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SAMPLE EXCERPTS FROM THE MONKEYNOTES FOR Alice in Wonderland by Lewis Carroll.

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Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

(Alice in Wonderland)

By

Lewis Carroll



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KEY LITERARY ELEMENTS

SETTING

The novel has two separate settings. The main narrative takes place in the amazing and intriguing place of "Wonderland". The second

LIST OF CHARACTERS

MAJOR CHARACTERS

Alice

The protagonist of the story. She is a young girl who travels through the wonderland.

White Rabbit

The animal who leads Alice into Wonderland

The Duchess

A lady who is sentenced by the Queen.

Queen of Hearts

The queen of

CONFLICT

Protagonist

Alice is the protagonist of the novel. She is the little girl who finds things in Wonderland getting "curioser and curioser." She falls down.....

PLOT (SYNOPSIS)

The novel opens with Alice and her sister sitting on the bank of a river. Feeling absolutely bored since she (Alice) did not have anything to do she decides to take a short walk. Just then she spots a small white rabbit dart across the grass. What amazes her is that the rabbit takes out a small watch from its pocket and exclaims, "I will be late". Alice had never heard a rabbit talk and moreover felt that it was very strange for a rabbit to own a pocket watch. Curiosity takes Alice down the rabbit hole and this leads her into a

THEME

MAJOR THEMES

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland revolves around the experiences of a child in a world of imagination (dream). Carroll starts out by hurling the child into a deep abyss of realization. It is an abyss where the child learns to grapple with the problems that she has to face. She tries to

come up with logical explanations for her state of affairs and thus is presented with a knowledge of herself. In her mind, Alice indulges

MOOD

The mood of the entire novel is that of adventure. Throughout the

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

AUTHOR INFORMATION

Born in 1832, Reverend Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (Lewis Carroll), the creator of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and a host of other stories, first published *Useful and Instructive Poetry*, the first of the family magazines. The logic that seems to pervade through most of his works is the keen interest and brilliance that the author displays during his school days. In December 1852, he obtained a First in Maths Moderations and was nominated to a Fellowship at Christ Church. It was in February 1855, that he was nominated for the "Master of the House". It is during this time his interest in photography was

LITERARY AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Lewis Carroll, or The Rev Charles L Dodgson, a Victorian Mathematician and a logician , had succeeded in bringing into this world a world called "Wonderland",concentrated with the vocabulary and the language of childhood. In a world where there were books written for children Carroll managed to bring in books in which the readers become children.

The creative catalysts were little children, especially the Lidell children and Alice Lidell in particular. In a diary that he customarily kept, he states:

Duckworth and I made an expedition up the river to Godstow with the three Lidells; we had tea on the bank there, and did not reach Christ Church again till quarter past eight---

It is at this time that one of the children named Alice asked him to tell them a story, and later requested him to write down all the stories that he

CHAPTER SUMMARIES WITH COMMENTARIES

CHAPTER 1

DOWN THE RABBIT- HOLE

Tired of sitting with her sister at the bank of a river, having nothing to do, Alice decides to make a daisy chain since it would involve getting up and picking up daisies. It is at this time that she spots a dear old rabbit with pink eyes dart across the grass. What intrigues her greatly is the manner in which the rabbit takes out a watch from his pocket and loudly complains of being late. Burning with curiosity Alice follows the Rabbit down the rabbit hole and after a long journey down the rabbit hole reaches the bottom. There she finds herself in a long passage at the end of which is a long and low hall. It is here that she spots a bottle labeled "Orange Marmalade". On

exploring the room, she spots a table on which there is a golden key that fits into a door behind a curtain. Alice discovers that there lies a beautiful garden behind the curtain. However, she is unable to go on to the other side since the door is just as small as a rat hole. Her desire to get to the other side is manifested in her desire to "shut up like a telescope". It is then that she discovers a small bottle labeled "Drink Me", on the table. She makes sure that there is no label of "poison" on the bottle and then goes on to drink from it. And indeed, on drinking from the bottle she realizes that she has started to shrink. She is now able to get through the door. However, her troubles are not over, since she discovers that she is now unable to reach the top of the table on which she had placed the key to the door. Alice now discovers a small cake with the words "eat me" written on them. By now her experiences have taught her that eating and drinking of anything in this wonderland results in a change in the size of the person. She thus dares to eat the piece of cake.

NOTES

This chapter unfolds to the reader (both children as well as adults) the kind of experiences that are in store for Alice. Through the narrative there is the line of logic that the author falls back on. It is in the narrative that we notice the appeal that the book has to the readers (for children as well as adults). While the children are attracted towards the 'magic' and the adventure of Alice, the adults are astounded by the kind of events and the manner in which the events are developed. Moreover, what is interesting is the thought process of children that is clearly worked out through the central character (Alice). Carroll seems to state that children are at many times, more logical than adults. Alice's entry into wonderland and the innocence and reasoning with which she handles all that she encounters at the bottom of the rabbit hole are commendable. The notion of "growing up" is clearly projected in the manner in which Carroll talks about the manner in which Alice grows tall and becomes short. It is exemplified in the manner in which she rationalizes by the end (as seen at the end of the chapter):

I will eat it, and if it makes me grow larger, I can reach the key; and if it makes me grow smaller, I can creep under the door; so either way I will get into the garden, and I do not care which happens.

OVERALL ANALYSES

PLOT

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, is a novel that appeals not only to children but also to the adult. It is not a fairy tale in the traditional sense of the term. It is an experience of the mind in its process of maturing from childhood to adulthood.

During the years when human beings travel through from their childhood to adulthood through adolescence, they are hardly aware of what exactly happened during the process of change. What were the factors that went into making them what they are? Does everything around us exert their influence on us? These are some of the questions that Lewis Carroll tries.....

CHARACTERS

ALICE

Alice, the central character of the novel, is the person who leads the narrative and the reader through the chain of events - through the rabbit hole, wading through a pool of tears, into the house of the White Rabbit, sneezing with

QUESTIONS

1. Discuss the novel *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* as a typical representative of Children's Literature.
2. Discuss the significance of "logic and language" that is used in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.
3. What is Carol's explanation of the.....‘

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