

StoryLines

The Narrative Arc

The plot is what happens in the story. Each scene happens in a certain order to keep readers interested and entertained. **That order, with its rising, cresting, and dropping levels of excitement, is called the *narrative arc*.** If you drew that arc, it would be shaped like a lopsided mountain.

After you read each arc point's definition, pause to label the scene below that belongs on that point.



The EXPOSITION is the introduction to the characters and the setting – the *who*, *where*, and *when*.

The CONFLICT is the first sign that the main character has a *big issue* to deal with.

The RISING ACTION consists of the more exciting scenes that follow, as he or she *deals with* that big issue.

The CLIMAX is when the big issue comes to a *crisis point*, and the main character **MUST** do something **NOW!**

The RESOLUTION is how he or she *deals* with the crisis.

The FALLING ACTION is the *wrap-up* of all the loose ends – the “how it all turns out” part.

A. _____ Alice eats food and drinks beverages that change her size; cries a pool of tears; meets many strange creatures; shrinks and enlarges several times; gets stuck in the White Rabbit's house, gets good advice from a caterpillar, attends a Mad Tea Party, visits the Duchess and rescues a baby (pig), meets the Cheshire Cat in the woods, joins a game of croquet with the cruel Queen of Hearts, hears the Mock Turtle's tale, and attends a trial for the Knave of Hearts. She grows larger, and when she is called as a witness, she begins to reason things out and use common sense.

B. _____ A young girl named Alice is sitting on a riverbank with her older sister when she sees a White Rabbit run by, wearing a coat and looking at a pocket watch.

C. _____ Alice's sister imagines everything Alice had told her, and imagines herself in Wonderland too. She thinks about all the children who will share in Alice's child-life through her tale.

D. _____ Alice, now grown to full size, dismisses the queen as “nothing but a pack of cards,” and wakes up on the riverbank with her sister again.

E. _____ Alice follows the White Rabbit down a hole and falls into a strange new world.

F. _____ When Alice stands up to the Queen of Hearts, the queen shouts “Off with her head!”

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- A. Rising Action Alice eats food and drinks beverages that change her size; cries a pool of tears; meets many strange creatures; shrinks and enlarges several times; gets stuck in the White Rabbit's house, gets good advice from a caterpillar, attends a Mad Tea Party, visits the Duchess and rescues a baby (pig), meets the Cheshire Cat in the woods, joins a game of croquet with the cruel Queen of Hearts, hears the Mock Turtle's tale, and attends a trial for the Knave of Hearts. She grows larger, and when she is called as a witness, she begins to reason things out and use common sense.
- B. Exposition A young girl named Alice is sitting on a riverbank with her older sister when she sees a White Rabbit run by, wearing a coat and looking at a pocket watch.
- C. Falling Action Alice's sister imagines everything Alice had told her, and imagines herself in Wonderland too. She thinks about all the children who will share in Alice's child-life through her tale.
- D. Resolution Alice, now grown to full size, dismisses the queen as “nothing but a pack of cards,” and wakes up on the riverbank with her sister again.
- E. Conflict Alice follows the White Rabbit down a hole and falls into a strange new world.
- F. Climax When Alice stands up to the Queen of Hearts, the queen shouts “Off with her head!”

WhereAbouts

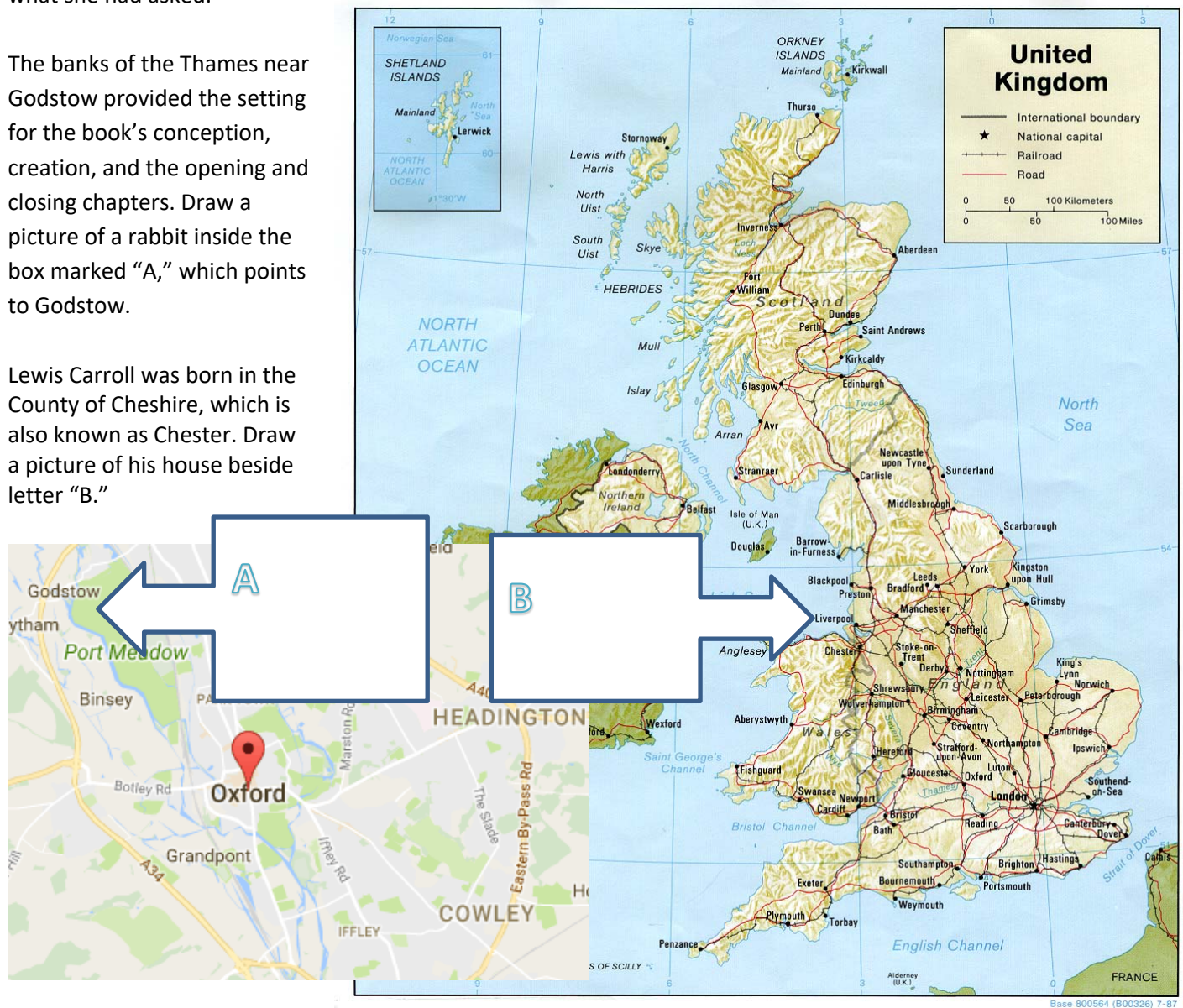
Setting

Wonderland is everywhere and nowhere, but it was created on the banks and waters of England's Thames. It was during a boating trip on the river with three young sisters that the author's imagination became the book—and Alice, Lorina, and Edith Liddell became its characters.

On July 4, 1862, the writer, the sisters, and Reverend Duckworth were traveling from Oxford to Godstow for a picnic when ten-year-old Alice asked Charles Dodgson to tell them a story. The girls loved it, and little Alice asked Charles to write the story down for her. As promised, a few months later, he became Lewis Carroll and did what she had asked.

The banks of the Thames near Godstow provided the setting for the book's conception, creation, and the opening and closing chapters. Draw a picture of a rabbit inside the box marked "A," which points to Godstow.

Lewis Carroll was born in the County of Cheshire, which is also known as Chester. Draw a picture of his house beside letter "B."



Write Angles

Creative Writing

Making Sense of Nonsense

Lewis Carroll was one of the inventors of “literary nonsense,” a genre (category) of literature that’s funny because it purposely doesn’t make sense. In Wonderland, everything is mixed-up and bizarre, including some well-known lyrics and poems. Let’s step into the author’s shoes and do some mixing-up of our own – by making sense of his own nonsense poem from *Through the Looking Glass*, the sequel to *Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland*.

First, read the poem as it’s written, and decide what the Jabberwock might be, and what might be happening here. Your guess is as good as anyone’s! Here’s what Alice thinks of it:

‘It seems very pretty,’ she said when she had finished it, ‘but it’s rather hard to understand!’ (You see she didn’t like to confess, ever to herself, that she couldn’t make it out at all.) ‘Somehow it seems to fill my head with ideas—only I don’t exactly know what they are! However, somebody killed something: that’s clear, at any rate—’

Then replace each nonsense word with a “real” word, doing your best to keep the beat and rhyme scheme. Feel free to reverse the idea of what’s happening, if you like! This is your chance to be creative in a whacky way, just like Lewis Carroll.

Jabberwocky

‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;

All mimsy were the borogoves,

And the mome raths outgrabe .

‘Beware the Jabberwock, my son!

The jaws that bite, the claws that catch!

Beware the Jubjub bird, and shun

The frumious Bandersnatch!’

Write Angles, cont.

He took his vorpal sword in hand:

Long time the manxome foe he sought—

So rested he by the Tumtum tree,

And stood awhile in thought.

And as in uffish thought he stood,

The Jabberwock, with eyes of flame,

Came whiffing through the tulgey wood,

And burbled as it came!

One, two! One, two! And through and through

The vorpal blade went snicker-snack!

He left it dead, and with its head

He went galumphing back.

‘And hast thou slain the Jabberwock?

Come to my arms, my beamish boy!

O frabjous day! Callooh! Callay!’

He chortled in his joy.

‘Twas brillig, and the slithy toves

Did gyre and gimble in the wabe;

All mimsy were the borogoves,

And the mome raths outgrabe.

Write Angles

Creative Writing

Wrinkle, Wrinkle, Little Cat

Lewis Carroll was one of the inventors of “literary nonsense,” a genre (category) of literature that’s funny because it purposely doesn’t make sense. In Wonderland, everything is mixed-up and bizarre, including some well-known lyrics and poems. For instance, at the Mad Tea Party, the Mad Hatter tells Alice that he once had to sing this song for the Queen of Hearts:

“Twinkle, twinkle, little bat!
How I wonder what you’re at!”
You know the song, perhaps?’
‘I’ve heard something like it,’ said Alice.
‘It goes on, you know,’ the Hatter continued, ‘in this way:—
“Up above the world you fly,
Like a tea-tray in the sky.
Twinkle, twinkle—”

Let’s put our own nonsensical spin on “Twinkle, Twinkle, Little Star,” Lewis Carroll style. Make up your own version, talking to one of the novel’s characters—maybe the Cheshire Cat, or the Mad Man in the Hat, or the Dormouse (for poetic reasons, you could call him a Rat).

Twinkle, twinkle, little star	
How I wonder what you are!	
Up above the world so bright	
Like a diamond in the night	
Twinkle, twinkle, little star,	
How I wonder what you are!	

Brave New Words

Vocabulary

Tickling the Punny-Bone

When the Queen of Hearts explains that a Mock Turtle is “the thing Mock Turtle Soup is made from,” she’s making a pun. A pun is a joke based on the different meanings of a word (“We had a blast at the rocket launch”), or on words that sound alike but mean different things (Astronaut Smith, don’t worry about the launch—you’re going to rock it!). The Mock Turtle’s tale of his school days is full of puns. Add the letter of the image that shows the “real” meaning of the puns in bold.

1. _____ “Ah! then [your school] wasn’t a really good school,” said the Mock Turtle. . . [our school had] French, music, and **washing**—extra.”

2. _____ “**Reeling and Writhing**, of course, to begin with,” the Mock Turtle replied.

3. _____ “. . . and then the different branches of Arithmetic—**Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision**.”

4. _____ “Well, there was **Mystery**,” the Mock Turtle replied, counting off the subjects on his flappers, “—**Mystery**, ancient and modern, with **Seaography** . . .”

5. _____ “. . . the **Drawling-master** was an old conger-eel, that used to come once a week; he taught us **Drawling, Stretching, and Fainting in Coils**.”

6. _____ “I went to the classical master, though. He was an old **crab**, he was.”

7. _____ “I never went to him,” the Mock Turtle said with a sigh: “he taught **Laughing and Grief**, they used to say.”



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1. E (waltzing) “Ah! then [your school] wasn’t a really good school,” said the Mock Turtle. . . [our school had] French, music, and **washing**—extra.”

2. D (reading and writing) “**Reeling and Writhing**, of course, to begin with,” the Mock Turtle replied.

3. G (addition, subtraction, multiplication, division) “. . . and then the different branches of Arithmetic—**Ambition, Distraction, Uglification, and Derision.**”

4. B (history and geography) “Well, there was **Mystery**,” the Mock Turtle replied, counting off the subjects on his flappers, “—**Mystery**, ancient and modern, with **Seaography** . . .”

5. F (drawing, sketching, and painting in oils) “. . . the **Drawling-master** was an old conger-eel, that used to come once a week; he taught us **Drawling, Stretching, and Fainting in Coils.**”

6. A (crabby person) “I went to the classical master, though. He was an old **crab**, he was.”

7. C (Latin and Greek) “I never went to him,” the Mock Turtle said with a sigh: “he taught **Laughing and Grief**, they used to say.”

