

LEWIS CARROLL'S ALICE

Lewis Carroll (1832-1898) was an English author, poet, and gifted mathematician. He taught Mathematics at Christ Church, Oxford. There he met three little Liddell sisters: Lorina, Alice, and Edith.

He invented many stories for the three girls during their childhood years but the story about Alice's Adventures Under Ground became everyone's favourite. Carroll first told this story on a boat journey up the River Thames. It happened on July 4, 1862. Later, Carroll always called the day the "golden afternoon" in his writing.

Alice Liddell loved the story so much that she asked Carroll to write it down for her. He did just that. Then the writer published it as a book with a title *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. The book was two times bigger than the original story.

Six years later Carroll published the next story about Alice. Its title was *Through the Looking Glass*.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland has been translated into many languages. Thousands of children and grown-ups around the world love the book about the girl who wasn't afraid to run after the White Rabbit.

Before-reading questions:

1. Lewis Carroll lived in the United Kingdom during the Victorian era. What do you know about England of that time?

2. Wonderland is a world made up by Lewis Carroll. What other imagined worlds have you seen or read about? Describe them.

3. Englishmen love their puns and *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is full of them. Do you know what a pun is? Find the definition of it and try to invent a pun yourself.

Chapter 1

DOWN THE RABBIT HOLE

Alice was tired of sitting near her sister. Her sister was reading a book and didn't want to play with her. It was boring. Once or twice Alice looked into the book. But it had no pictures or conversations in it. "How can a book be good," thought Alice, "without pictures or conversations!"

She wanted to pick up some flowers, but the day was hot, and she felt very sleepy and lazy. Suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran past her.

The Rabbit said to itself, "Oh! Oh, I will be late!" Then it took a watch out of his pocket and looked at it, and ran faster. She wanted to know where the rabbit was running! She stood up and ran after it. The Rabbit jumped down a large rabbit hole, and Alice went after it. Soon she was falling down a very deep tunnel, so she had time to look around. She saw books, pictures on the walls, cups, plates, and jelly in the cupboards.

Down, down, down.

"I must be near the earth's centre," Alice said. "Maybe I will fall on the other side of the earth! I will see people that walk on their heads! Oh, how funny!"

Down, down, down.

Falling down was very boring, and Alice started thinking about her cat, Dinah. "Dinah will miss me very much, I think! Dinah, my dear!"

Down, down, down.





It was a very long fall! Alice started to feel sleepy but suddenly — THUMP! And the fall ended — she was sitting on a small mountain of dry leaves.

Alice jumped up onto her feet. She looked up, but it was all dark there. Suddenly she saw the White Rabbit and ran after it. The Rabbit said, “Oh, how late it is!” and turned the corner. She turned the corner too, but she couldn’t see him. She was now in a long hall.

There were doors all around the hall, but all of them were locked. Suddenly Alice saw a little glass table. A very little **golden** key lay on top of it. But the locks in all the doors were very large and the key was very small! Then suddenly Alice noticed a little door and opened it with the key.

Behind the door was a small corridor. It led to a very beautiful garden. Alice wanted to be among those bright flowers and cool fountains! But even her head was too big for the little door. So she went back to the table. Maybe there is another key on it? But this time she found there a little bottle and a piece of paper. The paper said. “DRINK ME”.

Alice thought about the bottle and the note. Maybe it was **poison**. But the bottle did NOT say “**poison**,” so Alice drank it. “What an interesting feeling!” said Alice, “I am getting smaller.”

Now she could go through that little door! But poor Alice! She forgot to take the little **golden** key from the table! Now she couldn’t take it from the glass table because she was too small. So she sat down and cried.





Alice's Adventures in Wonderland



“But crying will not help me,” said Alice to herself and looked around. She noticed a little glass box under the table. She opened it and found in it a very small cake with the words “EAT ME”. She ate a little bit, but nothing happened so very soon she ate the whole cake.

Dictionary

golden — золотой

poison — яд

Chapter 2

THE POOL OF TEARS

Now Alice started to grow taller and taller. Her feet were now very far away, and she almost couldn't see them. "Goodbye, feet!" she said. "Oh, my poor little feet, who will put shoes on you now? I will be too far away. But I will send you a new pair of shoes every Christmas. How funny it will be!"

At that moment, her head hit the roof of the hall. She took the little **golden** key from the table and went to the small garden door.

Poor Alice! This time she could look into the garden with only one eye. So she sat down and began to cry again. Soon there was a large pool around her.

Suddenly she heard footsteps far away and quickly dried her eyes to see what it was. The White Rabbit returned! It wore beautiful clothes and had a pair of white **gloves** in one hand and a large **fan** in the other. Alice needed help very much. When the Rabbit came near her, she began very quietly. "Please, sir—" The Rabbit was very scared. It dropped the white **gloves** and the **fan** and ran away.

Alice took the Rabbit's **gloves** and the **fan** and began to think how strange everything was that day. "And yesterday things were so usual. Did I change during the night? Who am I? That's the great puzzle!"



“I’m sure I’m not Ada,” she said. “Her hair is curly and my hair isn’t curly at all. And I’m sure I can’t be Mabel because I know a lot of things, and she, oh! she knows so little! What is more, SHE’S she, and I’M I, and – oh, how difficult it all is! Do I really know the things I knew once? **Four times five is twelve**, and four times six is thirteen, and four times seven is— Oh no! It is all wrong! No, Math doesn’t mean anything. Let’s try Geography. London is the capital of Paris, and Paris is the capital of Rome, and Rome—no, THAT’S all wrong, I’m sure! Am I Mabel now? I’ll try and say ‘*How does the little—*’”.

She had had to learn this **poem** for one of her lessons once, and she knew it very well. But now, when she tried to repeat it, her voice sounded strange, and the words were all different.

“I’m sure those are not the right words,” said poor Alice, and she started to cry again, “I must be Mabel then. And they will make me live in that terrible little house, and I will have no toys, and oh! I will have to learn so many lessons! No, I made a decision. If I’m Mabel, I’ll stay in this rabbit hole! They will come for me and they will try to make me come back. But I will only look at them and say, ‘Who am I then? Tell me that. Then, if I like that person, I will come up. If I will not like that person, I’ll stay down here and try to become somebody else’” cried Alice, “But oh! Why don’t they come for me right now and call me back home? I am so VERY tired of being all alone here!”