
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Alice in Wonderland

Part 1: Down the rabbit hole



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Narrator

Hello. This is the story of an ordinary girl called Alice. Our story begins on an ordinary summer's day. Let's meet Alice: here she is, sitting next to the river with her sister on a very hot summer's afternoon. Her sister is reading a book, and with no-one to talk to, Alice is bored... and a bit sleepy. Soon, she'll be in a Wonderland full of strange and wonderful adventures... but Alice doesn't know that yet...

Alice

Ohh... There's nothing to do... except lie on the grass and pick **daisies**. Shall I make a daisy chain for my dear little Dinah? Oh... I don't know... it's sooo hot...

White Rabbit

Oh dear! Oh dear! I'm late! I'm so very late! Oh dear oh dear!

Alice

A White Rabbit! A talking white rabbit? Perhaps. But a rabbit with a pocket-watch? A rabbit with pockets? I must see where he's going!

Narrator

Alice had never seen a rabbit with a pocket, or a waistcoat, or a pocket-watch before. So, she ran after the rabbit as fast as she could, and when the rabbit jumped down a large rabbit hole, Alice jumped straight after him.

Alice

Oohhhh... Either this hole is very deep or I'm falling very slowly. And what a curious rabbit-hole! Who would think a rabbit-hole would have book-shelves ... and books ... and maps ... and jars of **marmalade**?

Narrator

Alice fell down, down, down. She fell for so long that she began to think about Dinah, her cat.

Alice

Dinah will miss me to-night! I hope they'll remember her milk at tea-time. Dinah, my dear, I wish you were down here with me!

Narrator

Alice was beginning to feel quite sleepy when suddenly, her fall was over and she found herself sitting on a pile of leaves and grass.

Alice

Ouch! Who's there?

White Rabbit

Oh, my ears and whiskers! How late it's getting!!

Alice

Wait! Please sir, wait a moment!

Narrator

The White Rabbit ran down a long tunnel. Alice ran after him. But when she reached the end of the tunnel she found only a long hall with doors all the way round. Alice tried to open the doors – but they were all locked. Then she saw a table with a tiny key on it.

Alice

These doors are all too big. There must be a smaller door somewhere. I wonder... hmmm, let me look behind this little curtain... ooh! a tiny little door! Let me try the key... What a beautiful garden! But how can I visit it? The door is so tiny – I can't even fit my head through! Oh! It's no use. I wish I could fold up like a **telescope**! Wait a minute... what's this? It certainly wasn't here before. A bottle – **I wonder what it is**. Let me see the label. Hmm: Drink me... Oh! Oh! Ohhhhh!!!! What a curious feeling! I'm folding up like a telescope!

Narrator

And so she was! Alice got smaller and smaller until she was small enough to fit through the door. But she'd forgotten something ...

Alice

The key!

Narrator

Alice was too small to reach the key on the table. She tried and tried to climb up the table leg but it was too slippery. When she had tired herself out with trying, poor little Alice sat down and cried.

Alice

It's no use. I can't reach the key, so I can't get into the garden and that's that. There's no use crying like that! Alice! I advise you to stop this minute! Oohh... what's this? A little glass box... with cake inside! Ooh: and there's a note. Eat me. Hmm. **I wonder if it will make me grow** ... if I grow, I will be able to reach the key. But what if it makes me even smaller? Well, if it makes me smaller, I will be able to creep under the door.

Narrator

And Alice began to eat the cake. Did she grow big enough to reach the key? Or perhaps the cake made her small enough to creep under the door and into her beautiful garden. I'll tell you what happened next time. Goodbye.

Vocabulary

curious

wanting to know everything about everything

daisies (singular: daisy)

small garden flowers that are white with yellow centres

marmalade

a kind of jam made from oranges

telescope

a metal tube with glass at the end that you use to see things that are very far away. Some telescopes are made from several tubes of different sizes that can fit inside each other

creep

to move very carefully and secretly so that nobody sees you