

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

A Reading A-Z Level Y Leveled Book
Word Count: 4,355

Connections

Writing

Write an essay describing Alice's interactions with the animals in this part of the story. Then explain what these interactions reveal about Alice's character.

Social Studies

Research the social classes of nineteenth-century England. Create a table listing each character, which class he or she belongs to, and why.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Part 2

LEVELED BOOK • Y



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Adapted from the Writings of Lewis Carroll
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Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Lewis Carroll
(1832–1898)



Lewis Carroll (Charles Dodgson) was an English writer, photographer, and mathematician. After Carroll entertained his friend's seven-year-old daughter, Alice Liddell, with a fantastic story, she asked him to write it down for her. The original title, *Alice's Adventures Underground*, was ultimately published in 1865 as *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

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Focus Question

How does Alice try to adjust to Wonderland, and what is the result?

Words to Know

absurd	fancying
adjourn	feeble
attending	gravely
capital	messages
comfits	pretexts
consultation	usurpation

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Level Y Leveled Book
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Correlation

LEVEL Y

Fountas & Pinnell	T
Reading Recovery	40
DRA	40

In Part 1 of Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, readers were introduced to young Alice. Alice finds herself in a bizarre world filled with many unusual creatures.

CHAPTER III. A Caucus-Race and a Long Tale

They were indeed a queer-looking party that assembled on the bank—the birds with draggled feathers, the animals with their fur clinging close to them, and all dripping wet, cross, and uncomfortable.

The first question of course was, how to get dry again: they had a **consultation** about this, and after a few minutes it seemed quite natural to Alice to find herself talking familiarly with them, as if she had known them all her life. Indeed, she had quite a long argument with the Lory, who at last turned sulky, and would only say, "I am older than you, and must know better." This Alice would not allow without knowing how old it was, and, as the Lory positively refused to tell its age, there was no more to be said.

At last the Mouse, who seemed to be a person of authority among them, called out, "Sit down, all of you, and listen to me! *I'll* soon make you dry enough!"

They all sat down at once, in a large ring, with the Mouse in the middle. Alice kept her eyes anxiously fixed on the Mouse, for she felt sure she would catch a bad cold if she did not get dry very soon.

"Ahem!" said the Mouse with an important air, "are you all ready? This is the driest thing I know. Silence all round, if you please! 'William the Conqueror, whose cause was favoured by the pope, was soon submitted to by the English, who wanted leaders, and had been of late much accustomed to **usurpation** and conquest. Edwin and Morcar, the earls of Mercia and Northumbria—'"

"Ugh!" said the Lory, with a shiver.

"I beg your pardon!" said the Mouse, frowning, but very politely. "Did you speak?"

"Not I!" said the Lory hastily.

"I thought you did," said the Mouse. "—I proceed. 'Edwin and Morcar, the earls of Mercia and Northumbria, declared for him: and even Stigand, the patriotic archbishop of Canterbury, found it advisable—'"

"Found *what*?" said the Duck.

"Found *it*," the Mouse replied rather crossly: "of course you know what 'it' means."

"I know what 'it' means well enough, when I find a thing," said the Duck. "It's generally a frog or a worm. The question is, what did the archbishop find?"

The Mouse did not notice this question, but hurriedly went on, "'—found it advisable to go with Edgar Atheling to meet William and offer him the crown. William's conduct at first was moderate. But the insolence of his Normans—' How are you getting on now, my dear?" it continued, turning to Alice as it spoke.

"As wet as ever," said Alice in a melancholy tone. "It doesn't seem to dry me at all."

"In that case," said the Dodo solemnly, rising to its feet, "I move that the meeting **adjourn**, for the immediate adoption of more energetic remedies—"

"Speak English!" said the Eaglet. "I don't know the meaning of half those long words, and, what's more, I don't believe you do either!" And the Eaglet bent down its head to hide a smile: some of the other birds tittered audibly.

"What I was going to say," said the Dodo in an offended tone, "was, that the best thing to get us dry would be a Caucus-race."

"What *is* a Caucus-race?" said Alice; not that she wanted much to know, but the Dodo had paused as if it thought that *somebody* ought to speak, and no one else seemed inclined to say anything.

"Why," said the Dodo, "the best way to explain it is to do it." (And, as you might like to try the thing yourself, some winter day, I will tell you how the Dodo managed it.)

First it marked out a race-course, in a sort of circle ("the exact shape doesn't matter," it said), and then all the party were placed along the course, here and there. There was no "One, two, three, and away," but they began running when they liked, and left off when they liked, so that it was not easy to know when the race was over. However, when they had been running half an hour or so, and were quite dry again, the Dodo suddenly called out, "The race is over!" and they all crowded round it, panting, and asking, "But who has won?"

This question the Dodo could not answer without a great deal of thought, and it sat for a long time with one finger pressed upon its forehead (the position in which you usually see Shakespeare, in the pictures of him), while the rest waited in silence. At last the Dodo said, "*Everybody* has won, and all must have prizes."

"But who is to give the prizes?" quite a chorus of voices asked.

"Why, *she*, of course," said the Dodo, pointing to Alice with one finger; and the whole party at once crowded round her, calling out in a confused way, "Prizes! Prizes!"

Alice had no idea what to do, and in despair she put her hand in her pocket, and pulled out a box of **comfits** (luckily the salt water had not got into it), and handed them round as prizes. There was exactly one apiece all round.

"But she must have a prize herself, you know," said the Mouse.

"Of course," the Dodo replied very **gravely**. "What else have you got in your pocket?" he went on, turning to Alice.

"Only a thimble," said Alice sadly.

"Hand it over here," said the Dodo.

Then they all crowded round her once more, while the Dodo solemnly presented the thimble, saying "We beg your acceptance of this elegant thimble"; and, when it had finished this short speech, they all cheered.

Alice thought the whole thing very **absurd**, but they all looked so grave that she did not dare to laugh; and, as she could not think of anything to say, she simply bowed, and took the thimble, looking as solemn as she could.

The next thing was to eat the comfits: this caused some noise and confusion, as the large birds complained that they could not taste theirs, and the small ones choked and had to be patted on the back. However, it was over at last, and they sat down again in a ring, and begged the Mouse to tell them something more.

"You promised to tell me your history, you know," said Alice, "and why it is you hate— C and D," she added in a whisper, half afraid that it would be offended again.

"Mine is a long and a sad tale!" said the Mouse, turning to Alice, and sighing.

"It *is* a long tail, certainly," said Alice, looking down with wonder at the Mouse's tail; "but why do you call it sad?"

And she kept on puzzling about it while the Mouse was speaking, so that her idea of the tale was something like this:—

"Fury said to a mouse,
That he met in the house,
'Let us both go to law:
I will prosecute *you*.
—Come, I'll take no denial;
We must have a trial:
For really this morning
I've nothing to do.'
Said the mouse to the cur,
'Such a trial, dear sir,
With no jury or judge,
Would be wasting our breath.'
'I'll be judge, I'll be jury,'
Said cunning old Fury:
'I'll try the whole cause,
And condemn you to death.'"

"You are not **attending!**" said the Mouse
to Alice severely. "What are you thinking of?"

"I beg your pardon," said Alice very humbly:
"you had got to the fifth bend, I think?"

"I had *not!*" cried the Mouse, sharply and
very angrily.

"A knot!" said Alice, always ready to make
herself useful, and looking anxiously about her.
"Oh, do let me help to undo it!"

"I shall do nothing of the sort," said the Mouse,
getting up and walking away. "You insult me by
talking such nonsense!"

"I didn't mean it!" pleaded poor Alice. "But
you're so easily offended, you know!" The Mouse
only growled in reply.

"Please come back and finish your story!"
Alice called after it. And the others all joined
in chorus, "Yes, please do!" but the Mouse only
shook its head impatiently, and walked a little
quicker.

"What a pity it wouldn't stay!" sighed the
Lory, as soon as it was quite out of sight; and an
old Crab took the opportunity of saying to her
daughter, "Ah, my dear! Let this be a lesson to you
never to lose *your* temper!" "Hold your tongue,
Ma!" said the young Crab, a little snappishly.
"You're enough to try the patience of an oyster!"

"I wish I had our Dinah here, I know I do!"
said Alice aloud, addressing nobody in particular.
"She'd soon fetch it back!"

"And who is Dinah, if I might venture to ask
the question?" said the Lory.

Alice replied eagerly, for she was always ready to talk about her pet: "Dinah's our cat. And she's such a **capital** one for catching mice you can't think! And oh, I wish you could see her after the birds! Why, she'll eat a little bird as soon as look at it!"

This speech caused a remarkable sensation among the party. Some of the birds hurried off at once: one old Magpie began wrapping itself up very carefully, remarking, "I really must be getting home; the night-air doesn't suit my throat!" and a Canary called out in a trembling voice to its children, "Come away, my dears! It's high time you were all in bed!" On various **pretexts** they all moved off, and Alice was soon left alone.

"I wish I hadn't mentioned Dinah!" she said to herself in a melancholy tone. "Nobody seems to like her, down here, and I'm sure she's the best cat in the world! Oh, my dear Dinah! I wonder if I shall ever see you anymore!" And here poor Alice began to cry again, for she felt very lonely and low-spirited. In a little while, however, she again heard a little pattering of footsteps in the distance, and she looked up eagerly, half hoping that the Mouse had changed his mind, and was coming back to finish his story.

CHAPTER IV. The Rabbit Sends in a Little Bill

It was the White Rabbit, trotting slowly back again, and looking anxiously about as it went, as if it had lost something; and she heard it muttering to itself, "The Duchess! The Duchess! Oh my dear paws! Oh my fur and whiskers! She'll get me executed, as sure as ferrets are ferrets! Where *can* I have dropped them, I wonder?" Alice guessed in a moment that it was looking for the fan and the pair of white kid gloves, and she very good-naturedly began hunting about for them, but they were nowhere to be seen—everything seemed to have changed since her swim in the pool, and the great hall, with the glass table and the little door, had vanished completely.

Very soon the Rabbit noticed Alice, as she went hunting about, and called out to her in an angry tone, "Why, Mary Ann, what *are* you doing out here? Run home this moment, and fetch me a pair of gloves and a fan! Quick, now!" And Alice was so much frightened that she ran off at once in the direction it pointed to, without trying to explain the mistake it had made.

"He took me for his housemaid," she said to herself as she ran. "How surprised he'll be when he finds out who I am! But I'd better take him his fan and gloves—that is, if I can find them."

As she said this, she came upon a neat little house, on the door of which was a bright brass plate with the name “W. RABBIT” engraved upon it. She went in without knocking, and hurried upstairs, in great fear lest she should meet the real Mary Ann, and be turned out of the house before she had found the fan and gloves.

“How queer it seems,” Alice said to herself, “to be going on **messages** for a rabbit! I suppose Dinah’ll be sending me on messages next!” And she began **fancying** the sort of thing that would happen. “‘Miss Alice! Come here directly, and get ready for your walk!’ ‘Coming in a minute, nurse!’ But I’ve got to see that the mouse doesn’t get out.’ Only I don’t think,” Alice went on, “that they’d let Dinah stop in the house if it began ordering people about like that!”

By this time she had found her way into a tidy little room with a table in the window, and on it (as she had hoped) a fan and two or three pairs of tiny white kid gloves: she took up the fan and a pair of the gloves, and was just going to leave the room, when her eye fell upon a little bottle that stood near the looking-glass. There was no label this time with the words “DRINK ME” but nevertheless she uncorked it and put it to her lips.

“I know *something* interesting is sure to happen,” she said to herself, “whenever I eat or drink anything; so I’ll just see what this bottle does. I do hope it’ll make me grow large again, for really I’m quite tired of being such a tiny little thing!”

It did so indeed, and much sooner than she had expected: before she had drunk half the bottle, she found her head pressing against the ceiling, and had to stoop to save her neck from being broken. She hastily put down the bottle, saying to herself, “That’s quite enough. I hope I shan’t grow any more. As it is, I can’t get out at the door—I do wish I hadn’t drunk quite so much!”

Alas, it was too late to wish that! She went on growing, and growing, and very soon had to kneel down on the floor. In another minute there was not even room for this, and she tried the effect of lying down with one elbow against the door, and the other arm curled round her head.

Still she went on growing, and, as a last resource, she put one arm out of the window, and one foot up the chimney, and said to herself, “Now I can do no more, whatever happens. What *will* become of me?”

Luckily for Alice, the little magic bottle had now had its full effect, and she grew no larger: still it was very uncomfortable, and, as there seemed to be no sort of chance of her ever getting out of the room again, no wonder she felt unhappy.

"It was much pleasanter at home," thought poor Alice, "when one wasn't always growing larger and smaller, and being ordered about by mice and rabbits. I almost wish I hadn't gone down that rabbit-hole—and yet—and yet—it's rather curious, you know, this sort of life! I do wonder what *can* have happened to me! When I used to read fairy-tales, I fancied that kind of thing never happened, and now here I am in the middle of one! There ought to be a book written about me, that there ought! And when I grow up, I'll write one—but I'm grown up now," she added in a sorrowful tone. "At least there's no room to grow up any more *here*."

"But then," thought Alice, "shall I *never* get any older than I am now? That'll be a comfort, one way—never to be an old woman—but then—always to have lessons to learn! Oh, I shouldn't like *that*!"

"Oh, you foolish Alice!" she answered herself. "How can you learn lessons in here? Why, there's hardly room for *you*, and no room at all for any lesson-books!"

And so she went on, taking first one side and then the other, and making quite a conversation of it altogether; but after a few minutes she heard a voice outside, and stopped to listen.

"Mary Ann! Mary Ann!" said the voice. "Fetch me my gloves this moment!" Then came a little pattering of feet on the stairs. Alice knew it was the Rabbit coming to look for her, and she trembled till she shook the house, quite forgetting that she was now about a thousand times as large as the Rabbit, and had no reason to be afraid of it.

Presently the Rabbit came up to the door, and tried to open it; but, as the door opened inwards, and Alice's elbow was pressed hard against it, that attempt proved a failure. Alice heard it say to itself, "Then I'll go round and get in at the window."

"*That* you won't!" thought Alice, and, after waiting till she fancied she heard the Rabbit just under the window, she suddenly spread out her hand, and made a snatch in the air.

She did not get hold of anything, but she heard a little shriek and a fall, and a crash of broken glass, from which she concluded that it was just possible it had fallen into a cucumber-frame, or something of the sort.

Next came an angry voice—the Rabbit’s—“Pat! Pat! Where are you?” And then a voice she had never heard before, “Sure then I’m here! Digging for apples, yer honour!”

“Digging for apples, indeed!” said the Rabbit angrily. “Here! Come and help me out of *this*!” (Sounds of more broken glass.)

“Now tell me, Pat, what’s that in the window?”

“Sure, it’s an arm, yer honour!” (He pronounced it “arrum.”)

“An arm, you goose! Who ever saw one that size? Why, it fills the whole window!”

“Sure, it does, yer honour: but it’s an arm for all that.”

“Well, it’s got no business there, at any rate. Go and take it away!”

There was a long silence after this, and Alice could only hear whispers now and then, such as, “Sure, I don’t like it, yer honour, at all, at all!”

“Do as I tell you, you coward!” and at last she spread out her hand again, and made another snatch in the air. This time there were *two* little shrieks, and more sounds of broken glass.

“What a number of cucumber-frames there must be!” thought Alice. “I wonder what they’ll do next! As for pulling me out of the window, I only wish they *could*! I’m sure I don’t want to stay in here any longer!”

She waited for some time without hearing anything more. At last came a rumbling of little cartwheels, and the sound of a good many voices all talking together. She made out the words: “Where’s the other ladder?—Why, I hadn’t to bring but one; Bill’s got the other—Bill! Fetch it here, lad!—Here, put ‘em up at this corner—No, tie ‘em together first—they don’t reach half high enough yet—Oh! They’ll do well enough; don’t be particular—Here, Bill! Catch hold of this rope—Will the roof bear?—Mind that loose slate—Oh, it’s coming down! Heads below!” (a loud crash)—“Now, who did that?—It was Bill—Who’s to go down the chimney?—Nay, I shan’t! *You* do it!—That I won’t, then!—Bill’s to go down—Here, Bill! The master says you’re to go down the chimney!”

“Oh! So Bill’s got to come down the chimney, has he?” said Alice to herself.

“Why, they seem to put everything upon Bill! I wouldn’t be in Bill’s place for a good deal: this fireplace is narrow, to be sure, but I *think* I can kick a little!”

She drew her foot as far down the chimney as she could, and waited till she heard a little animal (she couldn't guess of what sort it was) scratching and scrambling about in the chimney close above her: then, saying to herself, "This is Bill," she gave one sharp kick, and waited to see what would happen next.

The first thing she heard was a general chorus of "There goes Bill!" then the Rabbit's voice alone—"Catch him, you by the hedge!" then silence, and then another confusion of voices—"Hold up his head—Brandy now—Don't choke him—How was it, old fellow? What happened to you? Tell us all about it!"

Last came a little **feeble**, squeaking voice ("That's Bill," thought Alice), "Well, I hardly know—No more, thank ye. I'm better now—but I'm a deal too flustered to tell you—all I know is, something comes at me like a jack-in-the-box, and up I goes like a sky-rocket!"

"So you did, old fellow!" said the others.

"We must burn the house down!" said the Rabbit's voice; and Alice called out as loud as she could, "If you do, I'll set Dinah at you!"

There was a dead silence instantly, and Alice thought to herself, "I wonder what they *will* do next! If they had any sense, they'd take the roof off." After a minute or two, they began moving about again, and Alice heard the Rabbit say, "A barrowful will do, to begin with."

"A barrowful of *what*?" thought Alice, but she had not long to doubt, for the next moment a shower of little pebbles came rattling in at the window, and some of them hit her in the face. "I'll put a stop to this," she said to herself, and shouted out, "You'd better not do that again!" which produced another dead silence.

Alice noticed with some surprise that the pebbles were all turning into little cakes as they lay on the floor, and a bright idea came into her head. "If I eat one of these cakes," she thought, "it's sure to make *some* change in my size; and as it can't possibly make me larger, it must make me smaller, I suppose." So she swallowed one of the cakes, and was delighted to find that she began shrinking directly.

As soon as she was small enough to get through the door, she ran out of the house, and found quite a crowd of little animals and birds waiting outside.

The poor little Lizard, Bill, was in the middle, being held up by two guinea-pigs, who were giving it something out of a bottle. They all made a rush at Alice the moment she appeared, but she ran off as hard as she could, and soon found herself safe in a thick wood. "The first thing I've got to do," said Alice to herself, as she wandered about in the wood, "is to grow to my right size again, and the second thing is to find my way into that lovely garden. I think that will be the best plan."

It sounded an excellent plan, no doubt, and very neatly and simply arranged; the only difficulty was, that she had not the smallest idea how to set about it, and while she was peering about anxiously among the trees, a little sharp bark just over her head made her look up in a great hurry.

An enormous puppy was looking down at her with large round eyes, and feebly stretching out one paw, trying to touch her. "Poor little thing!" said Alice, in a coaxing tone, and she tried hard to whistle to it; but she was terribly frightened all the time at the thought that it might be hungry, in which case it would be very likely to eat her up in spite of all her coaxing.

Hardly knowing what she did, she picked up a little bit of stick, and held it out to the puppy; whereupon the puppy jumped into the air off all its feet at once, with a yelp of delight, and rushed at the stick, and made believe to worry it; then Alice dodged behind a great thistle, to keep herself from being run over; and the moment she appeared on the other side, the puppy made another rush at the stick, and tumbled head over heels in its hurry to get hold of it.

Alice, thinking it was very like having a game of play with a cart-horse, and expecting every moment to be trampled under its feet, ran round the thistle again; then the puppy began a series of short charges at the stick, running a very little way forwards each time and a long way back, and barking hoarsely all the while, till at last it sat down a good way off, panting, with its tongue hanging out of its mouth, and its great eyes half shut.

This seemed to Alice a good opportunity for making her escape; so she set off at once, and ran till she was quite tired and out of breath, and till the puppy's bark sounded quite faint in the distance.

“And yet what a dear little puppy it was!” said Alice, as she leant against a buttercup to rest herself, and fanned herself with one of the leaves. “I should have liked teaching it tricks very much, if—if I’d only been the right size to do it! Oh dear! I’d nearly forgotten that I’ve got to grow up again! Let me see—how *is* it to be managed? I suppose I ought to eat or drink something or other; but the great question is, what?”

The great question certainly was, what? Alice looked all round her at the flowers and the blades of grass, but she did not see anything that looked like the right thing to eat or drink under the circumstances. There was a large mushroom growing near her, about the same height as herself; and, when she had looked under it, on both sides of it, and behind it, it occurred to her that she might as well look and see what was on the top of it.

She stretched herself up on tiptoe, and peeped over the edge of the mushroom, and her eyes immediately met those of a large blue caterpillar, that was sitting on the top with its arms folded, quietly smoking a long hookah, and taking not the smallest notice of her or of anything else.

Glossary

absurd (<i>adj.</i>)	wildly ridiculous or unsuitable (p. 8)
adjourn (<i>v.</i>)	to temporarily end or conclude for a time (p. 5)
attending (<i>v.</i>)	paying attention to (p. 9)
capital (<i>adj.</i>)	excellent (p. 11)
comfits (<i>n.</i>)	a type of candy (British spelling) (p. 7)
consultation (<i>n.</i>)	a meeting to gather advice from an expert or other source of information (p. 3)
fancying (<i>v.</i>)	imagining things or having fantasies (p. 13)
feeble (<i>adj.</i>)	weak or inadequate (p. 19)
gravely (<i>adv.</i>)	seriously (p. 7)
messages (<i>n.</i>)	errands (p. 13)
pretexts (<i>n.</i>)	reasons given to hide or justify something (p. 11)
usurpation (<i>n.</i>)	the act of taking by force or without authority (p. 4)