

teaching **STAGE**

MAR 2016
VOLUME VII, ISSUE 8

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

In this issue:

Page 2

Lewis Carroll

Victorian Etiquette for Children

Page 3

Drama Activity for Younger Children: "Yes, Let's!"

Drama Activity for Older Children: Frozen Pictures

Page 4

Questions for Writing and Discussion

Plus:

Handout #1, Flower Garden of Greatness

Handout #2, Alice's Dream

Handout #3, Reviewing the Play

Handout #4, Down the Rabbit Hole



WRITER LEWIS CARROLL

Lewis Carroll was an English writer, photographer, and mathematician whose real name was Charles Lutwidge Dodgson. Lewis Carroll wrote *Alice in Wonderland* and its sequels *Through the Looking-Glass* and *What Alice Found There*.

Charles Dodgson was the third of eleven children. As a child, he enjoyed making up stories, games, and puppet shows with his brothers and sisters. When he was 17, he was admitted to Oxford University where he studied mathematics, photography, art, theatre, religion, science, and literature. He graduated with honors in 1864. In 1857, Dodgson was hired as a teacher at Christ Church College in Oxford. When he was not teaching, he wrote poems and short stories under the pen name Lewis Carroll.

While working at the college, he became good friends with the dean (similar to a vice-principal) and the dean's family. One of the dean's children was named Alice Liddell, and she was the inspiration for *Alice in Wonderland*.

VICTORIAN ETIQUETTE FOR CHILDREN



When Alice Liddell was growing up in Victorian England, there were a lot of rules she had to follow at home and at school. When Lewis Carroll first started telling Alice and her sisters the story of a little girl who followed a rabbit down a rabbit hole and entered a magical world, the sisters loved the story. Wonderland was a world where all the rules Alice and her sisters had to follow didn't exist, and everything was topsy-turvy, upside down, and backwards!

Here are some of the rules the real Alice would have had to follow at home:

- Be seen and not heard.
- Act like a little lady, not like a girl. Behave like a grown-up at all times.
- Never question adults.
- Never run or talk loudly.
- Be clean and well-groomed at all times: hair combed, neat and clean clothes, no dirt under the nails, even when outside.
- Never frown in front of grownups.

Here are some of the rules that Alice Liddell would have had to follow at school:

- Do not ask the teacher questions, even if you don't understand the lesson.
- Do not write with your left hand, even if you are left-handed.
- If the teacher calls on you, stand up to answer the question.
- Do not raise your hand unless you are told to.
- When entering a classroom, line up according to height. Boys always enter before girls.

How would you feel if you had to follow all of these rules yourself?



DRAMA ACTIVITY FOR YOUNGER GRADES: “YES, LET’S!”

Courtesy of the Polka Theatre of London

Begin in a large empty space. Ask the students to move around the space, making sure that they use all areas and that they don’t just walk in circles. Remind them to be aware of their friends and not run into each other or touch each other.

Call out “Let’s all…” and then add a movement or action that relates to a character or event in *Alice in Wonderland*. The class will respond by saying “Yes, let’s!” and doing what you suggest. For example, the teacher might call out “Let’s all hop like the white rabbit” and the students respond with “Yes, let’s” and begin to hop.

Here are some other actions you may call out that relate to the action of the play:

- “Let’s all jump down the rabbit hole after Alice.”
- “Let’s all sleep like the Dormouse.”
- “Let’s act silly like the Mad Hatter.”
- “Let’s all smile like the Cheshire Cat.”

You may allow students to call out their own suggestions related to *Alice in Wonderland*.

DRAMA ACTIVITY FOR OLDER GRADES: FROZEN IMAGES

Split the class into groups of five or six. Ask the students to think of three key moments from the play: one from the beginning, one from the middle, and one from the end. Ask the groups to re-create these moments in frozen pictures, with the students posing and freezing as the characters.

If there aren’t enough characters in a picture for all of the students to portray one, ask students to become an object in the picture, such as a tea pot at the tea party.

Once the students can re-create all three images from memory, ask them to create the first picture and then move to the second and third picture when you clap your hands. Ask the class to describe what they see happening in each scene. Ask how these three frozen pictures help to tell the story, like pictures in a picture book.

Students may then create a new story based on these pictures. The images remain the same but the story can be completely new. The stories could then be performed for the rest of the class.

QUESTIONS FOR WRITING OR DISCUSSION:

1. Why did Alice jump down the rabbit hole?
What do you think she expected to find?
Would you jump down a rabbit hole? Why or why not?
2. Did Alice feel good about herself at the beginning of the play?
What about at the end?
Did Alice learn anything about herself?
3. Alice is all alone in Wonderland. Have you ever felt lonely and scared?
What can you do to feel better?
4. Why does Alice have so much trouble explaining who she is?



5. Which characters does Alice have the hardest time communicating with?
Who do you have a hard time talking to?
Which characters are easy for Alice to communicate with?
Who is easy for you to talk to?
6. What types of things does Alice know well?
What does she still need to learn?
7. How did Alice get back home?
What did she learn while in Wonderland?

SOURCES CONSULTED:

<http://www.alice-in-wonderland.net/>, <http://lewiscarrollssociety.org.uk/>, <http://www.victorianchildren.org/>,
<http://www.victoriaspast.com/>, <http://www.logicmgmt.com/>

CREDITS

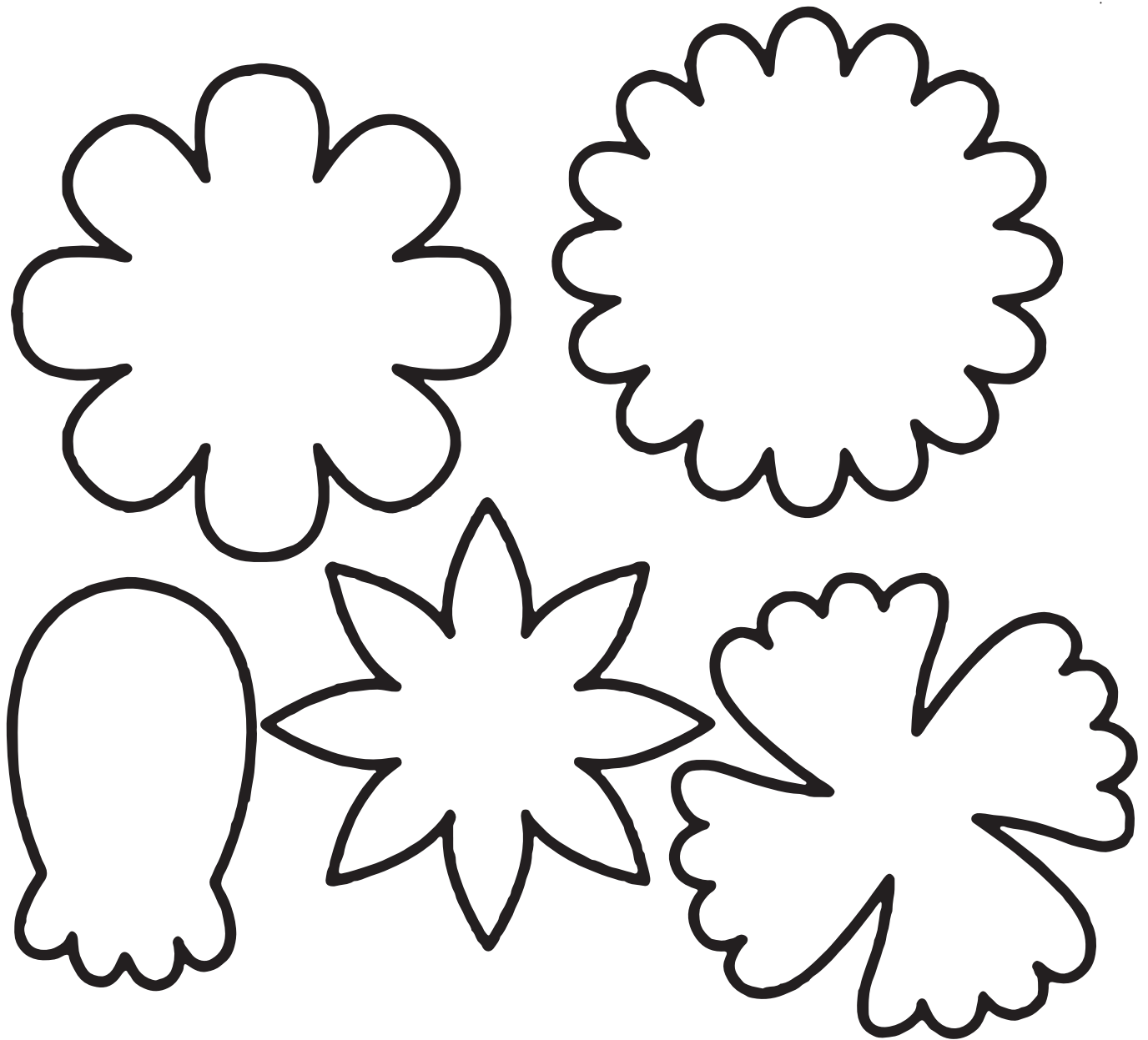
Teaching Stage is published by the Noorda Theatre Center for Children and Youth at UVU.
This issue was guest edited by Outreach Coordinator Kynsie Kiggins under the direction of executive editor Dr. John Newman. Graphic design by Jason Warren.

UVU
UTAH VALLEY UNIVERSITY
NOORDA REGIONAL THEATRE
CENTER for CHILDREN & YOUTH

Handout 1: Flower Garden of Greatness

What are you good at? What are some of your talents?

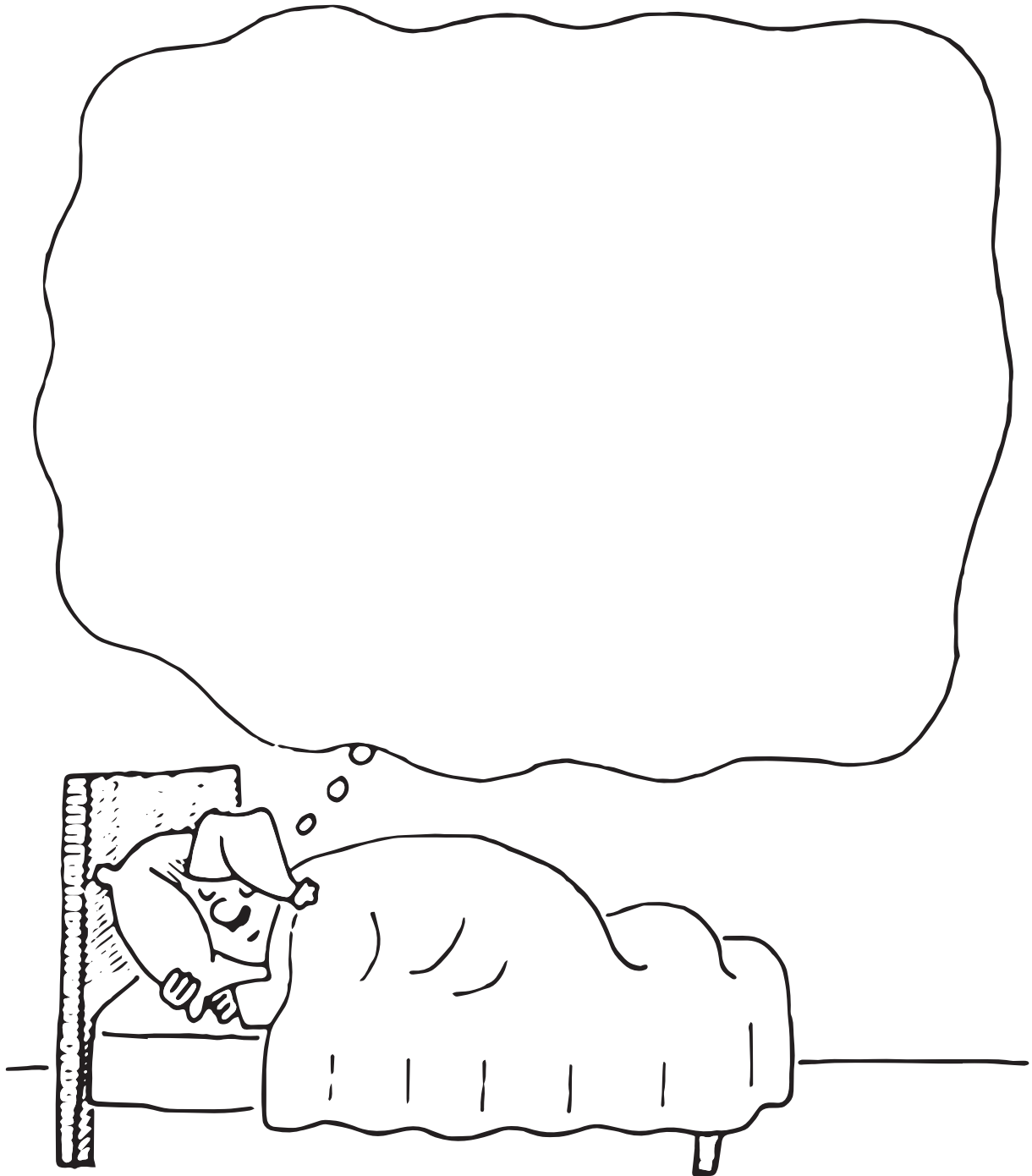
On the flowers below, write down some of the things you do well, such as taking care of your pet, making your bed, or running fast. Then color the flowers the way you like, cut them out, and add stems from green construction paper to make a “Flower Garden of Greatness” that could be a part of Wonderland!



Handout 2: Alice's Dream

Was Alice awake, or was her trip to Wonderland part of a dream?

Draw an image of a scene from the play in the "thought bubble" below.



Handout 3: Reviewing the Play

Remember details from the play *Alice in Wonderland*:

The title of the play was _____

The names of the characters in the play were _____

My favorite character was _____ because she/he _____

If I were an actor in the play I would like to play the role of _____

because _____

I liked it when _____

My favorite part was _____

I was surprised when _____

The actors used movement and body gestures to show _____

If I were the director of this play I would have _____

I think Alice is _____

If I were Alice I would have _____

I have felt like Alice when _____

Handout 4: Down the Rabbit Hole

Alice chases the White Rabbit down the rabbit hole. If you could chase something you wanted to do, what would it be? Becoming a superhero? Making people laugh? Being a good friend? Learning to make breakfast?

Write or draw those things you wish you could do in the path below.

