

Alice in Wonderland Book Notes

Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll

(c)2015 BookRags, Inc. All rights reserved.



Contents

Alice in Wonderland Book Notes.....	1
Contents.....	2
Author/Context.....	3
Plot Summary.....	5
Major Characters.....	7
Objects/Places.....	10
Quotes.....	12
Topic Tracking: Identity.....	14
Topic Tracking: Knowledge.....	16
Topic Tracking: Meaning.....	18
Introductory Poem.....	20
Chapter 1: Down the Rabbit Hole.....	21
Chapter 2: The Pool of Tears.....	23
Chapter 3: A Caucus-Race and a Long Tale.....	25
Chapter 4: The Rabbit Sends in Little Bill.....	26
Chapter 5: Advice from a Caterpillar.....	28
Chapter 6: Pig and Pepper.....	30
Chapter 7: A Mad Tea-Party.....	32
Chapter 8: The Queen's Croquet-Ground.....	34
Chapter 9: The Mock Turtle's Story.....	36
Chapter 10: The Lobster Quadrille.....	38
Chapter 11: Who Stole the Tarts?.....	40
Chapter 12: Alice's Evidence.....	42



Author/Context

The man the world would come to know as Lewis Carroll was born Charles Lutwidge Dodgson on January 27, 1832, in Daresbury, in England's Cheshire county. His parents were from good North Country families, and his father was a clergyman. He was the third of eleven children, and the eldest son. During his childhood, Lewis Carroll entertained his brothers and sisters with games he invented and with stories and verses from family magazines that he edited, illustrated, and largely wrote.

At the age of 12, Carroll went off to school. It seems that he was a hardworking student but he did not enjoy life at boarding school. Carroll was quite shy and reclusive, in part due to a stammer. He distinguished himself in mathematics, and went on to study at Oxford's Christ Church at the age of 19. The Oxford where Carroll spent his college years was not quite the staid institution of previous generations. Oxford in Carroll's time was the site of heated debates over such issues as church reform and Charles Darwin's *Origin of Species*. Carroll himself tended to be orthodox and conservative in his beliefs.

After taking his degree, Carroll became a teacher of mathematics at Christ Church, where he lived until almost the end of his life. At Oxford, Carroll made a name for himself as a freelance humorist, parodist, and versifier. His pseudonym first appeared in 1856. (The name Lewis Carroll was derived from a Latinized version of Charles Lutwidge-Carolus Ludovic.)

Though he did well at writing, Carroll was not well suited for the teaching profession. He disliked lecturing both undergraduates and boarding school boys. In the classroom, he had a very difficult time keeping order. Carroll hated disorder and tried to keep his own life in meticulous order; for example, he kept a detailed log of every letter he wrote and received during his adult life. Carroll's bad experiences at teaching may have contributed in part for his distaste of boys. He once wrote, "I am fond of little children (except boys)."

Some of the little children he knew and loved best at Oxford were the daughters of Henry Liddell, the dean of Christ Church. One of these daughters, Alice Liddell, was the first in a long line of what Carroll called his "child-friends." In an age in which young girls were sentimentalized as emblems of purity and beauty, Carroll regarded little girls with great adoration, almost worship.

On a boating outing in July of 1862 with a teaching colleague and three of the Liddell children, Carroll told a story so entertaining that Alice, for whom the story's heroine was named, begged Carroll to write it down for her. Carroll agreed, and he later expanded upon the tale to create *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, which was illustrated by John Tenniel and published in 1865.

Carroll wrote other books, such as the nonsense poem *The Hunting of the Snark* and the didactic children's tale *Sylvie and Bruno*, as well as books and pamphlets on mathematical theory which are almost forgotten today. He is best known for *Alice* and its



sequel, *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There*. These two books broke from traditional children's literature, which was expected to be realistic, educational, and above all, moral. In most children's books before *Alice*, authors condescended toward their young readers and did not provide much opportunity for a child to use his or her imagination. Carroll encouraged imagination and was quite determined that *Alice's Adventure's in Wonderland* would not have a moral purpose.

In addition to his professions of author and mathematician, Carroll was a talented amateur photographer and an ordained deacon of the Church of England. He was a celebrated author in his lifetime, but as he grew older he avoided attention and preferred that people not realize that Charles Dodgson the private person was Lewis Carroll the author. He died on January 14, 1898 in Guildford, England.

Bibliography

Carroll, Lewis. *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1993.

Cohen, Morton N. *Lewis Carroll and Alice: 1832-1982*. New York: The Peirpont Morgan Library, 1982.

Gardner, Martin, ed. *The Annotated Alice*. New York: Bramhall House, 1960.

Kelly, Richard. *Lewis Carroll*. Boston: Twayne Publishers, 1977.

Pudney, John. *Lewis Carroll and His World*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1976.

Taylor, Alexander L. *The White Knight*. London: Oliver & Boyd, 1952.



Plot Summary

Alice is very bored and sleepy while sitting with her older sister outside, until she sees a White Rabbit looking at his watch and talking to himself. She follows the Rabbit down a very deep rabbit hole and ends up far beneath the ground in a hall with a tiny locked door that leads to a beautiful garden. She eats and drinks things that make her change in size, but she is still unable to get through the door into the garden.

When she becomes huge, she cries in frustration and when she shrinks, she is small enough to swim around in a pool made of her own tears. In the pool, she encounters many creatures, including a Mouse. The creatures and Alice manage to get out of the pool and dry off, but Alice is soon left alone.

Alice finds the Rabbit's house and grows huge after drinking a strange liquid. She terrifies the rabbit and his neighbors and grows very small again after fanning herself. Alice then comes across a Caterpillar smoking a hookah. He irritates Alice and asks her to recite poetry, which she cannot do properly. The Caterpillar informs Alice that eating one side of the mushroom he is sitting on will make her larger but eating the other side will make her smaller. Alice is still trying to become the right size to get into the garden.

She comes to a house in the woods, where a Duchess, her ugly baby, her hostile Cook, and her Cheshire Cat reside. The kitchen is full of pepper and dishes which were hurled in anger. Alice tries to save the baby from this environment, but the baby soon turns into a pig, so she is forced to let it go. The Cheshire Cat appears, grins at Alice, and recommends that she visit the Mad Hatter or the March Hare. The Cheshire Cat vanishes and reappears suddenly. Finally, he disappears gradually so only his grin remains.

Alice goes to the March Hare's house, where she finds a tea-party going on. Alice sits down at the table with the Hare, the Hatter, and the Dormouse. She finds them rude and quickly becomes annoyed with them, so she leaves. She decides to go through a door in a tree and again finds herself in the room with the tiny door leading to the garden. This time she manages to get into the garden.

In the garden she comes across three gardeners painting white roses red. They are afraid of being executed by the Queen of Hearts. Suddenly the Queen and her entourage of playing cards appear. The Queen invites Alice to play croquet, and Alice joins a very strange game. She soon learns that the Duchess is to be executed. The Cheshire Cat's head appears above the ground and causes quite a stir.

The Duchess is brought from prison to settle matters and begins talking with Alice about the moral of everything. The Queen then decides Alice should go meet the Mock Turtle; she is escorted by the Gryphon. Alice learns the Mock Turtle's history and sees a dance called the Lobster Quadrille. Alice again tries to recite poetry with little success.



The Gryphon whisks Alice back to court when they hear that the trial is beginning. The Knave of Hearts is on trial for stealing the Queen's tarts. Alice is excited to be in court and to hear the testimony of the Hatter and the Cook. Alice herself is called to testify after she has inexplicably grown larger again. Alice is impertinent and the King orders her to leave the court, but she refuses. She is outraged by the unfairness of the court's proceedings and provokes the Queen to order her execution. Alice tells the court that they're nothing but a pack of cards, and they rise up and attack her.

At this point, Alice realizes that she has been asleep for a long time in her sister's lap. She tells her sister about the events of her marvelous dream and then goes in to tea. Her sister is captivated by the dream and imagines Alice as a grown woman who will still have a child-like sense of wonder.



Major Characters

Alice: A little girl, probably 7 years old. She has an amazing dream about changing size and meeting various strange creatures underground in Wonderland. Alice is curious, intelligent, trusting, and ready to accept the impossible. She can be quite bold; additionally, she tends to take herself seriously and sometimes has a rather quick temper.

White Rabbit: A rabbit wearing a waistcoat and pocket watch scampers past Alice at the beginning of the story. Alice follows the White Rabbit into Wonderland. The Rabbit is rather timid and nervous. He meets Alice again at his house and at the Queen's croquet-grounds where he serves as the herald at the trial of the Knave of Hearts.

Caterpillar : A large, blue, hookah-smoking caterpillar. He treats Alice with contempt and makes her angry, but he helps her to grow to the height she wants to be by telling her about the special properties of the mushroom he sits on.

Duchess: Hideously ugly in the illustrations by John Tenniel, the Duchess is hostile when she first meets Alice, but quite pleasant later on. The Duchess believes that everything has a moral, and she speaks in moralizing clichés.

Cheshire Cat: The Duchess' perpetually grinning cat. The cat speaks to Alice, but not to anyone else in the story. He informs Alice that he is insane. The Cheshire Cat can disappear and reappear suddenly, he can disappear very slowly, and he can appear as just a floating head. 'Grins like a Cheshire cat' was a common saying in England when Alice was written.

March Hare: A hare who lives in a house shaped like a hare's head. The Mad Tea Party is held on his lawn. At the trial, he contradicts the evidence presented by the Mad Hatter. At the time Alice meets him, he has been mad for two months. Alice doesn't care for him. In Carroll's time, 'Mad as a march hare' was a common phrase alluding to the frenzied behavior of hares in March, their mating season.

Mad Hatter: A hatter who continually has tea with the March Hare and the Dormouse because for him it is always six o'clock (tea-time). He quickly offends Alice. Two months before meeting Alice, he gave a concert for the Queen that ended badly. He is called as a witness at the trial of the Knave of Hearts. 'Mad as a hatter' was also a common expression in 19th century England, probably because many hatters did go mad from exposure to mercury, which was used in the process of making felt hats.

Queen of Hearts: The savage, domineering queen whose realm includes the garden. She is literally a playing card. She constantly issues orders to behead someone or other. Alice doesn't like her at all. The Queen sends Alice to meet the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle. At the trial, the Knave of Hearts is accused of stealing her tarts.



Mock Turtle: The Mock Turtle is always sad and depressed, and usually he's sighing or sobbing. He used to be a real turtle, but now he's a mock turtle, which, as the Queen explains, is what mock turtle soup is made from. (Mock turtle soup is imitation green turtle soup and is often made from veal-hence John Tenniel's illustration of a turtle with a calf's head and hooves.) The Mock Turtle loves to reminisce about his schooldays, and he teaches Alice the Lobster Quadrille.

Gryphon: A gryphon is a mythical monster, part lion and part eagle. This Gryphon takes Alice to meet the Mock Turtle and then ushers her off to the trial. He is amused by the illusions of other characters. He speaks in a Cockney accent and, like many of the other characters, he loves puns. Like the Mock Turtle, he is nostalgic about his days at school and he joins in the Lobster Quadrille.

Minor Characters

Alice's sister: Alice's older sister, who reads a book without illustrations or dialogue while sitting on the bank with Alice at the beginning of the book. Alice falls asleep with her head in her sister's lap and has the dream about Wonderland. When Alice awakes, she tells her sister about her dream, and the book closes with her sister daydreaming about what Alice will be like as a grown-up.

Dinah: Alice's cat. Dinah never actually appears in Alice, but as Alice has her adventures she often misses Dinah or talks about her.

Mouse: A French mouse who falls into the pool of Alice's tears. He is easily offended. He tells Alice his tale, which appears in Alice printed in the shape of a tail.

Mary Ann: The White Rabbit's maid. She never actually appears, but at one point the Rabbit mistakes Alice for Mary Ann.

Bill the Lizard: A hapless, somewhat stupid lizard. He first appears in the story when Alice, having grown huge, is blocking all of the entrances to the White Rabbit's house-the Rabbit sends Bill down the chimney, but Alice kicks him back out. Bill is also one of the jurors at the trial, where Alice takes away his chalk and accidentally stuffs him upside-down into the jury box.

Pig-Baby: The Duchess' ugly, squealing baby boy. Alice takes him from the Duchess to take care of him, but she lets him go when he actually turns into a pig before her eyes.

Cook: The Duchess' belligerent, violent cook. When Alice first sees her, she is making soup and using so much pepper that it fills the air of the Duchess' house. The cook is a hostile witness at the Knave's trial.

Dormouse: A guest at the Mad Tea Party. The Dormouse is always either asleep or falling asleep, despite the efforts of the Mad Hatter and the March Hare to keep him awake. The Dormouse tells Alice a story about three little girls in a treacle well. He appears again at the trial of the Knave of Hearts. (Dormice are nocturnal, hibernating



rodents found in Europe and Britain. The word 'dormouse' is derived from the Latin dormire, which means 'to sleep.')

Three Gardeners: Three playing cards in the service of the Queen of Hearts. They are spades-numbers Two, Five, and Seven-who paint white roses red in an effort to cover up their mistake of planting the wrong kind of rose tree. They are placed under a sentence of execution by the Queen.

King of Hearts: Kinder than his wife, the King of Hearts quietly pardons everyone who has been sentenced to death when the Queen leaves the croquet grounds. He serves as the judge at the Knave's trial, although he doesn't seem to know much about court proceedings.

Knave of Hearts: In the King and Queen's court processions, the Knave serves as a crown-bearer. He is tried for stealing tarts made by the Queen. Despite reasonable efforts to prove himself innocent, the King and the court are determined to pronounce him guilty.



Objects/Places

Rabbit hole: The entrance through which Alice follows the White Rabbit into Wonderland. The hole is initially straight like a tunnel, but then it suddenly opens into a shaft that goes straight down into the earth like a well. The sides of the well are lined with cupboards, bookshelves, and pictures.

Golden key: The key to the tiny door. Alice finds the key on a little table made of glass. She accidentally leaves the key on the table when she becomes tiny, so she is not able to reach it to unlock the door and enter the garden. Later in the story, when she finally manages to enter the garden, she does so by using this key.

Tiny door: The entranceway to the garden, the tiny door is located behind a curtain in a long hallway filled with doors. It is about 15 inches high and can only be opened with the tiny golden key.

Garden: The most beautiful garden imaginable. Alice sees this garden, with bright flowers and fountains, through the tiny door soon after she arrives in Wonderland. She longs to get out into the garden, but she is unable to do so until after she leaves the Mad Tea Party. The garden is part of the realm of the King and Queen of Hearts.

Bottle marked DRINK ME: This little bottle with a paper label appears on the little glass table while Alice is trying to get through the tiny door. The bottle is not marked 'Poison,' so Alice drinks its contents, which make her shrink to a height of 10 inches.

Cake marked EAT ME: Alice finds this tiny cake in a glass box underneath the table made of glass. On the cake, 'EAT ME' is spelled out using currants. Eating the cake makes Alice grow to a height of more than 9 feet.

Fan: The White Rabbit drops his gloves and his fan in terror when he sees 9-foot-tall Alice. When Alice absent-mindedly fans herself with the Rabbit's fan, she quickly shrinks to a tiny size.

Little bottle : Alice finds this bottle in the White Rabbit's house. It has no label at all; however, when Alice drinks it, she immediately grows almost too large to fit in the house.

Little cakes: When Alice fills up the Rabbit's house and prevents him from entering, he and his neighbors throw pebbles at her. When the pebbles hit the floor, they turn into little cakes. Alice eats one and shrinks to a height of 3 inches.

Mushroom: The Caterpillar's seat. The Caterpillar instructs Alice that eating one side of the mushroom will make her larger and that the other will make her smaller. Alice grabs a handful from each side, and throughout the rest of her adventures, whenever she wants to grow or shrink to a particular size, she nibbles at the appropriate handful of mushroom.



Mad Hatter's Watch: A pocket-watch that tells the day of the month. It runs two days behind, even though the March Hare tried to fix it with butter. The Hatter explains that Time controls all clocks, and because he and Time quarreled, in the Hatter's world it is always tea-time.

Door in tree: Alice sees a tree in the woods with a little door in it. She goes through the door and finds herself in the hallway with the entrance to the garden, which she is finally able to enter.

Rose tree: A tree with white roses that the Queen's gardeners paint red with the hope of tricking her into believing that the tree is the red-rose tree that she ordered.

Croquet ground and equipment: The strangest croquet ground and croquet equipment Alice has ever seen. The ground is full of ridges and furrows. The croquet balls are living hedgehogs who have no desire to be used as balls, and the croquet mallets are equally uncooperative live flamingoes. Some of the playing cards, the soldiers, bend over to form the wickets.

Lobster Quadrille: A song and a dance that the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon learned when they were young. The dance goes something like this: two lines are formed on the seashore, and each dancer, with a lobster for a partner, goes through some steps; then everyone throws the lobsters as far out to sea as possible, swims after them, and returns to land with a new lobster.

Letter : The evidence presented in the trial of the Knave. It is not addressed to anyone, is not in the Knave's handwriting, and is actually a set of nonsense verses. The King and Queen of Hearts believe that the Knave is guilty based upon this evidence.



Quotes

Quote 1: "'what is the use of a book,' thought Alice, 'without pictures or conversations?'" Chapter 1, pg. 1

Quote 2: "'Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!'" Chapter 1, pg. 3

Quote 3: "'Curiouser and curiouser!'" Chapter 2, pg. 7

Quote 4: "'I wonder if I've been changed in the night? Let me think: was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I'm not the same, the next question is 'Who in the world am I?' Ah, that's the great puzzle!'" Chapter 2, pg. 8

Quote 5: "'How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale! . . .'" Chapter 2, pg. 9

Quote 6: "'Speak English!' said the Eaglet. 'I don't know the meaning of half those long words, and I don't believe you do either!'" Chapter 3, pg. 14

Quote 7: "'I can't explain *myself*, I'm afraid, Sir,' said Alice, 'because I'm not myself you see.'" Chapter 5, pg. 28

Quote 8: "'You are old, Father William,' the young man said,
'And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head--
Do you think, at your age, it is right?'
"'In my youth," said his father, 'I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life.'
'I have answered three question, and that is enough,'
Said his father, 'Don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you down-stairs!'" Chapter 5, pp. 29-32, stanzas 1, 6, and 8

Quote 9: "'...those serpents! There's no pleasing them!'" Chapter 5, pg. 34

Quote 10: "'If everybody minded their own business,' the Duchess said, in a hoarse growl, 'the world would go around a great deal faster than it does.'" Chapter 6, pg. 39

Quote 11: "'If it had grown up,' she said to herself, 'it would have made a dreadfully ugly child; but it makes rather a handsome pig, I think.'" Chapter 6, pg. 41

Quote 12: "'we're all mad here'" Chapter 6, pg. 41



Quote 13: "'Why is a raven like a writing desk?'" Chapter 7, pg. 44

Quote 14: "'Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!/How I wonder what you're at.'" Chapter 7, pg. 47

Quote 15: "'I've had nothing yet,' Alice replied in an offended tone, 'so I can't take more.'
'You mean you ca'n't take *less*,' said the Hatter, 'it's very easy to take *more* than nothing.'" Chapter 7, pg. 48

Quote 16: "'Off with her head!'" Chapter 8, pg. 54

Quote 17: "'Perhaps it hasn't one,' Alice ventured to remark.
'Tut, tut, child!' said the Duchess. 'Everything's got a moral, if only you can find it.'
Chapter 9, pg. 59

Quote 18: "'Take care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves.'" Chapter 9, pg. 60

Quote 19: "'We called him Tortoise because he taught us.'" Chapter 9, pg. 63

Quote 20: "'Reeling and Writhing, of course, to begin with,' the Mock Turtle replied; 'and then the different branches of arithmetic--Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision.'" Chapter 9, pg. 65

Quote 21: "'Will you walk a little faster?' said a whiting to a snail,
'There's a porpoise close behind us and he's treading on my tail.
See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance!
They are waiting on the shingle--will you come and join the dance?
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?'" Chapter 10, pp. 67-8

Quote 22: "'Tis the voice of the Lobster: I heard him declare
'You have baked me to brown, I must sugar my hair.'"
Chapter 10, pg. 70

Quote 23: "'Well, I never heard it before,' said the Mock Turtle; 'but it sounds uncommon nonsense.'" Chapter 10, pg. 70

Quote 24: "'Soup of the evening, beautiful soup!'" Chapter 10, pg. 72

Quote 25: "'Begin at the beginning,' the King said, very gravely, 'and go on till you come to the end: then stop.'" Chapter 12, pg. 81

Quote 26: "'I don't believe there's an atom of meaning in it.'" Chapter 12, pg. 82

Quote 27: "'Sentence first--verdict afterwards.'" Chapter 12, pg. 83

Quote 28: "'You're nothing but a pack of cards!'" Chapter 12, pg. 83



Topic Tracking: Identity

Identity 1: Alice decides that one possible explanation for why everything is going so strangely for her is that she has been changed into a different person overnight and that she is now experiencing someone else's reality. She puzzles over who she could possibly be if she has changed. She tries to figure out whom she is by determining what she knows and how well she remembers things she has learned.

Identity 2: Alice's identity is not clear to the White Rabbit either, because he mistakes Alice for his maid, Mary Ann. Alice is so surprised that she doesn't get a chance to tell the Rabbit who she actually is and decides she should pretend to be Mary Ann.

Identity 3: When Alice meets the Caterpillar, he wants to know who she is, and he demands that she explain herself. Alice replies that the thing she really can't explain is herself because she isn't herself. She has changed so much recently, she says, that she simply cannot answer who she is. She is pretty sure that she is someone else because she can't stay the same size for long and she can't remember the things that she used to know.

Identity 4: In one of her many changes in size, Alice finds that her neck has grown enormously long. A frightened Pigeon assumes Alice is a serpent because that's what she looks like. Alice insists that she is a little girl (though she herself starts to doubt that that is what she really is after changing so much). The Pigeon, however, continues to believe that Alice is a serpent, both because of her appearance and because Alice admits to eating eggs.

Identity 5: When asked by Alice where she should go next, the Cheshire Cat suggests that she visit either the March Hare or the Mad Hatter. Alice expresses her reluctance to be around insane people, but the Cat replies that everyone in Wonderland is mad. He tells Alice that she too must be mad, or else she would never have come to Wonderland. According to the Cat, to be in Wonderland is to be crazy, and the identifying mark of an insane person is his or her presence in Wonderland.

Identity 6: The Dormouse tells a story about three little sisters named Elsie, Lacie, and Tillie. These names are meant to refer to the Liddell sisters, to whom Carroll told the original story. Lacie is an anagram for Alice, the name of the middle Liddell girl. Three of the characters in *Alice* are based on Alice Liddell: the title-character, Lacie, and Secunda, who appears in the introductory poem. These three characters might be considered three fictional versions of the same little girl.

Identity 7: The three gardeners who try to hide their mistake of planting the wrong kind of rose trees also try to hide who they are when the Queen of Hearts appears. The Queen demands to know who Alice is, so Alice introduces herself. Then she demands to know who the cards are; Alice tells the Queen that it is not her business to know who they are.



Identity 8: Upon discovering that Alice doesn't know what a Mock Turtle is, the Queen of Hearts insists that Alice meet the Mock Turtle and hear his story. Even though she has told Alice that Mock Turtles are what Mock Turtle Soup is made from, the Queen seems to believe that Alice will only understand who the Mock Turtle is by hearing him tell his life story.

Identity 9: The Gryphon asks to hear some of Alice's adventures. She agrees to tell him the events of the day, but says that she can't really tell him what happened the day before because she was a different person then. The Mock Turtle wants to hear about this change of identity, but the Gryphon overrules him and says that he's more interested in the adventures than in understanding who Alice is or has been.

Identity 10: At the trial of the Knave of Hearts, Alice understands quite a lot because she has read about courts in the newspaper. She is able to identify the King as the judge because he is wearing a wig.

Identity 11: The jurors at the trial have such a tenuous hold on who they are that each one of them has to write down his name before the trial begins for fear that he'll forget it by the time the trial is over. Alice is appalled by such stupidity.



Topic Tracking: Knowledge

Knowledge 1: Again and again throughout the book, Alice repeats the lessons she's learned in school--either because she feels the need to test herself, to practice, or because someone she meets wants to hear the lessons she's learned. As she falls, she tries to apply her lessons to her present situation, but they don't seem particularly useful. She repeats long words she doesn't quite understand ("latitude" and "longitude") and words that she knows aren't quite right.

Knowledge 2: Here Alice exercises her book learning. She remembers typical children's stories that teach lessons by recounting the misfortunes of foolish children who don't know the proper things to do. Wisely, Alice checks to make sure that the bottle marked "DRINK ME" is not also marked "poison."

Knowledge 3: Alice tries to find out if perhaps she has turned into another little girl by testing her knowledge. She is worried that perhaps she turned into her friend Mabel, who is not too bright. First Alice tries to recite the multiplication tables, but they come out wrong, and then she attempts to recall her geography and poetry--both of which also lead to failure. Based on her inability to prove to herself that she knows her lessons, Alice fears that she has indeed become a different stupid child.

Knowledge 4: When Alice grows as big as a house, she worries that since she's grown as large as she possibly can, she may never grow any older. If she doesn't grow to be an adult, then she will have to learn lessons forever. To Alice, an important distinction between children and grown-ups is that children have a lot to learn and are always being subjected to some educational exercise while adults apparently don't have to learn anything.

Knowledge 5: For Alice, her knowledge is a major touchstone for proving whether or not she is the same little girl that she used to be. When the Caterpillar asks her how she can be sure that she has changed, she explains that she can no longer recite poems the way that she learned them. As proof, she recites "You are old, Father William," which is a strange parody of a real poem a nineteenth-century child might have learned.

Knowledge 6: Alice often becomes frustrated by her encounters with the creatures of Wonderland because many of them tend to contradict her or tell her that she is wrong or that she doesn't know what she is talking about. She gets annoyed at the Caterpillar when she expects him to know and understand what her experiences have been, but he insists that he doesn't know what she is talking about. Other characters Alice meets expect *her* to know certain things that she, having had different experiences, has no way of knowing.

Knowledge 7: The Duchess assumes Alice is quite ignorant when she discovers that Alice doesn't know that all cats can grin and that most of them do. She tells Alice, "You don't know much...and that's a fact." (Chapter 6, pg. 39).



Knowledge 8: In an effort to show the Duchess how intelligent she is, Alice tries to demonstrate why one of the Duchess' morals is flawed. Pleased to have an opportunity to show off her knowledge, Alice starts to give the Duchess a lesson in astronomy. (The Duchess is not the least bit interested in learning from Alice and threatens to have her killed.)

Knowledge 9: The Mock Turtle and the Gryphon, both nostalgic for their school days, emphasize the importance of a proper education. They are shocked at Alice's lack of knowledge about basic elements of their educational system and about life under the sea. Both of them tell Alice that she is quite stupid.

Knowledge 10: In the course of relating her adventures, Alice tells the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle that she has been unable [unable to do what?? This is unclear]. The two creatures are intrigued and tell her to recite a poem. Alice does, even though she is beginning to get annoyed that everyone in Wonderland is always making her repeat her lessons. Once again, what Alice recites is not the poem she once knew.

Knowledge 11: At the Knave's trial, Alice learns the meaning of "suppressed," a word she had often wondered about. Carroll takes great care to explain the meaning to the reader as well. In Wonderland, if someone is disruptive at a trial, he is suppressed by being stuffed into a sack and sat upon. This is one of the only lessons Carroll takes great care to teach the reader directly, and one of the only lessons that Alice comments on learning.



Topic Tracking: Meaning

Meaning 1: Though Alice realizes that she is in a land where nothing seems normal and nothing seems impossible, she is surprised and disconcerted when she finds herself speaking nonsense. In this bit of nonsense, she tries to figure out how to send packages to her feet, considering she's grown so tall she can scarcely see them.

Meaning 2: The Mouse tries to tell a very boring yet important story about William the Conqueror, but the rest of the creatures have a hard time following it. There is a bit of a dispute over the meaning of the word "it." Then one of the birds complains that the Mouse is telling a story full of words that his audience cannot understand--he also accuses the Mouse of not knowing the meaning of many of the words he uses. It turns out that this story, whose meaning is difficult to comprehend, has very little effect on any of the listeners.

Meaning 3: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is full of humorous nonsense verses, most of which are parodies of popular poems from Carroll's time. One of the best known nonsense poems in the book is the one Alice recites to the Caterpillar: "You are old, Father William." This poem is a parody of one called "The Old Man's Comforts and How He Gained Them," a poem full of lessons and meaning.

Meaning 4: The Mad Hatter, confused by Alice's speech, tells her to say what she means. He demonstrates an important distinction between statements with apparently identical meanings when he tells Alice that "I say what I mean" does *not* mean the same thing as "I mean what I say." He reminds Alice that she wouldn't assume that "I eat what I see" means the same thing as "I see what I eat."

Meaning 5: Now alert to shades of meaning, Alice tries to understand the Hatter, but he doesn't seem to speak with much logic or sense. Although she understands the meanings of each individual word he uses, Alice is often unable to find meaning in a statement as a whole.

Meaning 6: The Duchess, who constantly moralizes everything, tells Alice to "Take care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves." That is, she advises Alice to worry about the meanings of speech or writing first and foremost--according to her, if the meanings are right, then the proper form will follow as a matter of course. This moral is actually a play on the English proverb "Take care of the pence and the pounds will take care of themselves." Carroll often uses wordplay--especially puns--to expand or shift the meanings of expressions.

Meaning 7: The Mock Turtle and the Gryphon are both punsters, and several times Alice finds their puns confusing. She believes, for example, that the Mock Turtle means "purpose" and not "porpoise" when he speaks of the importance of traveling with a porpoise. Insulted by Alice's suggestion, the Mock Turtle assures her that he means what he says.



Meaning 8: When Alice tries to recite a poem and it comes out all wrong, the Mock Turtle gets quite frustrated because he can't understand it. He thinks what Alice has recited is utter nonsense, and the Gryphon comments that there is no way Alice would be able to explain the meaning of what she has said. The Mock Turtle exclaims that there's no point in Alice reciting her lessons if she can't explain what she recites.

Meaning 9: Much at the trial is so ridiculous that it doesn't have much meaning. Alice doesn't think it to be of much significance whether the jurors are heads up or tails up in the jury box. The King of Hearts seems to be unable to tell the difference between words opposite in meaning such as "important" and "unimportant".

Meaning 10: When the letter is presented as evidence at the trial, the King goes to great lengths to analyze and explain the nonsensical verses; in addition, he finds the letter to be a most important and revealing piece of evidence. Alice, however, announces that she doesn't believe there is an atom of meaning in the verses, and she challenges all present at the trial to explain their meaning.

Introductory Poem

Carroll gives an account--in verse--of the day he first told the story that would become *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*. On a beautiful day, he took a boat trip with three young girls (called Prima, Secunda, and Tertia) who begged him to tell a tale with lots of nonsense in it. He told a long tale, full of many adventures and wonders--the tale that follows.



Chapter 1: Down the Rabbit Hole

Alice is sitting with her older sister on the bank. Her sister is reading a book, and Alice is getting bored and sleepy. Alice looks in her sister's book and finds it very dull; she thinks, "what is the use of a book...without pictures or conversations?" Chapter 1, pg. 1 Suddenly a White Rabbit, worrying aloud about being too late, hurries past her. When he takes a watch out of his pocket to check the time, Alice jumps up and chases after him. She sees the Rabbit slip through a rabbit hole and she pursues him through a tunnel until suddenly she finds herself falling down what seems to be a deep well.

Alice falls for a very long time--so long that she wonders if she will fall straight through the earth to the other side. During her fall she notices cupboards, bookshelves, and pictures on the walls of the well. There isn't much to keep her occupied during her long fall, so she practices some of her lessons on the way down and has imaginary conversations with her cat Dinah. Finally, Alice hits the ground with a thump and, unhurt, she jumps up and continues to chase after the White Rabbit.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 1

She hears the Rabbit saying, "Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!" but she is not able to catch up with him. Chapter 1, pg. 3 She winds up in a long hall with doors all around. Alice tries every door, but they are all locked. Suddenly Alice comes across a glass table with a tiny golden key on it. While unsuccessfully trying to unlock each of the doors with this key, Alice notices a low curtain she hadn't seen before. Behind the curtain is a little door about fifteen inches high. The tiny key unlocks this door and Alice opens it. Through the door, Alice can see the most beautiful garden imaginable. She tries to get out of the dark hall and into the garden, but her head is even too big to fit through the tiny door.

Disappointed, Alice returns to the glass table, hoping to find a key to a larger door or a book that would teach her how to become smaller by shutting up like a telescope. Instead, Alice finds a new item on the table: a bottle with a label that says "DRINK ME." Alice, who has read stories in which bad things happen to children who do not know the simple rules of common sense, makes sure that the bottle is not labeled "poison" before she drinks the whole bottle.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 2

At this point, Alice *does* shut up like a telescope, as she had wished. She shrinks to ten inches high and starts for the door to the garden, but then she remembers she has left the golden key on the glass table, which now towers high above her. She sits down and cries in frustration. She lectures herself on the uselessness of crying, for Alice is quite fond of pretending to be two people; she realizes that now she's not even big enough to make even one proper person.



After a while Alice notices a glass box underneath the table. In the box she finds a tiny cake marked "EAT ME." Alice eats it right away, since she figures changing size will be to her advantage whether she grows tall enough to reach the key or shrinks enough to slip under the door and into the garden. Initially she stays the same size and is quite surprised (even though this is usually the result of eating a tiny cake).



Chapter 2: The Pool of Tears

But then Alice starts growing larger and larger. When she begins to open out like a telescope, she exclaims, "Curiouser and curiouser!" and says goodbye to her feet. Chapter 2, pg. 7 As she considers what might be the best way to communicate with her feet when they are so far off, she realizes she is talking nonsense. Not until she is nine feet tall does she take the key off the table and go to the door. Now, of course, she is much too large to fit through. She starts sobbing in frustration, and she cries such large tears for so long that she is surrounded by a pool of tears a few inches deep.

Topic Tracking: Meaning 1

At this point, the White Rabbit comes running back down the hall. He is dressed elegantly and carries a pair of white gloves and a fan, and he is still muttering about being late. Alice tries to ask the Rabbit for help, but she startles him so badly that he drops the gloves and the fan and runs away. Alice picks up the fan and begins fanning herself while she tries to figure out why everything is going so strangely for her this day. She wonders if today she is a different person. She asks,

I wonder if I've been changed in the night? Let me think: was I the same when I got up this morning? I almost think I can remember feeling a little different. But if I'm not the same, the next question is 'Who in the world am I?' Ah, that's the great puzzle! Chapter 2, pg. 8

Topic Tracking: Identity 1

In trying to determine who she might be, Alice tests herself to see if she knows all the things she used to know. She tries to recite a multiplication table, but it doesn't come out right, and then she tries to recite a nursery rhyme. This comes out strangely too, as the first of a number of Carroll's verses that parody children's lyrics of the time:

*"How doth the little crocodile
Improve his shining tail,
And pour the waters of the Nile
On every golden scale! . . ."* Chapter 2, pg. 9

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 3

Alice decides that she has been turned into someone she doesn't want to be, and that she won't go back above ground if she finds out she's someone particularly disagreeable.

Just as she begins to feel very lonely, she sees that she has unconsciously put on one of the Rabbit's gloves, which is a very strange feat for someone nine feet tall. Alice realizes that she must have shrunk quite a bit and that she's still shrinking. When she realizes that the fan is the cause, she drops it before she shrinks away to nothing. She



runs toward the garden, but the door is locked again and the key is still on the glass table. Her situation has not improved, and now she is quite small.

She is so small that she falls into the pool of her own tears, which she first takes for the sea, and is afraid she will drown. She swims past a Mouse and tries to speak to it, but he doesn't answer until she starts talking in French. Unfortunately, Alice speaks the first sentence from her French lesson-book: *Ou est ma chatte?* (Where is my cat?) The Mouse is quite agitated, and tells her (in English) he doesn't like cats at all. Alice further offends the mouse by telling him how good her cat, Dinah, is at catching mice. When asked to change the subject, Alice begins to talk about a dog. The Mouse, having had enough talk of these animals, starts to swim away from Alice as fast as he can. Alice promises not to talk about cats or dogs, and the Mouse returns and tells her that he will explain why he hates cats and dogs when they get to the shore. Alice swims toward the shore, and she is followed by many animals and birds that had also fallen into the pool of tears.



Chapter 3: A Caucus-Race and a Long Tale

The wet animals, birds, and Alice all gather on the bank and try to figure out how to get dry. Alice chats comfortably with the company and gets into an argument with one of the birds. Finally, the Mouse announces that he will make everyone dry by telling them the driest story he knows, a history of William the Conqueror. He proceeds to tell a long, boring tale, despite frequent interruptions.

The Duck and the Mouse have an argument over the meaning of the word "it," and the Eaglet exclaims, "Speak English!...I don't know the meaning of half those long words, and I don't believe you do either!" Chapter 3, pg. 14

Topic Tracking: Meaning 2

No one is getting any drier, and so the Dodo proposes that instead they ought to have a caucus race. The Dodo arranges everyone in a sort of circle, and everyone begins and ends running when they like. Eventually when everyone is dry, the Dodo calls out that the race is over. When asked who won, the Dodo thinks very hard before deciding that everyone has won and therefore must have a prize, to be awarded by Alice. Alice has just enough candies in her pocket for everyone, except herself. She is awarded a thimble that she had in her pocket. She finds the whole thing quite absurd but is careful not to laugh and offend anyone.

Alice reminds the Mouse that he had promised to tell her the reason he hates cats and dogs. The Mouse replies, with one of the many, many puns of this book, that his tale is long and sad. He relates his history, and Alice pictures it in the shape of a tail. The Mouse understands he is telling a *tale*, and not a *tail*, so when he resentfully tells Alice that he had *not* been telling the tale in the way she imagined and Alice thinks he's talking about a *knot* in his tail, he accuses her of speaking utter nonsense.

The Mouse stalks off in anger, and Alice wishes that Dinah were there to fetch it back. Alice's stories of Dinah's bird- and mouse-catching skills are about as popular with the rest of the company as they had been with the Mouse, so she soon finds herself alone. Out of loneliness, she begins to cry.



Chapter 4: The Rabbit Sends in Little Bill

The White Rabbit, searching for his gloves and fan, appears. Alice tries to find them for him, but she sees that everything has changed since she fell into the pool. The hall, the glass table, and the little door are nowhere to be seen. The White Rabbit sees Alice and mistakes her for his maid, Mary Ann. He scolds "Mary Ann" for being in these parts and sends her home to fetch new gloves and a fan. Alice is so frightened by his orders that she runs off without telling him who she really is.

Topic Tracking: Identity 2

Luckily, she finds a house whose door reads W. RABBIT, and she hurries in to find the Rabbit's things. Alice imagines what it would be like if Dinah ordered her about in this way and makes up a conversation with her cat. In the Rabbit's house, she finds a fan and some gloves, and also a little bottle. Even though it doesn't say DRINK ME, Alice drinks the liquid; by now she has caught on that whenever she eats or drinks anything, something interesting happens. She is hoping to grow large again, since she is still quite tiny from fanning herself in the hall of doors. Alice gets what she wishes for--she grows so big she can scarcely fit inside the Rabbit's house, and she keeps on growing. Fortunately for Alice, she stops growing before she gets hurt, but she's very uncomfortable.

In her awkward position, squashed up inside the house of a Rabbit who orders her about, Alice can't help but think how much nicer it is to be at home, where normal things happen. She realizes that she has had some amazing adventures and that she should probably write them down when she grows up. She worries that since she's grown up as large as she possibly can, she'll never grow any older and will forever have to be learning school lessons.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 4

After a while Alice hears a voice outside calling for Mary Ann. The Rabbit comes into his house and runs up the stairs. The Rabbit cannot enter the room Alice is in because she completely blocks the door. He decides to go in the window, but Alice swipes her hand outside. The Rabbit is frightened and decides this is not going to work. So he calls for Pat and asks Pat to tell him what is preventing him from getting in the window. Pat (evidently the gardener) takes a look and tells the Rabbit it is clearly a very large arm. The Rabbit wants to get rid of this inconvenient addition to his house, and Alice wants to get out of the house altogether.

Pat calls for Bill, a lizard whom the Rabbit orders to go down the chimney. Alice's foot is already stuck partway up the chimney, so she gives a kick when she hears Bill scrambling down. Bill flies out onto the ground. The Rabbit announces that the only thing left to do is to burn the house down. Alice threatens that if he does, she will set Dinah on him. So the burning plan is abandoned.



Soon the creatures outside start throwing pebbles in the window at her. These pebbles happen to turn into little cakes after they fall on the floor, and Alice eats one. She shrinks in size, runs out of the house, and escapes a group of animals who want to attack her.

At this point, Alice forms a plan. First, she must return to her proper size (as she is once again very tiny), and then she must find her way into the beautiful garden. The only thing wrong with this plan is that Alice has absolutely no idea how to accomplish either part of it.

Alice hears a bark overhead and looks up to see an enormous puppy peering down at her and trying to touch her. Alice tries to comfort the dog, but she is terrified that it might be hungry and will eat her up. She throws a little stick and the puppy plays with it; afraid of being trampled, Alice scurries off as far and as fast as she can.

Alice fans herself and laments that she is not the right size to play with and to teach the dog. Realizing that she really must get larger, she decides she needs to figure out what to eat or drink to bring about a change in size. Nothing presents itself, but Alice notices a large mushroom that is about her height. She checks underneath, around, and behind it, but sees nothing. She stretches up to look on top and finds herself staring into the eyes of a large blue caterpillar. This caterpillar takes no notice of Alice at all, but continues sitting on the mushroom and smoking a long hookah.



Chapter 5: Advice from a Caterpillar

Alice and the Caterpillar look at each other for a long time until finally the Caterpillar sleepily demands to know who Alice is. Shyly, Alice responds that, though she knows who she was when she got up in the morning, she is pretty sure she's been changed a few times since then. The Caterpillar orders her to explain herself and what she means by such a remark. Alice answers, "I can't explain *myself*, I'm afraid, Sir...because I'm not myself you see." Chapter 5, pg. 28 This does not make the issue any clearer to the Caterpillar, who doesn't think that changing size again and again would be confusing. Alice reminds the Caterpillar that it will be strange when he changes to a chrysalis and then into a butterfly, but the Caterpillar disagrees. Alice counters that such changes would seem strange to her. Again, the Caterpillar demands, "Who are *you*?"

Topic Tracking: Identity 3

Annoyed at being back at the beginning of a disagreeable conversation, Alice tells the Caterpillar that he should tell her who *he* is first. The Caterpillar gives a short "Why?" as a reply, and this sends Alice away in anger. The Caterpillar calls her back to tell her something important, which he prefaces by advising Alice that she should keep her temper. After some time and some more puffs on his hookah, the Caterpillar continues by asking Alice if she really thinks she's changed. Alice insists that she has. She knows this because she can't remember things the way she used to and because she changes size so frequently. When questioned what things she cannot remember correctly, Alice says that she's recited children's rhymes all wrong.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 5

The Caterpillar suggests that Alice recite *You are old, Father William*. Thus Alice begins to recite what turns out to be nonsense. The most famous stanzas of this poem are:

*"You are old, Father William," the young man said,
'And your hair has become very white;
And yet you incessantly stand on your head--
Do you think, at your age, it is right?'
"In my youth," said his father, 'I took to the law,
And argued each case with my wife;
And the muscular strength which it gave to my jaw,
Has lasted the rest of my life."
"I have answered three question, and that is enough,'
Said his father, 'Don't give yourself airs!
Do you think I can listen all day to such stuff?
Be off, or I'll kick you down-stairs!"* Chapter 5, pp. 29-32, stanzas 1, 6 and 8

Topic Tracking: Meaning 3



When Alice finishes, the Caterpillar comments that her recitation is not right. Alice concedes that it is not quite right, as some of the words are changed from normal. The Caterpillar retorts that her version is wrong from beginning to end, and then he asks Alice what size she would like to be. Alice says she doesn't mind what height she is exactly, but she doesn't like changing so often, as the Caterpillar would know. The Caterpillar says that he doesn't know, and Alice begins to lose her temper again.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 6

She tells the Caterpillar that she'd like to be a little larger and offends him by telling him that three inches (his own height) is an awful height to be. Soon after, the Caterpillar decides to take his leave of Alice and gets down off of the mushroom and crawls away. As he goes, he comments that one side of the mushroom will make Alice taller and the other side will make her smaller.

Alice has a hard time figuring out what the sides of a round mushroom would be, but finally she broke off a bit of the edge with each hand. She nibbles one handful and suddenly feels her chin hit her foot. Alarmed, she quickly eats from the other handful as best as she can, what with her chin up against her foot. Her head shoots up, but soon she realizes that she can no longer see her own shoulders below the treetops that surround her neck. She realizes she can get a better idea of what's going on by moving her neck like a snake and looking around.

She hears a hiss from a Pigeon who fears Alice because she appears to be a serpent. Despite Alice's protests, the Pigeon continues to address her as a snake and wails "...those serpents! There's no pleasing them!" Chapter 5, pg. 34

Alice tries to tell the bird that she is not a serpent, but a little girl, but even Alice herself is not sure if she *is* still a little girl after having undergone so many changes in one day. Alice finally leaves the Pigeon after telling her she doesn't want to eat the bird's raw eggs. She remembers the two pieces of the mushroom and nibbles at them until she finally achieves her usual height.

Topic Tracking: Identity 4

At first, being normal size seems strange, but Alice is glad to have accomplished the first part of her plan. Now she only needs to get into the garden. While wondering how to do this, Alice comes upon a little house about four feet high. Since Alice sees that she is far too large to meet anyone living in such a house, she nibbles on the right-hand bit of mushroom until she is nine inches tall.



Chapter 6: Pig and Pepper

While Alice is deciding whether to go into the house, she sees a footman (or rather, a fish dressed in the clothes of a footman) run out of the woods and up to the house to knock on the door. Another footman (this one apparently a frog) opens the door. The Fish-Footman pulls out a huge letter and announces that it is an invitation to the Duchess from the Queen to play croquet. The Frog-Footman takes the letter and the two footmen bow to each other, which tangles together the curls of their powdered wigs. Alice has to run away for a little while to keep them from hearing her laughter at this.

She returns and knocks on the door, which is now closed again. The Frog-Footman, sitting outside near the door, tells her that it's useless to knock because he is on the same side of the door as she is, and because everyone inside is making so much noise they'll never hear her. Alice does indeed hear constant howling and sneezing and the crashing of various kitchen objects. She asks the Frog-Footman how she can get in. The Footman is not helpful and decides that he will just sit outside until the next day. Just then the door opens and a large plate comes flying out of the house. The Footman ignores it, and Alice asks again how she might get in. The Footman tells her that the real question is whether she should get in at all. Alice knows this is right, but she is getting increasingly irritated by the way the creatures around her argue. The Footman concludes that he'll just sit outside for days.

Alice decides that further conversation with the Footman is useless, and she opens the door and goes in. She finds herself in a smoke-filled kitchen and begins sneezing because the air is full of pepper. In the kitchen are the Duchess, who is nursing a baby, and the Cook, who is stirring a very peppery soup, and a grinning cat. Alice tells the Duchess that she doesn't know any other cats who smile from ear to ear. The Duchess informs her that this is a Cheshire Cat and adds that Alice doesn't know much. Suddenly the cook begins hurling everything in the kitchen at the Duchess and the baby.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 7

Worried that the baby will be killed, Alice begs the cook to mind what she's doing. This gives the Duchess the opportunity to offer one of her many morals and maxims: "If everybody minded their own business...the world would go around a great deal faster than it does." Chapter 6, pg. 39 Alice is sure this would not be a good thing, so she takes the opportunity to show off some of her knowledge by explaining the problems of a fast-spinning world to the Duchess. The Duchess doesn't want to hear any of this, and after threatening to chop off Alice's head, she starts singing to her baby and shaking him violently. She throws the baby at Alice and tells the girl that she can nurse the baby if she likes, since the Duchess needs to get ready to play croquet with the Queen.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 8

Alice decides that she better take the baby away with her before the Duchess and the Cook kill it. The baby grunts at her, and Alice looks closely to see what the matter is. His



nose is turning up and his eyes are getting quite small. Finally it completely turns into a pig, and Alice feels a little stupid carrying around a pig as if she's nursing it, so she lets it run off into the woods. She concludes, "If it had grown up...it would have made a dreadfully ugly child; but it makes rather a handsome pig, I think." Chapter 6, pg. 41

Suddenly Alice sees the Cheshire Cat sitting in a tree. The Cat grins at her, so Alice tentatively asks him where she should go next. When the Cat replies that that depends on where Alice wants to go. She says that she doesn't care where she goes, as long as it's somewhere. The Cat assures her that she's bound to get somewhere if she walks long enough in any direction.

Alice tries another tactic; she inquires what kind of people live in these parts. The Cat points in one direction and says that Mad Hatter lives there. In the other direction lives the March Hare. Both are raving mad, the Cat explains. Alice insists that she doesn't want to be around mad people, but the Cat insists "we're all mad here" and that even Alice is mad, or she wouldn't have come. Chapter 6, pg. 41

Topic Tracking: Identity 5

The Cat goes on to ask if Alice will be playing croquet with the Queen; if so, she'll see him there. The Cat promptly vanishes, and then reappears so he can ask what became of the baby. He is not surprised when Alice tells him the baby became a pig, and he vanishes again. Alice tries to decide whether it would be better to visit the Mad Hatter or the March Hare. She figures that the March Hare might not be completely mad since the month is May and not March. The Cat reappears again to ask whether Alice had said "pig" or "fig". Alice expresses her annoyance at the cat's tendency to disappear and reappear so suddenly. So this time the Cat vanishes slowly, beginning with his tail and ending with his grin, which lingers for a while after the rest of it has disappeared.

Alice goes along her way until she comes to the house of the March Hare. She can tell it's his because the house itself looks like a rabbit's head. She sees that she's too small for this house, so she nibbles on the left-hand bit of mushroom until she is two feet tall. Then she walks up to the house with trepidation.



Chapter 7: A Mad Tea-Party

Outside the house, the March Hare and the Mad Hatter are having tea while the Dormouse sleeps between them. Alice approaches, but the others yell that there is no room, even though they are sitting at a very large table. Indignantly claiming there is plenty of room, Alice seats herself at the table. Alice finds the Mad Hatter and the March Hare to be very rude, but they remind her that it was rude to join them without being invited.

The Hatter asks Alice a riddle, "Why is a raven like a writing desk?" Chapter 7, pg. 44 Alice says she thinks she can guess, which leads to some confusion on the Hatter's part. The Hatter insists Alice should say what she means. Alice answers that she means what she says, and that's the same thing. The Hatter disagrees because, for example, seeing what one eats is not the same thing as eating what one sees.

Topic Tracking: Meaning 4

The Hatter asks what day of the month it is, and when he finds out that his watch is two days slow he angrily reminds the March Hare that he didn't think the Hare's idea of using butter to fix it was a good one. Alice gets a good look at the watch and sees that it is a strange one. It tells the day of the month, but not the time. The Hatter tells her that his watch is perfectly normal, because neither his watch nor the watches Alice is used to tell what year it is. Alice is pretty sure this comment has no meaning whatsoever, even though she understands the individual words.

Topic Tracking: Meaning 5

When asked if she has guessed the riddle yet, Alice has to confess that she has no idea. The Hatter and the Hare both say they also have no idea, much to Alice's frustration. She says the other two are wasting time. The Hatter explains that it's best to keep on good terms with time; it turns out that he had a quarrel with Time when he took part in a concert for the Queen of Hearts. He had to sing "Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!/How I wonder what you're at." Chapter 7, pg. 47 The Queen hated his performance and had howled that he was murdering the time. Since then, it's always six o'clock for the Hatter--that is, it's always tea time.

The March Hare, who is getting sick of the conversation, suggests that Alice tell a story. Alice doesn't know any, so the Hatter and the Hare wake the Dormouse. So the Dormouse tells a story about three little sisters named Elsie, Lacie, and Tillie who lived at the bottom of a well and ate treacle.

Topic Tracking: Identity 6

The Hare speaks up to ask Alice if she'd like more tea. Irritated, Alice replies "I've had nothing yet...so I can't take more." To this the Hatter says, 'you mean you can't take less...it's very easy to take *more* than nothing.'" Chapter 7, pg. 48 Alice now wonders



why these girls lived at the bottom of a well. After some thought, the Dormouse pronounces that it was a treacle well. Alice objects that there is no such thing, and the Dormouse threatens to end his story if she doesn't stop interrupting. The Hatter interrupts when he decides he needs a clean cup; everybody must move down one place. Alice continues to argue over the details of the story the Dormouse is telling, but the Dormouse manages to confuse her into silence with a series of puns and strange expressions.

Finally, Alice becomes disgusted by the rudeness of her three companions and, swearing to herself that she will never return, she stalks away. She soon comes upon a tree with a door in it and decides without much thought to enter.

Inside, she finds the long hall with the glass table. Better prepared this time, Alice takes the golden key and unlocks the door to the garden. Then she nibbles at the mushroom until she is a foot tall and walks into the beautiful garden.



Chapter 8: The Queen's Croquet-Ground

Just inside the garden is a large rose tree covered with white blossoms. Three gardeners are hard at work painting the roses red. When the gardeners see Alice they bow low. Alice asks them why they are painting the roses. One of the gardeners speaks up; the tree should have been a red rose tree and not a white one. They are painting the roses to avoid angering the queen and having their heads cut off. Suddenly the gardeners spot the Queen across the garden and they throw themselves flat on the ground.

In the Queen's entourage, there are ten soldiers carrying clubs. Then there are ten children, decorated with hearts. Then there are guests, which include mostly kings and queens but also the White Rabbit. Then comes the Knave of Hearts and finally the King and Queen of Hearts appear. The soldiers, the children, and the kings and queens are all oblong and flat.

When the procession reaches Alice, everyone stops and looks at her until the Queen demands to know who she is. Alice tells the Queen her name and reassures herself that she need not be intimidated, since the company is nothing but a pack of playing cards. Pointing at the gardeners on the ground, the Queen asks Alice who they are. When Alice informs the Queen that she wouldn't know because it's not her affair, she sends the Queen into a rage. The Queen screams "'Off with her head!'" Chapter 8, pg. 54 But Alice shuts her up by telling her firmly that this is nonsense.

Topic Tracking: Identity 7

The King of Hearts tries to calm his wife, but, still furious, the Queen turns her attack back toward the three face-down cards, whom she forces to rise. She demands to know what they were doing, but before they can answer, she orders their beheading. Alice hides the cards to save them from this fate, so when the Queen asks her soldiers if the offending cards' heads are off, the soldiers truthfully answer that the cards' heads are gone.

That settled, the Queen turns back to Alice and asks if she can play croquet. Alice says she can, so the whole company moves off toward the croquet ground. When Alice notices that the White Rabbit is beside her, she asks him where the Duchess is. It turns out that she has been sentenced to be beheaded for boxing the Queen's ears. Alice finds this hilarious, but before she can find out more, the croquet game begins. Never has Alice seen such a bizarre set-up for croquet: the grounds are strange, the balls are live hedgehogs, and the mallets are live flamingoes. Some of the cards bend over to serve as wickets.

This version of croquet turns out to be extraordinarily difficult, since the hedgehogs refuse to stay curled in ball form and the flamingoes, who seem utterly confused by the whole game, are even less easily managed than the hedgehogs. To make matters even more confusing for Alice, everyone plays at once without waiting for his or her turn.



Soon the Queen becomes frustrated and furious and issues almost constant orders for somebody's head to be chopped off. This begins to make Alice rather uneasy so she decides it would probably be best to sneak away before the Queen gets angry with her.

While looking for a way to escape, Alice sees something strange in the air. It is an appearance that gradually turns into the Cheshire Cat's grin, which asks how Alice is doing. Finally the whole head of the cat appears and Alice complains that she doesn't think that this game has any rules--and if it does, then no one is abiding by them fairly. She goes on to tell the Cat that she doesn't like the Queen a bit, but when she sees the Queen hovering nearby, she pretends to be praising her.

The King soon sidles up and asks her who this large hovering cat's head might be. He doesn't like the look of it and declares it should be removed. The Queen tries to settle this the way she settles everything and orders that the Cat be beheaded. Alice turns back to the game for a while but remains confused and frustrated. Turning back toward the Cheshire cat, she finds a crowd around it arguing over whether or not a head *can* be cut off if there is no body to begin with. It falls to Alice to settle the dispute, and she decides that, since it is the Duchess' cat, the Duchess would be the one to ask. Before the Duchess can be fetched from prison, the cat disappears entirely and the crowd, with nothing better to do, returns to the croquet game.



Chapter 9: The Mock Turtle's Story

The Duchess is very happy to see Alice, and they walk together arm in arm, though Alice becomes lost in thought until the Duchess tries to explain to her the moral of Alice's silence.

"Perhaps it hasn't one," Alice ventured to remark.

'Tut, tut, child!' said the Duchess. 'Everything's got a moral, if only you can find it.'

Chapter 9, pg. 59

The Duchess continues to find morals in everything Alice says. Her morals are often based on puns and don't actually make much sense, despite her advice to "[t]ake care of the sense, and the sounds will take care of themselves." Chapter 9, pg. 60

Topic Tracking: Meaning 6

She stops chattering only when the Queen appears and threatens to cut off her head if she doesn't leave. Alice, quite frightened, goes back to the croquet game with the Queen and the Queen goes back to threatening to cut off the heads of everyone who is playing. The Queen does take a break from her death sentences to ask Alice if she's gotten around to meeting the Mock Turtle, which is, of course the thing that Mock Turtle Soup is made from. Since Alice has no idea what a Mock Turtle is, the Queen ushers her off to meet him, and in his wife's absence the King pardons everyone.

When they come to a sleeping Gryphon, the Queen wakes him up and commands him to take Alice to hear the Mock Turtle tell his history so Alice may learn what a Mock Turtle is. When the Queen leaves to attend to her executions, the Gryphon, who up to this point makes Alice uneasy, starts to chuckle. He is wholly amused by the Queen's behavior, for he knows that she never actually has anyone put to death.

Topic Tracking: Identity 8

The Gryphon then leads Alice to the Mock Turtle, who is busy making pitiful sighing noises. Alice asks the Gryphon why the Mock Turtle is so sad, but the Gryphon reveals that the Mock Turtle has no sorrow--it's all in his head. In his Cockney accent, the Gryphon introduces Alice to the Mock Turtle and asks him to tell his history.

The Mock Turtle agrees to tell his story, and after a long pause he begins by explaining that once he had been a real turtle. Then he dissolves into a fit of sobbing. Alice fears that this is the whole story, but once the Mock Turtle has composed himself a bit, he goes on to say that he had gone to school in the sea and was taught by an old Turtle whom everyone called Tortoise. Alice wants to know why the teacher was called Tortoise if he wasn't one, and annoyed, the Mock Turtle tells her, "We called him Tortoise because he taught us." Chapter 9, pg. 63 Both the Mock Turtle and the Gryphon are astonished at Alice's ignorance and they make her feel quite ashamed for asking such a stupid question.



Topic Tracking: Knowledge 9

The Mock Turtle claims that he received the finest of educations. Alice, who has been to day school, is not particularly impressed, but when she and the Mock Turtle compare the curricula of their schools, the Mock Turtle decides that his was superior. He had taken courses in "Reeling and Writhing" as well as arithmetic courses--"Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision." Chapter 9, pg. 65

Never having heard of such subjects, Alice asks the Mock Turtle to explain what uglification is. The Gryphon again is astounded by Alice's lack of education and tells Alice that uglification is obviously the opposite of beautification. The Mock Turtle tells Alice a bit more about his course of studies. It turns out that the Gryphon had quite a different education; he learned from an old crab who was a master in classical studies--the crab taught "Laughing and Grief."

Alice asks the Mock Turtle how long his school-day was. The Mock Turtle tells her that he went to school for ten hours on the first day, nine on the second, and so on. This seems most strange to Alice, but the Gryphon reveals to her that this is why studies are called lessons--because they lessen from day to day. Alice is very curious about this system, but the Gryphon changes the subject but suggesting they talk about school games.



Chapter 10: The Lobster Quadrille

After choking back sobs, the Mock Turtle tells Alice that he assumes that she has no idea what a Lobster Quadrille is. With the Gryphon's help, he goes about explaining it to her. The Mock Turtle and the Gryphon try to demonstrate the dance for Alice while the Mock Turtle sings the song, which includes such lyrics as

*"Will you walk a little faster?" said a whiting to a snail,
'There's a porpoise close behind us and he's treading on my tail.
See how eagerly the lobsters and the turtles all advance!
They are waiting on the shingle--will you come and join the dance?
Will you, won't you, will you, won't you, will you join the dance?"* Chapter 10, pp. 67-8

When the dance is over, Alice is quite relieved not to have to watch it any longer. She comments that she enjoyed the song about the whiting and narrowly avoids blurting out that she has eaten whittings often. The others are pleased that she seems to know quite a bit about whiting, and the Gryphon asks her if she knows the reason for the name of this particular fish. Alice doesn't know, so the Gryphon reveals to her that whiting is for boots and shoes. On land, he says, shoes are shined with blacking, and in the sea, they're shined with whiting.

And the Gryphon and the Mock Turtle are back to their punning again. Alice further learns that under the sea, shoes are made of "Soles and eels" and that when traveling in the sea one must always keep a porpoise along, in case someone asks with what porpoise one is traveling. Alice is pretty sure the Mock Turtle means "purpose" and not "porpoise," but the Mock Turtle defensively insists that he means what he says.

Topic Tracking: Meaning 7

The Gryphon tells Alice that now she should tell them her adventures, but Alice says that she could tell what has happened today, but not what happened before, since she had been a different person then. The Mock Turtle wants to know about the change Alice has gone through, but the Gryphon is much more interested in Alice's adventures and tells her to start with those instead.

Topic Tracking: Identity 9

Alice begins telling them the events of the day, from when she first saw the White Rabbit to trying to recite "You are old, Father William" to the Caterpillar. The Gryphon and the Mock Turtle agree that this is very strange, and for that matter so are all of her adventures. To test Alice's strange inability to recite properly, the Gryphon asks her to recite "'Tis the voice of the sluggard."

Alice, a bit annoyed that everyone keeps ordering her around and telling her to repeat her lessons, nevertheless begins to recite. Her head, however, is so full of the words of the Lobster Quadrille that the poem comes out as the story of a lobster:



*"'Tis the voice of the Lobster: I heard him declare
'You have baked me to brown, I must sugar my hair.'"* Chapter 10, pg. 70

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 10

When Alice finishes the first verse, the Gryphon tells her that Alice's poem is quite different from what he had learned as a child. The Mock Turtle never even knew the original, but he agrees that what Alice recited was "uncommon nonsense." Chapter 10, pg. 70 Alice wonders if anything will ever happen normally again. The Mock Turtle asks Alice to explain her version of the poem, but the Gryphon knows that she can't. The Mock Turtle keeps asking questions, but Alice herself is so confused by what she recited that she can't come up with a very good explanation. At the Gryphon's urging, she goes on to the second verse.

The Mock Turtle is getting quite upset because he can't understand the meaning of what Alice recites. He says that if she's not going to explain as she recites then she may as well stop. Alice is only too glad to be finished. The Mock Turtle then sings another song, "Turtle Soup," in his sobbing way.

Topic Tracking: Meaning 8

After a few verses, a voice in the distance yells that the trial is beginning. The Gryphon grabs Alice's hand and starts running back to court, faster and farther until all Alice can hear of the Mock Turtle's song is the chorus, "'Soup of the evening, beautiful soup!'" Chapter 10, pg. 72



Chapter 11: Who Stole the Tarts?

At court, the King and Queen of Hearts are on their thrones, surrounded by a huge crowd of creatures and the whole pack of cards. The Knave is standing in chains in front of the King and Queen, and the White Rabbit, holding a trumpet and a scroll, is nearby. In the middle of the court, a large platter of tarts is on display. Alice has never been in a court of justice, but she had read about them, so she could easily identify the King as the judge by his white wig.

Topic Tracking: Identity 10

She is quite pleased with her knowledge about courts when she is able to pick out the jury, twelve animals and birds who are busy writing on their slates. In a whisper, Alice asks the Gryphon what they could be writing before the trial has even begun. The Gryphon informs her that the jurors are writing down their names, lest they forget them before the trial ends. Alice, in a voice a bit too loud for the court setting, says, "Stupid things!" This prompts the White Rabbit to call for silence in the court, while the jurors all make a note of Alice's remark on their slates.

Topic Tracking: Identity 11

Alice becomes annoyed by the squeakiness of one juror's pencil, so she sneaks up behind him and steals it (from Bill the Lizard, as it so happens). For the rest of the day, this hapless juror has to try to write with his finger.

The trial begins, and the White Rabbit reads the accusation, which sounds a lot like a nursery rhyme. The King then asks the jurors to come to a verdict. The Rabbit argues that a lot more of the trial should come before that, so the first witness, the Mad Hatter, is called to the stand. The Mad Hatter apologizes for bringing in his tea and bread, since he had not been finished with tea when he was summoned. The King wants to know when the Hatter began having his tea--there is some dispute among the Hatter, the Hare, and the Dormouse. The King next demands that the Hatter remove his hat. When the Hatter replies that the hat *isn't* his, the King pronounces it stolen, but the Hatter explains that the hat, like all his others, is for sale.

The King tells the Hatter to give his evidence and warns him that if he keeps looking so nervous, he'll be executed at once. This does little to calm the Hatter's nerves. Suddenly, Alice becomes aware that she is getting larger again. Her first thought is to leave before it becomes a problem, but she decides to stay as long as she can fit.

The Hatter still does not give his evidence, which causes the Queen to order that the list of the singers at the last concert be brought to the court. This makes the Hatter so nervous, he actually shakes out of his shoes. The King again calls for the evidence. The Hatter tries to explain what happened one day at tea, but the March Hare denies everything, and when asked what the Dormouse said, the Hatter can't remember. The penalty for failing to remember this is death.



At this point a guinea pig becomes rowdy and is suppressed. Since "suppressed" is not an easy word, Carroll explains it: "suppressed" means that some officers shoved the animal into a bag, closed it up, and sat on it. Alice is pleased to have learned what "suppressed" means, since she has read the word before without understanding it.

Topic Tracking: Knowledge 11

Frustrated, the King tells the Hatter that if he doesn't know anything more, he may stand down, or if he can't stand any lower, he may sit down. The Hatter runs off before he can be executed.

Next on the witness stand is the Duchess' Cook. She refuses to give her evidence, and the King seems ready to give up. The White Rabbit, however, reminds him that it is traditional practice at trials to get some information from each witness, so the King presses the issue. The Cook informs the court that tarts are made mostly of pepper. The Dormouse calls out from the back that tarts are made from treacle, and in the confusion created by suppressing the Dormouse and throwing him out, the Cook slips away. The White Rabbit calls the next witness, who is Alice herself, much to her surprise.



Chapter 12: Alice's Evidence

Alice, who has forgotten how large she has grown, comes forward in such a rush that she tips over the whole jury box. She apologizes, rights the box, and starts stuffing the jurymen back in. The King refuses to proceed until all jurors are in their proper places, so Alice turns one upside-down juror (poor Bill the Lizard again) the right way up, though she is so unimpressed with the abilities of the jurors that she doesn't think there is much significance in whether they're heads or tails up.

Topic Tracking: Meaning 9

And so the trial continues. The King asks Alice what she knows about the matter at hand. When Alice says she doesn't know anything, the King advises the jurors to make a note of this important statement. The White Rabbit corrects the King and tells the jury that his majesty meant to say *unimportant*. The King mutters both words to himself as if he can't tell the difference. He then proclaims a rule from a book he is holding; rule forty-two states that all people who are more than a mile tall must leave the court.

Alice refuses to leave on the grounds that she is not a mile high, and also because she says the king just made that rule up to get her to leave. The King claims that the mile-high height limit is the oldest rule in the book, but Alice boldly retorts that the oldest rule would be rule number one. This is too much for the King, and he tells the jury to consider their verdict.

The Rabbit again reminds the King that there is evidence still waiting to be presented, most notably a letter that has just been placed in front of him. The Rabbit decides that the Knave wrote the letter to somebody, but there is no address and the letter turns out to be a poem. Strangest of all, the poem appears not to be in the Knave's handwriting at all. The Knave seizes this moment to deny writing the poem and to point out that no signature appears on the poem. The King decides that only a dishonest man doesn't sign his name and therefore the Knave is proven guilty. Alice interjects that there is absolutely no proof and that no one even knows what the poem is about.

The Rabbit, in his function as herald, is called upon to read the poem. He doesn't know where to begin, so he asks the King who advises, "Begin at the beginning...and go on till you come to the end: then stop." Chapter 12, pg. 81 So the Rabbit reads the poem, which the King finds to be a deciding piece of evidence.

Now by this time, Alice has grown so large that she is not afraid of anyone in the court, so she interrupts the king and challenges the court to explain the meaning of the poem. Alice herself doesn't believe there is "an atom of meaning in it." Chapter 12, pg. 82

Topic Tracking: Meaning 10

The King sees a connection between the poem and the Knave: there is a line in the poem about not being able to swim, and the Knave, being made of cardboard, of course



cannot swim. The King goes on with his incriminating interpretation of the poem. He wonders about a line in which a woman has fits. He assures the Queen that she never has fits, and tells her that the words don't fit her. His majesty is quite annoyed when he has to explain to the court that he had made a witty pun. Once again, the King asks for a verdict.

The Queen contests this judicial procedure by pronouncing, "Sentence first--verdict afterwards." Chapter 12, pg. 83 Outraged by this, Alice tells the Queen that it's nonsense to have the sentence first. Then, when ordered to hold her tongue, Alice refuses. This of course prompts the Queen to order Alice's execution. But Alice is not at all frightened, and she tells her majesty and the court, "You're nothing but a pack of cards!" Chapter 12, pg. 83

This brings the whole pack flying at her. Alice screams and tries to push them away until she realizes that she is lying with her head in her sister's lap. Once fully awake, Alice tells her sister about all of the adventures in her dream. Her sister sends Alice back to the house before it gets too late, but she remains on the bank and thinks about all of Alice's wonderful adventures. Alice's sister begins to daydream about Alice and about the creatures in Alice's dream. She thinks she hears the White Rabbit as he hurries past and the Mouse as he splashes around; she believes she hears the rattle of cups at the mad tea-party, the death-sentences of the Queen, the squeals of the pig-baby, the shrieks of the Gryphon, and so on. Alice's sister almost believes that she is in Wonderland herself, but she knows that the sounds she hears are really sheep-bells, a shepherd boy, and the noises of the farm yard. Finally, she pictures Alice as an adult who will still have the heart of a child and will tell her own children strange and wonderful tales like the dream of her adventures underground in Wonderland.