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STUDY GUIDE

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

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Dear Principal, Teacher and Parent:

Thank you for allowing your children the opportunity to experience live theatre. Studies consistently show that students exposed to the Arts score higher than the median, demonstrate higher self esteem and confidence and have a higher awareness of other cultures and races.

The theatre is a collaborative process, which the audience is a huge part. In addition to the study guide prepared for the specific show you will see, we offer you the following general ACTivities to share with your students before, during and after the performance.

Pre-performance ACTivities:

The following vocabulary may be helpful to review with your class:

Drama Terms:

Play: a presentation (or show) that is acted out with actors who use words and movements to play the different characters to tell a story for an audience.

Moral: the message or meaning of the play, how the characters' actions were good or bad.

Script: the text (or words) of a story that the actors and director use.

Act: a large section of the script that contains several scenes.

Scene: a small section of a play that usually takes place in one location and time.

Setting: where the play takes place, this may be one or several locations.

Time: when does the play take place, is it supposed to be today, perhaps the past or even the future.

Character: a person who is apart of the story in a play (or book, movie, etc.)

Acting: a way of playing as if you are another person (character) to tell a story.

Dialogue: the written sentences that two or more actors say to each other during a play.

Monologue: the written sentences that an actor says to them self or the audience during a play.

Fantasy: an imaginary world.

Realistic: something that seems like it could really happen in real life.

Theatre Parts:

Theatre: a building that includes a stage for the actors and seats for the audience.

Stage: the place where a play is presented, or acted out.

Backstage: where the actors wait until they come onto the stage.

Theatre People:

Director: the person who is in charge of the actors.

Actor: a person who plays a character in a play.

Audience: the people who watch a play.



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Show Terms:

Staging: the way the director has the actors move around on the stage.

Dance: movement that is choreographed (or planned) to work (or go) with a rhythm (or beat).

Lighting: the way that you are able to see the play with light. Many times the lighting will change color, how bright they are and when they turn on and off.

Set: the backdrop of the stage that lets you imagine where the play takes place.

Costume: the clothes that the actors wear to help you know what character they are playing.

Music: it can be just in the background (or playing softly), can be loud in between the scenes or sung along with by the actors.

Sound Effect: a special sound, like a train whistle or a bird, that has been recorded and played at a certain moment in the play.

Special Effect: any kind of exciting thing that happens during the show, like fog appearing on stage or a trap door that lets an actor appear magically from “no where.”

Applause: the way an audience lets the actors know they did a good job by clapping at the end of the show.

Performance ACTIVITIES:

The audience is a very important part of a great performance. You can make the play better by being a good listener and by using your imagination. What else do you think it takes to be a good audience member? Here are some tips that will help make all performances better for everyone:

- When you arrive at the theatre, please stay on your bus until a Birmingham Children's Theatre representative greets you.
- When you enter the lobby, please wait to be seated and remain in a single-file line.
- Use the handrails when going up and down the stairs in the theatre.
- Please, no screaming when the lights go down.
- During the performance, please be safe and stay seated.
- The actors love to hear laughter when they do or say something funny, but please, no talking or whispering during the performance unless you are helping the actors.
- Remember... no gum, eating or drinking in the theatre.
- No cameras, laser pointers or recording devices may be used during a performance.
- Please turn off all cell phones, iPods, Blackberries, beepers, etc. (this goes for adults too!)
- Actors love to hear applause! Show your appreciation by clapping at the end of the play.
- After the performance is over, please remain seated until your school is dismissed.



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Post-performance ACTivities

Suggested questions to engage your students:

What did you learn from the play?

Which character(s) did you think was (were) good? Which was (were) bad? Did that change from the beginning to the end of the play?

Why do you think the set looked like it did?

How did the costume help the actor play their character?

Did the music and sound create a certain location?

What seemed the most real to you about the play and why?

How did the actors show you the characters' feelings?

It is our goal to provide a magical and educational theatre experience that is directly applicable to your students and classroom. Please let me know if you have suggestions or comments in helping us achieve this. I may be reached at 205-458-8182 or education@bct123.org.

Now, let the show begin!

Dane Peterson

Director of Education and Production

Birmingham Children's Theatre

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About the Play: Alice lands in a strange new world and quickly learns that nothing is as it seems. Follow Alice as she attends mad tea parties, talks with flowers, and chases the elusive white rabbit through all of Wonderland. With each new character she meets, Alice discovers a new adventure, a new problem, and a new opportunity to practice her manners and patience. All the while, Alice must be sure to keep a level head or she may just lose it!

Characters:

Alice
Catepillar
Cheshire Cat
Gryphon
White Knight
King
Lory
Daisy
Duchess
Mock Turtle
Dormouse
Mouse
Tiger Lily
Tweedledum
Mad Hatter
Humpty Dumpty
Knave
Painter
White Rabbit
Dodo
Royal Painter
Duck
Rose
Cook
Tweedledee
March Hare
Queen





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***Classroom ACTivities* : GRADE 2**

POST PERFORMANCE ACTivity:

ELA Standard 3: Exhibit vocabulary skills, including explaining simple common antonyms and synonyms and using descriptive words.

Theatre Standard 4: Describe different elements in a dramatization.

Describing character traits, including appearance, actions, and choices. Using appropriate theatre vocabulary.

Alice in Wonderland, based on the works of Lewis Carroll, tells the story of seven-year-old Alice who falls down a rabbit hole and lands in a bizarre wonderland populated by odd people and other strange creatures.

PROCEDURES:

Discuss the meaning of the word antonym. What are some antonyms that you use everyday? Then discuss the meaning of the word synonym. What are some synonyms that you use everyday?

Have students discuss the character Alice that they saw portrayed in the production. Use some antonyms to describe Alice and her adventures. What are some synonyms that you might use to describe her trip to wonderland?

What were some important choices that Alice made in his play? How did the choices she made change the way the story turned out? How might the story have changed if Alice had made different choices?

Write a descriptive paragraph about the way that Alice looked in the play you saw. Be sure to use the antonyms and synonyms from the earlier discussion.

Share your paragraph with the class.

Would you describe Alice as “a smart little girl?” Why or why not? Give specific reasons based on the play you saw.

EXTENSION:

Have the students write narrative paragraphs about their experience attending the production.



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***Classroom ACTivities* : GRADE 3**

POST PERFORMANCE ACTivity:

ELA Standard 7: Compare fictional characters and events to real-life experiences.

Theatre Standard 8: Describe effects that sounds, movements, and visual images have on an audience.

Alice in Wonderland, based on the works of Lewis Carroll, tells the story of seven-year-old Alice who falls down a rabbit hole and lands in a bizarre wonderland populated by odd people and other strange creatures.

PROCEDURES:

How are Alice's experiences realistic? What about Alice's adventures are like your daily life? What are some things that happen to Alice that are different from reality? Which ones would you like to see become real? Which ones are scary or bother you?

Think about changing your size. What are some benefits of being small? What are some disadvantages? Would you like to be very big? Why? What would be better if you were big? Can you think of some problems your large size might create for you? What about your large size would be a problem for other people?

How did the production you saw create the changes in size? Did sounds play a part in what you experienced as an audience member? How and why? Describe the way the production looked and how that helped create your view of reality. How did the stage change as Alice changed size?

If you were making a production of this play, what would you do to give the impression of size changes in Alice and her world?

EXTENSION:

Have the students illustrate one of the fanciful moments from the production—falling into wonderland, or the Tea Party, for instance. Then have the students create an illustration for the same moment, but make a completely realistic version of it.



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Classroom ACTivities : GRADE 4
POST PERFORMANCE ACTivity:

Theatre Standard 5: Identify thoughts and feelings evoked by a performance

ELA Standard 7: Compare story elements and the experiences and feelings of literary characters to students' lives

Alice in Wonderland, based on the works of Lewis Carroll, tells the story of seven-year-old Alice who falls down a rabbit hole and lands in a bizarre wonderland populated by odd people and other strange creatures.

PROCEDURES:

Describe some of the feelings that Alice experienced in Wonderland. Think about the different experiences that she had and how each experience created different emotions for her. Try to focus **ONLY** on Alice's responses and feelings toward her experiences as you discuss this.

Have you had similar experiences to those of Alice in her Wonderland? How and when? Were your feelings similar to those of Alice? Did you respond to the experience in ways that were similar to Alice's response? How so or why not?

Now think about the production that you saw. What feelings were created for you by the production? What elements of the production helped to create those feelings? How did the elements work together to make you feel a particular way? Are your responses to the production similar to or different from other audience members? Do you think your personal experiences have an effect on the way that you respond to this production?

What did this production make you think of? OR What questions did this production cause you to want or need to ask? Were there some elements that puzzled or confused you? Was all of the story-telling clear?

What question would you like to ask a cast member? What comment would you make about the overall production?

EXTENSION:

Write a note to a cast member of the production and share your comment and feelings about the production. Then ask that cast member your question in your personal note.



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Classroom ACTivities : GRADE 5

POST PERFORMANCE ACTivity:

Visual Arts Standard 7: Associate a particular artistic style with an individual artist

ELA Standard 7, bullet 7: Compose expository texts...; Composing descriptive texts using an introductory paragraph, sensory details, vivid language, and a conclusion

Alice in Wonderland, based on the works of Lewis Carroll, tells the story of seven-year-old Alice who falls down a rabbit hole and lands in a bizarre wonderland populated by odd people and other strange creatures.

PROCEDURES:

Surrealism is a 20th-century literary and artistic movement that attempts to express the workings of the subconscious and is characterized by fantastic imagery and incongruous juxtaposition of subject matter. You can learn more about this movement at <http://www.surrealism.org/>.

Salvador Dali, the Spanish artist, was one of the most famous surrealist artists. You can find images of Dali's works at <http://virtualdali.com/>. There are chronological galleries of his work. Be careful when choosing an image to display as all images are not appropriate for all age students.

What elements in Dali's paintings appear dreamlike? What parts appear to be fanciful or fantastic? What parts of the image appear to not fit together? Would you describe any of the aspects of the visual works scary or creepy? If so, which elements? "Incongruous" means "out of place" or "inconsistent." What do you suppose the artist is trying to say with the use of incongruous parts in his image?

Think about the production of **Alice in Wonderland** that you saw. Are there some elements that you might describe as surreal? What are they? Why would they appear surreal? How did these elements combine to help create the play that you saw? Are there parts that seem like dreams? Why do you suppose a writer included those in the play?

Write a descriptive essay about the production that you saw. Be careful to describe the impression that the production made on you as you watched it. Include details from the discussion that you had and describe how the surreal elements made you feel.

EXTENSION:

Dali created illustrations for **Alice in Wonderland**. Find these illustrations online and discuss the surreal aspects of his illustrations. Then create your own illustration—drawing, watercolor, or collage—of one of the episodes in the play that you saw. Share your illustration with the class and describe your artistic process.



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Classroom ACTivities : GRADE 6

POST PERFORMANCE ACTivity:

ELA Standard 6: Identify the author's purpose as entertainment, information, or persuasion in selected texts

Visual Arts Standard 1: Create works of art utilizing a variety of traditional and nontraditional media and techniques

Alice in Wonderland, based on the works of Lewis Carroll, tells the story of seven-year-old Alice who falls down a rabbit hole and lands in a bizarre wonderland populated by odd people and other strange creatures.

PROCEDURES:

What are some animals that you can name? What is one characteristic of each of those animals?

Are some slow? Are some fast? What kinds of characteristics do they have?

There are many kinds of animals in Wonderland. Some of them are common animals and some are not at all common. What were some of the animals characters that you remember from the production you saw? Can you identify a characteristic of each animal? How was each dressed? If you need some refreshing, here are some drawings from the original text: <http://www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/teniel/alice/gallery1.html>.

How do these animals normally act? In Wonderland, these animals have human qualities. What human qualities does each of the animals possess? Assigning human qualities to animals is called **personification**. This is a very common literary device. What do you think the author wanted to say with his animal creatures in **Alice in Wonderland**? What about the story itself and the characters, especially the animals, make you think that?

How many of you have pets? What qualities characterize your pets? Think about your pet or some other animal that you know. What would that animal be like if it were human?

Create an illustration of one of the animals from Wonderland. Be sure that you create a picture that captures the characteristics of the animal as personified in the production.

EXTENSION:

Create a short episode in which your pet, as personified in #4 above, teaches you an important lesson.



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Classroom ACTivities : GRADE 7

POST PERFORMANCE ACTivity:

ELA Standard 7: Interpret the author's message in various literary... texts

Theatre Standard 4: Explain emotional responses to the whole as well as the parts of a dramatic performance

Alice in Wonderland, based on the works of Lewis Carroll, tells the story of seven-year-old Alice who falls down a rabbit hole and lands in a bizarre wonderland populated by odd people and other strange creatures.

PROCEDURES:

Read carefully Lewis Carroll's comments in *The Theatre, April 1887* concerning the characters and their portrayal in a stage version of **Alice in Wonderland** that he went to see. You can access this at <http://www.alice-in-wonderland.net/books/onstage.html>. This is nonfiction writing from the 19th Century, so it may need to be read with great attention to detail and vocabulary.

How does the author describe each of the characters in the production? You might want to use a T chart or other graphic organizer to keep track of Carroll's thoughts.

What are some other comments that Carroll makes about the production that he saw? What does he say about his ability as a theatre critic? Why then is he writing this?

Now think about the production you saw. Using the same kind of procedure, describe each of the characters that you saw in the production.

How do the characters that you saw in the production compare to the author's descriptions of the characters he saw? Which characterizations are similar? How are they alike? How would you explain their similarity? Which characters seem different? How do they appear different? Why do you think this is true?

Carroll mentions that some actors *double roles* (one actor plays more than one role in a production). Did you notice any doubling of roles in the production you saw? Are the doubled roles the same in the productions that Carroll saw and the one that you saw? Why do you suppose a theatre company decides to double roles? What factors would influence who and which roles would double?

EXTENSION:

Using Carroll's piece as a model, write a nonfiction essay about the characters in the production that you saw. Perhaps you could publish your own class newspaper containing the original piece by Lewis Carroll and the versions from your class.



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Classroom ACTivities : GRADE 8

POST PERFORMANCE ACTivity:

ELA Standard 8: Write in narrative, expository, and persuasive modes with attention to descriptive elements

Visual Arts Standard 7: Describe personal, sensory, emotional, and intellectual responses to the visual qualities of a work of art

Alice in Wonderland, based on the works of Lewis Carroll, tells the story of seven-year-old Alice who falls down a rabbit hole and lands in a bizarre wonderland populated by odd people and other strange creatures.

PROCEDURES:

Look at the illustrations that were created for the original book. Sir John Tenniel drew the illustrations. You can find them at <http://www.victorianweb.org/art/illustration/tenniel/alice/gallery1.html>. (There are three pages of images—click on “Next Section” at the bottom of the page for the next page of images). What terms would you use to describe these illustrations? How do you suppose they were created? Which illustrations do you like most? What about them appeals to you? Which illustrations do you least care for?

Salvador Dali is a contemporary artist who works in an art form known as **Surrealism**. It is a 20th-century literary and artistic movement that attempts to express the workings of the subconscious and is characterized by fantastic imagery and incongruous juxtaposition of subject matter. You can learn more about this movement at <http://www.surrealism.org/>. In 1969, Dali created his own set of illustrations for the story. You can find his illustrations here: <http://www.salvador daliexperts.com/dalialiceinwonderland.html>.

Look at these Dali illustrations and compare them to the originals. How are they like the original drawings? How are they different? How do you feel about each set of drawings? Which is your favorite? Why do you feel that way? Do you think one of these sets expresses the story better than the other? What about the illustrations makes you feel that way?

Write a narrative essay that describes your personal feelings about the sets of illustrations. Include descriptive language and pay attention to specific details concerning each set of illustrations. You might want to compare the illustrations to the scenes as they were depicted in the production. How were the details similar or different? What specific similarities can you point out? How are they different? Which vision of the story’s illustrations do you prefer and why? Give specifics from the illustrations to justify your preferences.



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Dear (who was your favorite character?) _____,

I am (how old are you?) _____ **and am in the** _____ **grade at** (to what school do you go?) _____.

I came to see you on stage in *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow* at _____

on _____ (date) _____ (month) _____ (year)!

I thought the play was (how did it make you feel and why?) _____
_____.

My favorite part of the play was (what was something that was real to you?) _____
_____.

I really liked your character because (what was it that made you like them?) _____
_____.

The set looked like (what did you see?) _____.

The music sounded like (what did you hear?) _____.

Something else that I really loved about the play was _____
_____.

I would like to come back to a Birmingham Children's Theatre play and see (what is a play that you think is fun?) _____.

Love,



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**This Study Guide was prepared by
Mr. Randy P. Foster, Program Manager, Alabama Institute for Education in the Arts
and is provided as a free service to our audiences.**

**Birmingham Children's Theatre is the resident professional theatre company
at the Birmingham-Jefferson Convention Complex.**

Founded in 1947, BCT is one of the nation's oldest continuously run children's theatres.

**BCT has over six decades of making a positive difference in the lives of over
twelve million of our children.**

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