
BBC LEARNING ENGLISH

Alice in Wonderland

Part 6: Pig and Pepper



This is not a word-for-word transcript

Narrator

Hello. Alice is in the woods. She's trying to find her way back to the beautiful garden that she saw when she first arrived in Wonderland. Here she is, outside a little house. She's wondering who lives there.

Alice

I wonder who could live in such a little house!

Narrator

Before she had the chance to wonder for very long, **a fish ran** out of the woods and knocked on the door. The fish was wearing a footman's uniform. **Another footman opened** the door. Alice was near enough to hear what the fish said.

Footman

the Queen. An invitation for the Duchess to play **croquet**.

Alice

The Duchess?!

Narrator

Alice was so curious she went to knock on the door. But there was no use knocking, because it was so noisy inside the house that no-one could possibly hear her little knock. Alice was even more curious now so **she opened** the door ...

Alice

Hello?

Narrator

And **she found** herself in a noisy, smoky kitchen. A cook was cooking a pan of soup over the fire and the Duchess was holding a crying baby. There was also a big cat who was sitting above the fire and smiling from ear to ear. Everyone was sneezing except the cook and the cat.

Alice

There's too much pepper in that soup! Please would you tell me why your cat **grins** like that?

The Duchess

It's a Cheshire-Cat, and that's why.

Alice

I didn't know Cheshire-Cats grinned. In fact, **I didn't know** that cats could grin.

The Duchess

You don't know much, and that's a fact.

Narrator

Just then, **the cook took** the pan of soup off the fire, and **started** throwing **pots and pans** and **plates and dishes** all around the kitchen. **Some of them hit** the Duchess, but **she didn't seem** to notice. **Some of them hit** the baby, who was crying anyway.

Alice

Oh please! The baby! Be careful!

The Duchess

Here! You hold it if you like!

Narrator

And **the Duchess threw** the baby at Alice who just managed to catch it.

Alice

Ohh!

The Duchess

I must go and get ready to play croquet with the Queen.

Narrator

And, with that, The Duchess left. **Alice held** the baby and wondered what to do with it.

Alice

What am I going to do with you? You're a strange shape ... Oh! You're a not a baby. You're a... you're a pig!

Narrator

It was easy to decide what to do with a pig. Alice took it outside and let it go into the woods. **The Cheshire-Cat sat** in a tree and watched her.

Alice

Cheshire-Cat, could you tell me which way I should go?

Cheshire-Cat

A Hatter lives over here, and a March lives over there. They're both **mad**.

Alice

But I don't want to meet mad people.

Cheshire-Cat

Oh, we're all mad here. Are you playing croquet with the Queen today?

Alice

I'd love to play croquet with the Queen... but **she hasn't invited me**.

Cheshire-Cat

You'll see me there ...

Narrator

The cat disappeared. Alice set off in the direction of the March Hare's house and soon she came to a house. Outside the house she saw a tea-party quite unlike any tea-party she had ever seen before. Next time, I'll tell you all about the Tea Party and what happened when Alice met the March Hare and the Hatter. Goodbye.

Vocabulary

footman

a male servant who delivers letters and messages

croquet

a traditional English game played on grass. Players use long wooden hammers called mallets to hit wooden balls along the grass and through arches made of curved pieces of metal

grinning; (verb to grin)

smiling very widely

pots and pans

containers that people cook and serve food in

plates and dishes

flat (usually ceramic) objects that people serve and eat food from

mad

crazy