

LOOKINGGLASS

ALICE

STUDY GUIDE



lookingglass

in association with
the actors
gymnasium

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Production Photos by Liz Lauren
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THE WORLD OF LOOKINGGLASS

Lookingglass Mission & Core Values

Activities that utilize collaboration, transformation and invention

Collaboration

Collaboration for Lookingglass: Lookingglass Theatre believes that the power of the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Lookingglass sees immense value in group history and experience, a collective vision, the dynamics of teamwork, and the importance of collaborative leadership. Each performance we do is a collaboration between artists, story and audience. Collaboration informs every aspect of how we produce theatre.

Collaboration for You:

Where do you collaborate with people?

- On School Projects?
- On Sports Teams?
- With Friends?
- At Home?

What does collaboration look like at each of these places?

When is collaboration helpful? When is it not?

What qualities do you look for in a teammate?

Collaboration Games:

One To Twenty

This game is so simple, yet so hard at the same time!

Rules:

- Sit or stand in a circle.
- The object and goal is to have the entire group count to twenty, with only one person saying one number at a time.
- Anybody can start the count.
- A different person must say the next number, but only one person can say each number!
- If two people talk at once, then you must go back to the beginning. If you mess up, don't get frustrated! Stop and discuss what is working and what

Make it More Difficult!

- Count with your eyes closed
- Count facing outwards
- Try counting backwards from 20 to 1

Flocking

This game requires careful attention to your team!

Rules:

- Divide into groups of 4. Stand in a diamond formation.
- The person at the front corner is the leader. The leader moves their body slowly, and the other group members try to follow their actions exactly.
- When the leader turns to face a different direction, the whole group turns, and the person who is now at the front is the new leader!
- Make the transitions between leaders smooth and immediate.

Make it More Difficult!

- Try moving around the room in your flocks
- Match your movement style to background music
- Move as if you are underwater, on the moon, an elephant, etc.

Transformation

Transformation for Lookingglass: Lookingglass uses visual metaphor, movement and daring theatricality to create transcendent staging. Fiction and non-fiction are converted into stage pieces. Actors are often required to play multiple characters outside their traditional range. Even our theatre space reflects the core value of transformation—the seats and stage can change around in order to best suit the show that is being performed.

Transformation for You:

- What is an example of a change that you have experienced this year? (Emotional, physical, etc)
- What was an event that transformed or changed you?
- What are some objects or things that can be transformed?

Transformation Games:

Invisible Clay

Sculpt and use invisible objects!

Rules:

- Stand in a circle. One person begins by (silently!) using their hands to create an invisible object. Show what shape it is, as if you are molding it out of invisible clay.
 - What else can you show? Is it heavy? Smooth? Fuzzy? Cold?
- What do you do with the object? Perform an action to show what your object is used for.
- Once it has been used for an action, pass the object to the next person.
- They must keep the size, shape and weight of your object when they take it from you, but then squish it back into a ball of clay to create their own object.

Make it More Difficult!

- Try guessing what each object is before it is passed on!
- Create complicated or unusual objects!

Follow Your Nose

See how little changes can make a big difference!

Rules:

- Walk around the room, making sure to fill up the space and keep distance between your classmates.
- Now, walk as if you are being led by your nose. (Think like your nose is attached to a string and someone is pulling it.) Let your nose lead you around the room. Follow it wherever it goes!
- Have the teacher call out other things to be led by:
 - Your bellybutton
 - Your right elbow
 - Your chin
 - Your forehead
 - Your knees, etc.

Make it More Difficult!

- Have your teacher decide on a pace: Follow your nose *quickly*. Follow your nose in *slow motion*.
- Pick your own body part to lead with. Have other students try to guess what body part you're leading with.
- Create different characters that would walk leading with different body parts.
 - Ex: What kind of person leads with their chest? What kind of person leads with their chin?

Invention

Invention for Lookingglass: Lookingglass seeks to redefine the limits of theatrical experience. We use many different kinds of arts training to innovate and invent new ways to develop and tell stories.

Invention for You

What do you like to create?

What is the most useful invention that you use today?

What is the difference between inventing and discovering?

What does the quote, "Necessity is the mother of invention" mean to you?

Invention Games:

Freeze

Create different scenes and scenarios!

Rules:

- Choose two people to start. The rest of the group should sit down as an audience.
- Have the teacher choose a location where a scene between two people could take place. (Maybe take suggestions!) After deciding upon the place, the two students standing begin to improvise a scene that would take place in that location.
- At any time, someone in the audience can say, "Freeze!" When "freeze" is said, the two actors on stage must freeze in their current position, no matter how difficult.
- The person who called "freeze" should then tap one of the actor's shoulders and switch places with them, assuming the exact position that the original actor was in.
- The new actor immediately launches into a new scene with different characters and location. The positions of the actors should inspire this new scene in some way, and the new actor onstage should make some attempt to justify them as part of the new scene
- The two actors then continue their scene until someone else in the audience calls "freeze."

Make it More Difficult!

- Have the teacher call "freeze" and choose a student to switch places from the audience. You've got to be on your toes!
- Add another actor! Have three or even four people onstage at a time.

3-Headed Expert

Answers to everything, one word at a time!

Rules:

- Three people stand side-by-side in front of the group. Together, they are the Three-Headed Expert who knows everything.
- Volunteers from the group ask the Expert questions.
- The Expert must answer the questions with each head only speaking one word at a time.
 - The Expert knows everything about every subject, so "I don't know" is not an answer.
 - The answers should stay on the topic of the question.
 - The answers should be grammatically correct.
 - Be silly, outrageous, and creative!

Make it More Difficult!

- Choose one field for the Expert to answer questions about. Ask them about
 - Animals and plants
 - Food
 - Books and movies
 - History
 - Outer space, etc.
- No pauses between words in the Expert's answers
- Make it a Four- Five- or Six-Headed Expert!
- Change which head begins each answer

Theatre Vocabulary

Act – a major division of a play, which is often used to indicate a change in time or setting. Acts are further divided into scenes. (Between two acts, there can be an intermission. See definition for intermission below.)

Actor's Tools – the primary tools used by an actor (mind, body, voice).

Adaptation – the process of changing or modifying something for use in theatre, such as adapting a novel into a play.

Antagonist – a character that opposes the protagonist's goals and desires. The antagonist helps create the conflict of a play.

Backstage – the area behind the stage that is concealed from the audience and contains the actor's dressing rooms.

Blocking – the pattern of the actors' movement on stage.

Character – the personality or role played by an actor.

Dialogue – the words spoken by the actors onstage.

Ensemble – the group of actors who work together to create a play.

Fourth Wall – the imaginary "wall" at the front of a proscenium stage through which the audience sees the world of the play.

House – the area in a theatre where the audience sits.

Intermission – the period of time between two acts of a play, which allows the run crew to change the scenery on stage if necessary.

Monologue – a long dialogue delivered by a single actor.

Props – short for stage property, props are objects used to help convey meaning, setting, and time period onstage.

Protagonist – the main character of a play and the character with whom the audience is intended to identify with the most strongly.

Rehearsal – the process of practicing a play.

Set – the scenery on stage, which helps indicate when and where the play takes place.

Tech Rehearsal – a rehearsal devoted to testing the technical aspects of a production such as: costume changes, scenery changes, and lighting and sound cues.

Understudy – an actor who learns the lines and blocking of a specific character in case the actor who usually plays that part cannot perform for any reason.

Theatre Personnel

Playwright – the author of a play.

Director – the person who provides the vision of how a show should be presented, who works with the actors on their roles, develops the blocking, and is in charge of the rehearsals.

Stage Manager – the person responsible for overseeing all the backstage elements of a production (scheduling the actors, overseeing rehearsals, documenting the blocking, rehearsing the understudies, and making sure light and sound effects happen at the correct time during performances).

Designers – the people who design the technical aspects of a production. For example: the costume designer, lighting designer, scenic designer, prop designer, and sound designer.

Run Crew – the backstage crew who are responsible for operating the technical aspects of a show, like raising/lowering the curtain or changing the scenery onstage.

Script – the dialogue and instructions for a play or musical.

Dramaturge – the person responsible for researching the historical and cultural aspects of a play in order to help the director make informed decisions.

Theatre Configurations

Alley Stage – the stage runs down the middle of the audience, with seating on either side.

Proscenium Stage – the most common type of theatre stage. All of the audience is seated on one side of the stage, looking through an "archway" to look into the set.

Theatre in the Round – the audience is seated on all sides of the stage.

Three Quarter Thrust Stage – a stage that extends into the audience so audience members are seated on three of its four sides.

Warm Up Exercises

Each day before rehearsal, actors need to warm up the tools that they will use in order to best tell the story; their mind, body, and voice. Stretch these muscles with these exercises!

Mental Warm-Up

What Changed?

This game requires serious attention to detail!

Rules:

- Select three people to begin and ask them to stand in front of the group.
- Everyone else should study these three people carefully.
- After everyone has had a chance to look, ask the three volunteers to stand in a corner of the room with their backs to the group.
- Everyone else should sit and face away from the corner, so they cannot see the three people who are standing.
- The people in the corner should each change one thing about their appearance (take off a jacket, roll/unroll a sleeve, tie/untie a shoe).
- Once each of the three people has changed something, they should stand in front of the group so everyone can see them.
- Everyone else must try to guess what each person changed.

Make it More Difficult!

- Try this game with a partner. Study your partner, then turn away for ten seconds and change something about your appearance. Take turns guessing what changed.
- Have each partner change three things.

Physical Warm-Up

Shake Down

Warm your body up as you shake your body down!

Rules:

- Standing in a circle, everyone shakes their right arm in the air, ten times. With each shake, whole group counts down with great energy from 10, saying a number with each shake ("ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one!").
- Repeat with left arm, left leg, right leg, whole body.
- Start from the top! Repeat shakedown, but begin count from the next number down ("nine, eight, seven, six...")

Make it More Difficult!

- Count from odd numbers.
- Count from even numbers.
- Count numbers divisible by 3, divisible by 5, etc.



Name and Gesture

Introduce yourself by making a scene!

Rules:

- Participants stand in a circle, facing in.
- One person begins by saying his or her name while making a bold physical gesture.
- Whole group repeats the first person's name and gesture.
- The second person introduces themselves (with name and gesture) and then the group repeats both the first person's name/gesture, as well as the second person's name/gesture
- Continue introducing yourselves, adding a new name and gesture on to the sequence each time. See how many you can remember!
- Play 'tag' with the names and gestures. While staying in the circle, participants can tag each other by saying their own name and gesture, and then someone else's, passing the movement around the circle. (Sam says "Sam, Olivia!", Olivia says "Olivia, Cody!", Cody says "Cody, Anissa", and so on)

Make it More Difficult!

- Add a descriptive term to your introduction, such as "Wild Samantha!" Make sure you add a gesture as well.
- Add a descriptive term to your introduction that begins with the first letter of your name, such as "Daring Diane!"

Vocal Warm-Up

Tongue Twisters

Warm up your articulation skills!

Rules:

- Everyone stands in a circle, and repeats one of the following tongue twisters a specific number of times. Make sure to focus on clarity and articulation!
- Unique New York, unique New York. You know you need unique New York
- Fresh fried fish, fresh fried fish, fresh fried fish
- Slippery southern snakes slide swiftly down ski slopes
- Red leather, yellow leather, red leather, yellow leather
- The sixth sheik's sixth sheep is sick
- She stood upon the balcony inexplicably mimicking his hiccuping and amicably welcoming him in
- When one black bug bled black blood, the other black bug bled blue
- Rubber baby buggy bumpers

Soundscape

This game lets us build an environment using our voices!

Rules:

- Sit in a circle on the floor.
- The teacher will demonstrate the hand signals used in this game.
- Palm-up hand moving up towards the ceiling = "louder"
- Palm-down hand moving down towards the floor = "softer"
- Closed fist = "silent"
- Open fist = "vocal" (use your voice)
- Practice the hand movements with humming. Everyone hums softly, getting louder or softer according to the teacher's instruction.
- Now try creating different environments out of sound using your voice, but no words. If the environment is a busy office, discuss some sounds you might hear.
- Pick one of the sounds from that environment and imitate it using your voice.
- Make the environment louder or softer according to the teacher's instruction.

Make it More Difficult!

- Try other environments: a jungle, a city street, a farm





**THE WORLD OF
THE PLAY**

About the Author

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson was born on January 27th, 1832, and from a young age was fond of writing puppet plays for the amusement of his ten siblings. Later in life, he wrote using the pen-name Lewis Carroll, under which he published *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*. Although he is still famous to this day for his whimsical storytelling abilities, Dodgson spent most of his life as a mathematics teacher at Oxford.



Dodgson grew up in a very religious household. His father was an Anglican clergyman and preached in small towns throughout Dodgson's childhood. As a boy, Dodgson would ask his father to teach him about complex mathematics. When he was twelve years old, Dodgson went off to school at Richmond, one of the oldest grammar schools in England. He then went on to study at Rugby School, which he later wrote was an unpleasant experience, and then to Christ Church, Oxford. He was a very successful student of mathematics at Christ Church. Upon graduating he remained there to teach the subject for the rest of his life.

Dodgson devoted most of his time to his pursuit of mathematics, but he pursued more artistic pastimes too. During Dodgson's life, photography was a new technology. Dodgson was a talented and enthusiastic portrait photographer, highly regarded for the artistry and composition of his work. Many of his photographs were of young children, though he also liked to photograph famous people, like Prince Leopold and Alfred, Lord Tennyson.

Dodgson also continued to write in his free time. When he was on holidays during his years at Rugby School, he edited local publications and published some of his own poetry and satire. During the 1850s, Dodgson began submitting his work

to magazines with a wider distribution. In May 1856, his poem "The Path of Roses" appeared in *The Train* magazine and was the first work published under the now-famous name "Lewis Carroll." Dodgson created this name from the Latin forms of his given names "Charles" and "Lutwidge," which were "Carolus" and "Ludovicus." He transformed these into "Carroll" and "Lewis," and changed their order to produce Lewis Carroll. The name was selected by *The Train's* editor Edmund Yates after Dodgson provided him with a list of four possible pen-names. The other options Dodgson suggested were Edgar Cuthwellis, Edgar U. C. Westhill, and Louis Carroll.

In the year 1855, a man named Henry Liddell became a dean at Christ Church. Dodgson struck up a friendship with the whole Liddell family, and for years afterward was a close friend to the Liddell children. Alice Liddell was the namesake and the



inspiration for Dodgson's famous books. In the summer of 1862, Dodgson told a story to Alice and her sisters, Ina and Edith. The story was about a girl named Alice and her fantastical adventures in an unusual world. Alice loved the story. She asked Dodgson to write it down for her, and the resulting manuscript, titled *Alice's Adventures Underground*, was an early form of his most famous work, *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*.

The famous drawings that accompanied the text were done by the well-known illustrator John Tenniel. Dodgson was an extremely careful overseer of the artwork. He would correct tiny details of each piece until it looked exactly like he imagined it in his own head. Tenniel and Dodgson were so unhappy with the printing quality of the first edition of *Alice* that they demanded it be recalled and done over again so that Tenniel's illustrations could be faithfully reproduced. When the book finally was published in December of 1865, it was immediately successful. Children and adults alike were entranced by the magical and simple storytelling of "Lewis Carroll," and by Tenniel's magnificent drawings. The first edition sold out very quickly, and since then *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* has never gone out of print.

In 1869, Dodgson finished the first chapter of the sequel to *Alice's Adventures*. The book was finished in 1871 with illustrations done once again by Sir John Tenniel. *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There* immediately received great reviews and sold extremely well. The two Alice books together were a winning combination, making Lewis Carroll a name nearly universally recognized in English-language children's literature. Dodgson enjoyed that his Alice books were so popular with children, but he did not like being famous. In a letter to a friend written in 1891, he wrote:

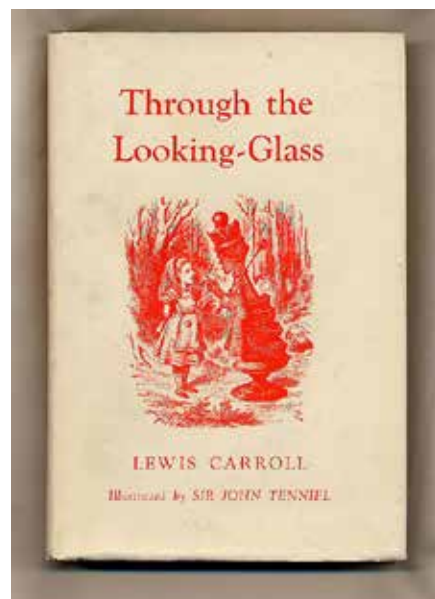
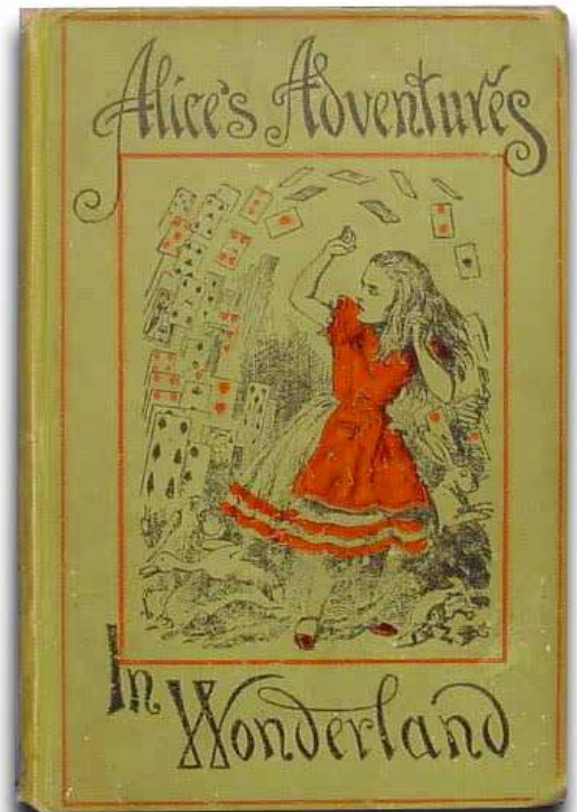
"All that sort of publicity leads to strangers hearing of my real name in connection with the books, and to my being pointed out to, and stared at by strangers, and treated as a "lion". And I hate all that so intensely that sometimes I almost wish I had never written any books at all."

He often tried to hide the fact that Charles Dodgson and Lewis Carroll were the same man, and would deny any connection if asked about it in public. The fact that today the name Lewis Carroll is famous and Charles Dodgson is not shows that he succeeded in some measure at keeping his real name from being associated with his fantasy writings.



Timeline of events in Carroll's time

- 1820: Antarctica is seen for the first time
- 1825: The Erie Canal is opened
- 1831-1836: Charles Darwin's voyage on the HMS Beagle
- 1832: Charles Lutwidge Dodgson is born**
- 1837: *Oliver Twist* is published
- 1845-49: Irish Potato Famine
- 1848: *The Communist Manifesto* published
- 1850: Alfred, Lord Tennyson becomes Poet Laureate
- 1851: *Moby Dick* is published
- 1856: Dodgson creates the pen name Lewis Carroll**
- 1859: *On the Origin of Species* is published
- 1861-1865: American Civil War
- 1862: *Les Misérables* is published
- 1865: American President Abraham Lincoln is assassinated
- 1865: *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is published**
- 1867: United States purchases Alaska from Russia
- 1867: Alfred Nobel invents dynamite
- 1870: First commercially sold typewriter developed
- 1871: *Through the Looking-Glass and What Alice Found There* is published**
- 1872: Yellowstone, the first National Park, is created
- 1873: Blue jeans are invented
- 1876: *The Hunting of the Snark* is published**
- 1879: Thomas Edison invents the light bulb
- 1883: *Treasure Island* is published
- 1884: *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* is published
- 1886: The first commercial automobile is produced
- 1886: Coca-Cola is invented
- 1889: The Eiffel Tower is completed
- 1898: Charles Lutwidge Dodgson dies**
- 1900: *The Wizard of Oz* is published



Adaptations of and Works Influenced by *Alice's Adventures and Through the Looking-Glass*

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland has been translated into at least 62 different languages, and *Through the Looking-Glass*, and *What Alice Found There* has been translated into at least 22. Additionally, the books have inspired hundreds of adaptations and retellings and been the source of characters and names for many different media. Below is a list of some adaptations and some works that contain ideas from or references to Carroll's books.

Film:

- 1903: The first film version of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* is recorded.
- 1915: Full length silent movie, directed by W. W. Young
- 1951: Disney releases its animated movie *Alice in Wonderland*
- 1977: *Jabberwocky*, a film created by Terry Gilliam of Monty Python
- 1985: *Dreamchild*, directed by Gavin Millar, tells a story about Alice Liddell with Wonderland scenes featuring puppets from Jim Henson's Creature Workshop
- 2010: Tim Burton's *Alice in Wonderland* features a teenaged Alice and many of the classic characters.

TV:

- 1966: "Alice in Wonderland, or What's a Nice Kid Like You, Doing in a Place Like This?" is an animated TV special made by the creators of "The Flintstones."
- 1966: Star Trek episode "Shore Leave" uses characters from "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland"
- 1983-1984: "Fushigi no Kuni no Arisu" an anime series based on Carroll's books.
- 1991-1995: Disney channel show "Adventures in Wonderland" loosely follows the books' events
- 2009: Syfy miniseries "Alice" is set in Wonderland many years after the events of the books.

Video Games:

- 1996: "Super Mario 64" contains a level in which the player must chase a rabbit who talks about being late, a reference to the White Rabbit from "Alice's Adventures."
- 2002: "Kingdom Hearts" features locations and characters from Disney's "Alice in Wonderland."
- 2009: "There's Something in the Sea," part of the "Bioshock," franchise developed by 2K Games, contains a character named Lutwidge who constantly quotes Lewis Carroll's books, and changes his name to Liddell.

Other:

- 2002: Tom Waits's album "Alice" is a collection of Carroll-inspired songs.
- 2004: Frank Beddor's "Looking Glass Wars" series of novels imagines that Wonderland is real, but misinterpreted by Dodgson, and that Alice is Wonderland's lost princess.
- 2011: "Tsukematsukeru" by J-Pop star Kyary Pamyu Pamyu has a Wonderland-themed music video.

DC's Batman comics include a number of villains inspired by the *Alice* books, including the mind-controlling Mad Hatter, nearly identical cousins Tweedledum and Tweedledee, and a group called the "Wonderland Gang" with members named March Harriet, Walrus, the Carpenter, the Lion, and the Unicorn.

THE WORLD OF THE PRODUCTION



In Conversation with Lauren Hirte and Lindsey Noel Whiting

Interview by Literary Manager and Company Dramaturg Marti Lyons

Lauren and Lindsey, Alices, if you will, when did you each become involved with *Lookingglass Alice*?

LAUREN HIRTE: I first did *Lookingglass Alice* for the original run of the show in 2005. It's hard to believe it was that long ago!

LINDSEY NOEL WHITING: I understudied the show for the Chicago run in 2007. Kevin Douglas and I both got involved during that run and we spent a good chunk of that tech week running lines in the green room.

Do you ever get to work together on the show or is the business of *Alice* a more individual pursuit?

LH: This is always a funny thing for us. While we have worked on so many of the same shows we rarely get to ever do scenes together. It has been great to work together on *Lookingglass Alice*, though, because I think each of our takes on Alice has informed the other.

LNW: It's true and it's so nice to have someone else who knows what you're going through, especially when it comes to the circus stuff. Lauren has been a great resource when it comes to dealing with all the unique demands of the show.

Can you give us some highlights of places you have toured with the show, maybe share a favorite tour story?

LH: I've been to the McCarter Theatre in Princeton, NJ, the New Victory in NYC and The Arden in Philadelphia. At the New Victory, we had some rigging challenges and actually had to change the ending. Instead of exiting down my rabbit hole as usual, I instead walked off stage and exited through the audience and lobby. That lobby opened out to the bustling 42nd street in New York City! While I was hesitant at first about the ending change, there was something very special about it that I then carried with me throughout subsequent runs.

LNW: I did the show at Actors Theatre of Louisville,



Syracuse Stage and the Alliance Theatre in Atlanta. I loved jumping into new communities of theatre artists and bringing this show to different audiences. Also, I have a lot of really wonderful food memories. Dinosaur BBQ in Syracuse, Flying Biscuit in Atlanta, and the now closed Lynn's Paradise Cafe in Louisville. *Lookingglass Alice* makes you hungry.

I am in such awe of the physical feats that you both must perform throughout the journey of the show each night– do you have a favorite moment to perform? Has it changed over the years?

LNW: The bungee juggle is pretty darn fun and it comes at the end of the show so you can really give it your all. However, it's not the most fun to tech because it means being in a harness for a long time.

LH: I love the cloud swing routine. Alice has accomplished something big. It is a moment I get to take a deep breath and say ok what's next. I'm ready.

What are you most looking forward to this time?

LH: I think there are a few things I am looking forward to. One is the fact that we get to bring this show to so many new people. Also I am excited to attack the role of Alice from a different perspective. I played Alice for the first time almost 10 years ago. And just as Alice grows and changes throughout the show, as you can imagine, I have changed and grown a lot as a person in the past years. Especially in the last 4 years since the show was last produced I have been wandering in a Wonderland of sorts on my own; traveling, learning to live in a new city, etc. So I am excited to see how these new experiences will inform Alice in her travels to become a queen.

LNW: I'm excited to be doing the show with Samuel again. We've been having adventures together off-stage for the last four years but I've really missed performing with him. And I'm excited to be back with everyone else as well. This show is a little bit like Everest so the people who are willing to come back and do it again have to be a little nuts, in a good way. It's very hard work and you don't work that hard for something unless you really love it.



Meet the Characters

Charles Dodgson is the given name of Lewis Carroll, the author of *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*. Dodgson was, throughout his life, friends with children. In *Lookingglass Alice*, the character of Dodgson speaks with the real-life writer's stammer.

Alice is based on Charles Dodgson's young friend Alice Liddell, the daughter of Dean Henry Liddell of Christ Church, Oxford. Alice is the heroine of Lewis Carroll's most famous books.

The White Rabbit is a character from *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, famous for his concern about being late. In *Lookingglass Alice*, just like in the original novel, the White Rabbit leads Alice to her fantastic adventures.



The Cheshire Cat has a tendency to disappear entirely except for his grin. In *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland*, the Cheshire Cat belongs to the Duchess (a character who does not appear in *Lookingglass Alice*).

The Red Queen in *Lookingglass Alice* is a character who incorporated both the Queen of Hearts from *Alice's Adventures* and the Red Queen from *Through the Looking-Glass*. The croquet game and "Off with his head!" are borrowed from the Queen of Hearts, while the references to chess and speed of movement come from the Red Queen. Alice declares in the opening of *Lookingglass Alice* that her cat should be the Red Queen while she and the cat pretend to be queens.



The White Queen, from *Through the Looking-Glass*, lives her life with time in reverse. As everyone around her grows older, the White Queen becomes younger and younger. In the opening scene of *Lookingglass Alice*, Alice decides that she will be the White Queen in a game of make-believe with her cat.



The Caterpillar is a character Alice encounters in Wonderland. He asks Alice confusing questions, and his lines are full of question words and repetition.

The White Knight is one of the chess pieces in the employ of the White Queen. He recites a piece of the poem *Jabberwocky* to Alice. *Jabberwocky* is one of the best-known pieces of nonsense poetry in the English language, and is among the most widely-recognized parts of *Through the Looking-Glass*. Later, he recites

the beginning of *The Walrus and the Carpenter*, another poem from *Through the Looking-Glass*.

The Red King is another chess piece character from *Through the Looking-Glass*. He is sleeping when he appears. The White Knight suggests to Alice that she is only a part of the Red King's dream, and that if he were to wake up, she would stop existing.



Tweedledee and Tweedledum have their origin in an English nursery rhyme. In the rhyme, the two are planning to fight over a broken rattle before they are frightened away by the appearance of a giant crow. They appear in *Through the Lookingglass*, where they reenact their nursery rhyme and tell Alice the poem *The Walrus and the Carpenter*.

The Hatter, the March Hare, and the Dormouse are the participants in Wonderland's never-ending tea party. The Hatter and the March Hare are both described as being mad. This is possibly a reference to the phrase "Mad as a Hatter," which was in use before Carroll wrote his books. (In 18th and 19th century England, mercury was used to make felt – which was used to make hats. Many hatters suffered from mercury poisoning, the effects of which included disorientation and distorted vision, leading to them being labeled "mad.") The Dormouse is always either asleep or in the process of falling back asleep.

Humpty Dumpty appears in *Through the Looking-Glass*, and, like Tweedledee and Tweedledum, is originally from an English nursery rhyme. Interestingly, the rhyme contains no reference to Humpty Dumpty being an egg. It is thought that the rhyme was originally a riddle, with the fact that he is an egg being the answer. In *Lookingglass Alice*, Humpty Dumpty engages in witty wordplay with Alice, and helps her understand some of the nonsense in *Jabberwocky*.



First Rehearsal Photos



THE WORLD OF THE AUDIENCE



Chess

A great deal of the plot of *Lookingglass Alice* revolves around a giant game of chess. Chess is a board game that has been played since the 6th century and is still very popular today. The object of chess is to capture your opponent's game pieces and to threaten their king. A game of chess is won when one player threatens the other player's king and the player being threatened has no way of answering the threat. This is called checkmate. Traditionally, the two sides of a chess game are black and white, but it isn't uncommon for other colors to be used, like Alice's set of white and red.

In *Lookingglass Alice*, a number of the characters are chess pieces: the Red King, the White Knight, and the Red and White Queens. Alice herself takes on the role of a white pawn. There are two other pieces, bishops and rooks, which don't appear in *Lookingglass Alice*. Every piece in the game of chess has different rules for how it can move on the board.

King: Each player has one king. The king can move one square at a time in any direction. Attacking the other player's king is how to win a game of chess.

Queen: Each player has one queen. Queens are the most powerful chess piece, and can move any number of squares at a time in any direction. In *Lookingglass Alice*, the Red Queen runs very fast as an illustration of this movement ability.

Knight: Each player has two knights. Knights move in an L-shape: two squares vertically and one horizontally, or two squares horizontally and one vertically. Also, knights can "jump" over other pieces on the board.

Bishop: Each player has two bishops, which can move any number of squares diagonally.

Rook: Each player has two rooks, which can move any number of squares horizontally or vertically.

Pawn: Each player has eight pawns. A pawn moves forward one square at a time, and can capture pieces that are one square in front of them diagonally. On its first move of the game, a pawn can move forward two spaces instead of one.

Alice, as a pawn, wants to reach the eighth row of the board because of the chess rule called promotion. When a pawn reaches the final square, it can be replaced with another piece: a queen, bishop, rook, or knight. A pawn that reaches the final square is almost always promoted to a queen instead of any other piece, and that is what Alice wants to do.

Modern chess sets are almost all modeled after the hugely influential and successful "Staunton Set" design, which was created in 1849, over twenty years before Lewis Carroll published *Through the Looking-Glass*. However, the original

illustrations by John Tenniel don't depict the chess piece characters as the simple, sturdy Staunton pieces which we see today. Instead, the bishop's double-peaked hat (or "mitre"), the king's crown and the distinctive rings making up the bodies of the king and the queens more closely resemble chess pieces from an earlier "St. George" style chess set.



Nonsense Writing

In addition to being renowned as a writer of children's fantasy stories, Lewis Carroll is also highly regarded for his nonsense writing. His most famous nonsense piece is *Jabberwocky*, a poem from *Through the Looking-Glass, and What Alice Found There*. In 1876, Carroll published a much longer nonsense poem called *The Hunting of the Snark (An Agony in 8 Fits)*. In it, he reused a number of the nonsense words which he created in *Jabberwocky*. The words uffish, galumphing, outgrabe, frumious, and mimsy all make an appearance in *The Hunting of the Snark*. So do the Jubjub bird and the Bandersnatch, dangerous creatures that are referenced in the second stanza of *Jabberwocky*.

The Hunting of the Snark tells the story of a crew of men setting out to catch a Snark. It is never established what exactly a Snark is, or why it is so valuable that it is worth a sea voyage and difficult hunt to get their hands on one. The poem is full of confusion, contradictions, and absurd things treated as though they were totally normal. The result is a wholly nonsensical poem. Much like *Jabberwocky*, it has a plot which the reader can follow fairly clearly without little idea of what is actually being written about.

Curious readers have suggested that *The Hunting of the Snark* is a metaphor for a number of things, from tuberculosis to seeking happiness. Henry Holiday, the original illustrator of the piece, wrote that "Much fruitless speculation has been spent over supposed hidden meanings in Lewis Carroll's *Hunting of the Snark*. The inclination to search for these was strictly natural, though the search was destined to fail." Lewis Carroll himself wrote in a letter to a friend, "As to the meaning of the Snark? I'm very much afraid I didn't mean anything but nonsense!"

This is why nonsense poetry is so fun to read. There is an inherent playfulness to the work because it focuses on the delightful organization and use of words instead of on the delivery of some message. It's easy to find nonsense in *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and in *Through the Looking-Glass*. The White Knight, the Hatter, Humpty Dumpty, and the Caterpillar all use some degree of nonsense in their conversation with Alice.

Portmanteau Words Vs. Compound Words

Lewis Carroll created the name and definition of portmanteau words. A Portmanteau is a word created by blending two original words, to create an entirely new word. Portmanteau is different from a compound word, in which two words are joined fully to create a new word.

For example, if you started with the words "star" and "fish", the compound word would be "starfish" and the portmanteau word could be "stish". Lewis Carroll used portmanteau in *Alice in Wonderland*, in 1865. Humpty Dumpty explains the unusual words found in the poem *Jabberwocky*:

"slithy" means "lithe and slimy"

"mimsy" is "flimsy and miserable"

Several years later, in 1876, Lewis Carroll wrote an introduction to *Hunting of the Snark* in which he defined this process (creating a new word from smashing together two different words):

Carroll wrote, “Humpty Dumpty’s theory, of two meanings packed into one word like a portmanteau [a piece of luggage with two compartments], seems to me the right explanation for all. For instance, take the two words “fuming” and “furious”. Make up your mind that you will say both words, but leave it unsettled which you will say first ... if you have the rarest of gifts, a perfectly balanced mind, you will say “frumious”.

Can you identify the origin words for the following portmanteaus, and what these new words might mean?

Gerrymander
Brunch
Bardolatry
Texarkana
Liger
Religulous
Turducken

Even celebrity name-meshing (like “Bennifer”, “Brangelina” and “Desilu Productions”) can trace their origins to Lewis Carroll and portmanteau!



(answers: Gerry & salamander, for the way Eldridge Gerry redistricted the state of Massachusetts in 1812; brunch and lunch, first used in 1896; Bard and idolatry, describing those who obsessively love Shakespeare, aka “the Bard”; Texas and Arkansas- describing the land at the border; lion and tiger, describing a hybrid of a male lion and female tiger; religion and ridiculous, and the title of a 2012 movie; turkey – duck- chicken, a dish in which a chicken is stuffed inside a duck, which is stuffed inside a turkey).

“But the danger was past—they had landed at last,
With their boxes, portmanteaus, and bags”

– *The Hunting of the Snark*. Fit the Second: The Bellman’s Speech

Discussion Questions



In Wonderland, characters sometimes treat totally absurd actions and situations as if they were totally normal. The Cheshire Cat casually remarks that “we’re all mad here.” The Red Queen plays a game of croquet using flamingos and hedgehogs. To Alice, these are very unusual things, but they don’t seem strange to the characters living in Wonderland. Is there anything in your life that seems normal to you, but other people might think is unusual?

Alice goes through a lot of trouble to reach her goal of becoming a queen, but when she reaches that goal, she’s not sure what to do next. Have you ever had something that you worked really hard for? Did you get it? How did you feel? Was it like you expected it to be?

The play ends with the line “Life, what is it but a dream?” Why do you think this is the last line? What does it mean to you?

Lookingglass Alice follows Alice’s adventure and her quest to become a queen. In the course of the play, did you observe changes in any characters besides Alice?

Lookingglass Alice uses very different storytelling and performance techniques than other versions of *Alice in Wonderland* that you might have seen or read. How do these techniques affect the story?

Resources and Links

The Life and Letters of Lewis Carroll (Rev. C. L. Dodgson) by Stuart Dodgson Collingwood, 1899
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/11483/11483-h/11483-h.htm>

I wish I'd never written Alice! Letter shows that Carroll hated fame by Simon Cable, from Daily Mail, February 18, 2014

