

Alice in Wonderland Audience Guide



2023-2024 Season

children's
theatre
company

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At CTC, our mission is to create extraordinary theatre experiences that educate, challenge, and inspire young people and their communities. This Audience Guide is just one of the ways in which we aim to enhance your experience and further your engagement with the shows on stage.

It includes a summary, context, fun facts, and activities plus details that can help you decide what's right for your kids.

If you have any further questions, please contact our friendly Ticket Office Associates at 612.874.0400 during their regular business hours or email them at tickets@childrenstheatre.org.

Summary

Summary

Take a tumble down the rabbit hole with Alice and you'll land in a wonderfully wacky world of rhymes and ridiculousness, checkerboards and cheeky cats, Mad Hatters and mayhem. In this head-spinning show, Alice chases the White Rabbit through the audience, attends the most absurd tea party in history, and faces off with the ragingly red Queen of Hearts, all amidst a melee of teeny tiny songs. Humpty Dumpty on a ladder—what could possibly go wrong? Curiouser and curiouser...



Content Advisories

Language: 0 out of 5 stars

Humpty Dumpty asks Alice what her name is, and she answers, "Alice, but..." and he cuts her off and calls her "Alice Butt."

Themes and Situations: 2 out of 5 stars

The Duchess sings about beating her little boy when he sneezes. The Mad Hatter and March Hare tell Alice to have some wine. Alice is put on trial in a cage, and the Queen threatens to have her executed.

Violence and Scariness: 3 out of 5 stars

Alice goes down the rabbit hole and into a world of madness where she finds herself in conflict with many of the characters. The Jabberwock is a giant puppet that grabs Alice and the White Knight. The White Rabbit and others are worried they'll be beheaded by the Queen of Hearts, and a member of the Queen's court swings a large ax around in a threatening way. A cook in the Duchess' kitchen tries to chop off Alice's head. The March Hare keeps trying to hit the Dormouse with a mallet. During the trial, the ensemble menacingly approaches Alice while repeatedly calling her guilty.

Sensory Advisories: 3 out of 5 stars

A smoking cauldron of soup may cause some fog/haze to enter the first few rows. During the trial, there are some loud sounds and bright spotlights while the witnesses give their testimony. Spiraling projections are used as Alice goes back up through the rabbit hole. Some sound effects may be loud and jarring.

Potentially Anxious Moments: 2 out of 5 stars

The Duchess and ensemble throw a bundled baby in the air. Humpty Dumpty climbs a tall ladder and sways forwards and backwards, eventually falling off behind a wall and cracking open his shell-head. Alice is put on trial in a cage, and the Queen threatens to have her executed. Actors enter the audience and may interact with audience members.

Please contact tickets@childrenstheatre.org with any questions.

About Lewis Carroll

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson was born in England in 1832. Later in life he became a photographer, a mathematician, and what he is best known for, a novelist. He wrote under the pseudonym “Lewis Carroll” and is remembered for *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*, *Through the Looking-Glass*, and his ability to write nonsense literature, such as *The Hunting of the Snark*.

About Alice in Wonderland

Carroll’s inspiration for *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* came from his invented dream worlds that he used to share as a storyteller. He eventually wrote down the full story and the book was published in 1865. Since it became so popular, Carroll also wrote *Through the Looking-Glass* and *What Alice Found There* in 1871. *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* became the most popular children’s book of its time and one of the most popular in the world by 1932, 100 years after he was born.

Bringing Costumes from Page to Stage

There are many different people who helped create the costumes that the actors wear for *Alice in Wonderland*. Here are the different jobs people have in our CTC costume shop and how they pitched in to create the costumes of Wonderland:

1. The costume designer researches and prepares a “line drawing” for the show’s director to approve. A line drawing is just a sketch done with pencil. When the director approves the drawing, the costume designer creates a color sketch and carefully considers fabric choices.
2. The costume director looks at the color sketches and estimates if they will have enough time and money to create the costume before the production is put onstage. If not, they make adjustments to the original design.
3. The drapers, first hands, stitchers, and crafts artisans use a sturdy fabric called “muslin” to create a “mock-up.” A mock-up is a first draft or a practice version of a costume to make sure that it will fit the actor properly. If the costume fabric needs to be dyed a certain color, a painter/dyer, who specializes in creating colorful costumes, will help at the actor’s first costume fitting session.
4. The head of wigs will have a special fitting session with the actor to create the perfect style for the actor’s hair or help them try on different wigs for the show.
5. During the actual performance, the wardrobe team helps actors backstage to make sure any quick costume changes run smoothly.



Original color sketch of Alice from CTC’s 2013 production of *Alice in Wonderland*



Things to talk about Before the Show

- Alice is curious about exploring Wonderland. Have you ever been somewhere that makes you curious about exploring? Where was that? What did you find there?
- The Mad Hatter loves throwing tea parties. If you threw a tea party, what kind of food and tea would you serve? Who would you invite?
- What about going to the show are you most excited about?

3 Things to Look and Listen for During the Performance

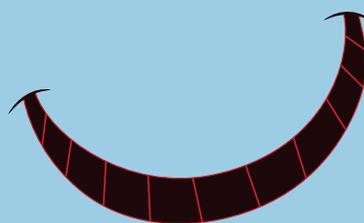
Look for...

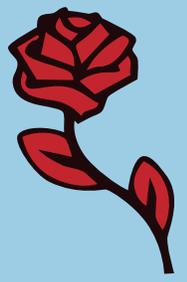
1. Clocks. Which character uses clocks to tell time?
2. Roses. What color are the roses?
3. Food. Which food from the show would you most like to try?



Listen for...

1. Trumpet fanfare. Which royal character's arrival do the trumpets signal?
2. Actors singing songs. Do you recognize any of the songs?
3. Sneezing. What kind of spice makes the character sneeze?





Reflections in a Mirror

You'll Need:

- Mirror
- Pen
- Paper

Instructions:

Try to write a short word backwards using the hand you normally write with. Use a mirror to check you've done it correctly.



This time draw a circle and add numbers so it looks like a backwards clock. Use the mirror to help you.

Extension idea - try again using the hand you don't normally write with.

What's happening?

If you look into a mirror you see an image of yourself reflected back. The image appears to be behind the mirror, is the right way up, but reversed.

Mirrors flip images front to back. If you write a word on a piece of paper and hold it up to a mirror the letters are backwards, but still the right way up. We call this a mirror image. Only mirrors that are perfectly flat (plane mirrors) give a mirror image.



Shape Poetry Writing

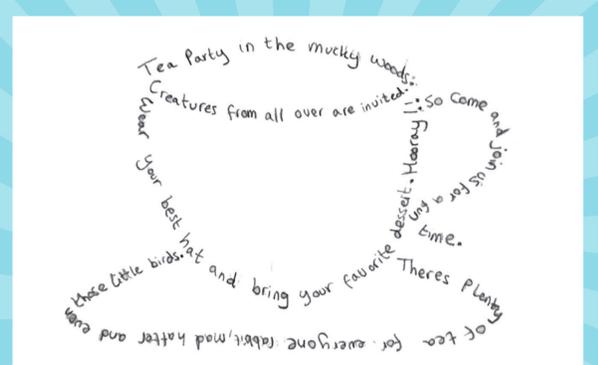


Shape Poetry How Tos:

- Before jumping in, decide on the shape of your poem and theme.
- Keep it simple—only use outlines and basic shapes (maybe a teacup, clock, hat, or rabbit!).
- Plan out your poem before writing it into your shape.
- Using a pencil, lightly outline or draw your shape onto your paper. Then write your words matching the outline. This will provide a neat guideline for your poetry.

A Teacup Shape Poem Example:

*Tea Party in the murky woods.
Creatures from all over are invited.
Wear your best hat and bring your favourite dessert.
Hooray!
There's plenty of tea for everyone, rabbit, mad hatter...
And even those little birds.
So, come and join us for a fun time.*



TEACUP SHAPE POEM

Create your *Alice in Wonderland*-inspired shape poem below!

Write your poem here:

Lightly draw your shape on the paper and write in the words around the outline:



CTC Theatre Etiquette

At CTC, we encourage audiences to engage with the live theatre experience and react freely. It's ok to laugh if something is funny, exclaim if something is surprising, gasp if something is scary, and maybe even dance along in your seats if the music inspires you. We value the real-time, honest reactions of our audiences.

We do, however, thank you for your partnership in making sure that any reactions from your kids are kind and respectful towards the actors onstage and towards all of the people who worked so hard to make the show possible.

Accessibility

Mobility Accessibility

The Target Lobby and UnitedHealth Group Stage are on the 2nd floor. At the building entrance, turn right and head through the Mia (Minneapolis Institute of Art) entrance. Then turn left just inside the entrance and go up the flight of 28 stairs to get to the lobby. Or you can use the elevator to the LEFT of the entrance doors. The balcony is accessed by going up another flight of 18 stairs. There is no elevator access to the balcony level.

An Accessible/All-Gender restroom is located next to the elevator on the 2nd floor in the Target Lobby. Additional restrooms are located down one floor near the entrance to the theatre.

Quiet Room/Sensory Sensitivities

The Quiet Room is located at the rear left side of the main floor of the UnitedHealth Group Stage. There are 3 stairs to get to the seating in the Quiet Room. The Quiet Room is separated from the audience by a glass window, so patrons can verbalize freely. Those utilizing the Quiet Room can still see and hear the performance. The performance is also live streamed in the lobby. Please feel free to come and go from the Quiet Room as you need to throughout the show.

Please let an usher know if someone in your group would benefit from a fidget, ear plugs, noise canceling headphones, or coloring/activity sheets during your visit.

Assistive Listening Devices

Please let an usher know if you would like to use an assistive listening device. These devices come equipped with an over-the-ear earpiece. This earpiece can be unplugged, and other devices, such as cochlear implants, can be plugged into the receiver using the 1/8" jack. If you will be plugging in your own device, please bring the appropriate cord as CTC does not have these on hand.

Sign Interpretation and Audio Description

Each CTC production has a sign interpreted and/or audio described performance for each production. These performances are noted in the [list of performance dates](#).

Prayer/Private Nursing Space

During your visit, please ask a member of our staff to use our private space for nursing, pumping, prayer, or other needs.

THIS IS A COMPLETE DESCRIPTION OF THE PLAY, SO IT IS FULL OF SPOILERS.

We see Alice and her sister Edith sitting outside under a tree. Edith is reading a history book, and Alice is bored. She starts yawning and sees a white rabbit with a waistcoat and pocket watch run by. Intrigued, she follows after him as he sings about being late. She follows him down a rabbit hole.

At the bottom, Alice finds herself in the Mysterious Hall of Locked Doors. She finds a small key that works on a tiny door, but she cannot fit through. She drinks a potion that makes her smaller and goes through the door into a garden. She encounters the White Rabbit who mistakes her for someone named Mary Ann. He asks her to get his gloves for him. As she follows the White Rabbit, she runs into the Caterpillar.

Alice tells him she wishes to be larger, and he tells her that the mushroom might help. If she eats one side it will make her larger and the other will make her smaller. As Alice goes to explore, a Fish and Frog Footmen enter with an invitation from the Queen addressed to the Duchess, inviting her to a game of croquet. Alice startles them, and they drop the invitation. Reading it, Alice decides to deliver it to the Duchess.

She next finds herself in the Duchess's kitchen where there is a smoking pot of soup amid many cooks and the Duchess holding a baby. The smoke makes Alice sneeze, and the Duchess sings a song about how she speaks roughly to her baby and beats him when he sneezes. During the song, the bundled baby gets tossed in the air. Alice tells her not to treat her baby that way, and the Duchess throws him to her to take care of. The Duchess and cooks exit so the Duchess can get ready for her game of croquet. As Alice holds the baby, it starts grunting and she realizes that it's actually a pig. She sets the pig down, and it runs offstage.

Alice meets the Cheshire Cat and asks him for directions to find the White Rabbit. He leads her to a clearing where a tea party is set. She meets the Mad Hatter and the March Hare who are having a truly wacky tea party. Alice gets frustrated with the Mad Hatter and March Hare's antics when she sees the White Rabbit run by. She chases him off stage.

Alice then meets Tweedledee and Tweedledum. Tweedledee broke Tweedledum's new rattle, and they have agreed to have a battle. They comically fight before exiting together. Alice remarks that she hasn't ever seen anyone make such a fuss over something so small when she runs back into the Cheshire Cat. His tail points her in a direction towards Humpty Dumpty's wall.

Humpty Dumpty enters and climbs a ladder. Alice knows the poem and is worried that he will fall. He is very sure that no such thing will happen. The ladder sways forward and backwards, but he continues chatting with Alice. He is about to tell her goodbye when he sways just a bit too far and falls off the ladder behind a wall.

Full Plot Description cont.

The White Knight enters on his horse to help put Humpty Dumpty together again, but he is too late. Instead, he offers to help Alice find her way through the forest. He pulls out his sword when he hears a noise thinking it might be the Jabberwock. As he tells Alice about the Jabberwock, the monster enters and fights the White Knight. The White Knight fights him and decapitates him. The White Knight leaves Alice asking her not to forget him.

She continues on her way and finds herself in a garden where playing cards are painting the white roses red. It is here that she finally catches up to the White Rabbit. She is about to speak with him when the Queen of Hearts enters. The Queen questions Alice and asks her if she can play croquet. The Queen notices that one of the white roses hasn't been painted yet, and yells, "Off with their heads!" The playing cards manage to run away before the execution can swing the axe in their direction.

It is now time for the croquet match. They are using flamingoes for mallets and hedgehogs for croquet balls. Alice goes first, and the White Rabbit ensures that her hedgehog does not score any points. The Queen takes a turn, and the White Rabbit and Playing Cards ensure that she makes every point. The Queen wins through cheating.

The Cheshire Cat enters, and Alice confides in him that the game isn't fair. The Queen demands to know who she's talking to, but the Cheshire Cat keeps disappearing when the Queen looks his way. The cat lifts up the back of her dress and exposes her underwear. There is a blackout and we see the Cheshire's smiling grin appear in different areas of the stage. When the lights return, the cat is gone, and the Queen blames Alice. The Queen yells for her to lose her head.

The King of Hearts asks the White Rabbit for some of the tarts that the Queen made that morning. The White Rabbit announces that the tarts are missing. Alice gets blamed, but she remembers the poem in which the Knave of Hearts has stolen the tarts. The King of Hearts suggests that they have a trial before the execution.

During the trial, the Mad Hatter and the March Hare arrive to serve as witnesses. They don't have much to offer in terms of evidence, and the Queen has her executioner chase them offstage with an axe to cut off their heads. The Duchess is the next witness to be called. She says that she will not give any evidence and exits.

Alice has had enough and tells the Queen to hold her tongue and that the people proceeding over the trial are just a pack of cards! The courtroom begins rocking and spinning madly. The characters all swarm in circles, and we see a spiraling light on the floor as Alice hears the characters repeating words from earlier in the story. Alice disappears through a rabbit hole in the floor, and we next see her sleeping against her sister's leg back under the tree.

Her sister wakes her up, and Alice realizes it was all a dream.