Alice in Wonderland
Adapted and Directed by Hugo Bélanger

Message from the Youth Program Director:
The Persephone Theatre Youth Series is an opportunity to present young audiences with the best of local, regional and national artistic talent while exposing them to issues that affect them close to home, as well as those with global implications. Through artistic experience students will recognize, relate to and think about their environment, their concerns and their feelings. It is our hope that this production will be springboard for further conversations and study. It is our intention that you will find this study guide useful as support material for *Alice in Wonderland*, and that its use will enhance the viewing experience for you and your students.

Enjoy the show!

Will Brooks
Artistic Associate

About Théâtre Tout à Trac
Since 1998, Théâtre Tout à Trac has been exploring theatre through various media such as masks, tales and puppetry, never limiting itself, but rather always following its imagination wherever the creative process leads. A member of the Maison Théâtre since 2007, the company is well known for its successful plays *L'Oiseau vert, commedia dell'arte*… and *La princesse Turandot*; the latter won several awards including the Masque for Best Script Adaptation in 2006. Théâtre Tout à Trac introduces its first play for children with a unique adaptation of *Alice in Wonderland*; this play was winner of the Acadie-RIDEAU Award in 2008.
Note to Educators

Enabling students to understand and value arts expressions throughout life is the aim of the Saskatchewan Arts Education Curriculum for grades K through 5. By viewing a production of *Alice in Wonderland* and participating in suggested activities from the Educators’ Guide, students will work toward meeting the following goals which support the aim of the curriculum:

- Respect the uniqueness and creativity of themselves and others
- Increase their ability to express themselves through nonverbal communication
- Understand the contributions of the arts and artists to societies and cultures, past and present
- Gain a lasting appreciation of art forms both as a participant and as an audience member
- Recognize the many connections between the arts and daily life. We hope that viewing this production provides a starting point for many conversations and opportunities for thought. It is our intention that you find this study guide useful as support material for *Alice in Wonderland* and that its use, in whole or in part, will enhance the viewing experience for the audience.

By providing your students with the experience of viewing *Alice in Wonderland*, you may also be incorporating the three components necessary for fulfilling the requirements of the Saskatchewan Arts Education Curriculum:

- The Creative/Productive Component
- The Cultural/Historical Component
- The Critical/Responsive Component

Pre-Show Activities

1. Discuss the concept of “Theatre Etiquette.” A live theatre production is a very exciting event! The cast and crew involved in the production have worked very hard to bring to you their best possible performance, but they can’t do it without your cooperation and participation. As an audience member, it is your job to help the performers and you can do your job by practicing “good theatre etiquette.”
2. Compare and contrast the expected behaviour of an audience member at a live theatre performance to that expected at a movie theatre.
3. Discuss proper theatre etiquette. Does it mean being silent through the entire production? What are some examples of good theatre etiquette? Why is good theatre etiquette important to those seated around you?
4. Read several examples of theatre reviews in the newspaper or on the Internet. What elements of theatre are the reviewers looking for? What do the reviews have in common? What is different?
5. Discuss theatre as a “vehicle for teaching.” Is it an effective tool for education? Can theatre influence a society? Organize a classroom debate on the topic.
6. Persephone Theatre provides students with opportunities to ask the actors questions following each production. What would you like to know about the life of an actor? Prepare a list of questions for the post-show Q&A session.
7. How is live theatre different from watching a movie? From the perspective of the audience? From the perspective of the performers?

Optional Activities:

1. Write a journal entry about your immediate reaction to the play.
2. Write a letter to the playwright with questions you might have about the play. Send it via Persephone Theatre.
3. Write your own review of the production. Email it to youthdirector@persephonetheatre.org.
4. Using Persephone Theatre’s website, research the youth programming provided by the theatre.
THE STUDY GUIDE
THEMATIC OVERVIEW

Everybody knows at least a little about Alice in Wonderland. Tout a Trac’s production presents a unique reading of the classic that is still faithful to the spirit of the tale created by Lewis Carroll, with all the craziness, freedom, playful language and comic twists of the original.

This production of Alice in Wonderland brings the visual arts to life. Its ingenious stage setting and its use of masks and puppets, all strive to achieve a single goal: to create wonder by experiencing a truly authentic moment of theatre.

STRANDS AND CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS

💕 CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS: Language: Storytelling
得天独 CHARACTER EDUCATION CONNECTIONS: Perseverance, Honesty
_almost THEMES: Imagination, Creativity, Self-Confidence

In addition to DRAMA 🎭 and LANGUAGE ARTS 📖, Alice and Wonderland directly relates to student development in the areas of:

 PHOTO: MARC-ANTOINE DUHAINE

L-R: SARIANNE CORBIER, VALERIE DRAUET, PHILIPPE ROBERT | PHOTO: MARC-ANTOINE DUHAINE
**THE COMPANY**

**THE CAST**

The Rabbit/Tweedledum/The Jack of Diamonds
Humpty Dumpty/The Snark Hunter/The Ace of Spades
Alice
The Queen of Hearts/The Dormouse/The Caterpillar/The Door and The Cheshire Cat
Tweedledum/The Mad Hatter/The Two of Spades

Sarianne Cormier
Gabriel De Santis-Caron
Valérie Deault
Marie-Ève Trudel
Philippe Robert

**CREATIVE TEAM**

Based on the novel by Lewis Carroll
Adaptation and Direction Hugo Bélanger
Translated from French by Maureen Labonté
Assistant Director Claudia Couture
Stage Manager Geneviève Gagnon
Set, Mask, Puppet and Costume Design Patrice Charbonneau-Brunelle
Lighting Design and Technical Director Jean-Philippe Charbonneau
Musical and Sound Design David-Alexandre Chabot
Assistant to Props and Puppet Fabrication Patrice d’Aragon
English teacher Marie-Pier Fortier

Julia Lenardon

**SYNOPSIS**

Alice refuses to do her schoolwork. Preferring to play and day-dream, she hides in her father’s study. Out of nowhere comes a curious looking rabbit who likes to eat books. Wanting to keep the rodent from devouring all the books, Alice chases the rabbit through his borough and discovers Wonderland.

Late for his appointment with the Queen of Hearts, the Rabbit leaves Alice in a hurry, but forgets his gloves. These are the gloves he must wear in the sovereign’s presence; otherwise: “Off with his head!”

Eager to save the Rabbit’s life, Alice dashes to his rescue and encounters strange and fascinating characters such as Humpty Dumpty the egg, a philosophizing Caterpillar, Tweedledum and Tweedledum, the Cheshire Cat, the Mad Hatter and the Snark Hunter, in this intriguing universe where rabbits are late and quarrels make good friends.

**GLOSSARY**

Some of the words in the Glossary appear in pink throughout the study guide.

- **Story telling:** the conveying of events in words, images, or sounds through improvisation.
- **Narrative:** the spoken or written account of connected events in order of happening.
- **Narrative point of view:** the perspective of the character from whom the story is being told.
- **Gestures:** a physical movement that expresses meaning.
- **Dilemma:** a situation in which a choice has to be made between two equally undesirable alternatives.
- **Sequence:** succession, coming after or next.
- **Imagination:** forming mental images or concepts that are not actually present.
- **Adventure:** an exciting and very unusual experience.
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

LEWIS CARROLL: WRITING THE WONDERLAND...

English writer, photographer and mathematician, Lewis Carroll – his real name was actually Charles Lutwidge Dodgson – was born on January 27 in 1832, in Daresbury, Lancashire. Even as a child, Charles enjoyed creating new games and directing puppet shows for his brothers and sisters. In January 1851, he was admitted to Oxford at the age of seventeen. He worked very hard and earned a degree in Mathematics with first class honours in December of 1854. In 1857, he was hired as a teacher at Christ Church College in Oxford where he became a Deacon of the Church in England. When he was not teaching, he wrote poems and short stories, using the pen name of Lewis Carroll.

A lover of photography, he got his first camera in 1856 and took many portraits of the Dean’s children. One of them, named Alice Liddell, was the inspiration for the character of Alice. His relationship with the Liddell family children and the stories he created to entertain them, became the basis for Alice's Adventures Under Ground which he created with the illustrator John Tenniel in 1865. This title was changed to Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland three years later. It became an immediate success. Carroll wrote a sequel to Alice called Through the Looking Glass in 1872. Then in 1876, he published The Hunting of the Snark, an absurd poem considered a precursor to surrealism. Lewis Carroll died in Guilford in 1898.
UNITs OF STUDY  

**Curriculum Expectations:** By participating in these activities, students will:

- produce two- and three-dimensional works of art that communicate a range of ideas (thoughts, feelings, experiences) for specific purposes and to specific audiences.
- demonstrate understanding of some of the principles (e.g., contrast, harmony) involved in the structuring of works in drama and dance.
- interpret and communicate the meaning of poems, stories, films, plays, songs, and other material drawn from different sources and cultures, using a range of drama and dance techniques (e.g., role playing, movement sequences).
- create dance pieces, using a variety of techniques.
- describe, orally and in writing, their response to their own and others’ work in drama and dance, gather others’ responses (e.g., through interviews, research), and compare the responses.
- generate, gather, and organize ideas and information to write for an intended purpose and audience.
- draft and revise their writing, using a variety of informational, literary, and graphic forms and stylistic elements appropriate for the purpose and audience.
- use editing, proofreading, and publishing skills and strategies, and knowledge of language conventions, to correct errors, refine expression, and present their work effectively.

**PRE-SHOW UNIT**

**DISCUSSION QUESTIONS — ALL GRADES**

- What do dreams look like?
- What are some of your favorite dreams?
- What are some of your scariest dreams?
- How do your dreams make you feel?

**ACTIVITY 1**

**Directions:**
- Ask each student to recount one of his/her dreams into a personal dream journal. Journal entries can be written or expressed through drawings.
- Ask each student to choose one moment from his/her dream.
- Write it down on a small piece of paper.
- Place each piece of paper into a hat or basket.
- Divide the class into groups of four.
- Each student will randomly choose one of the dreams from the hat/basket.
- In their groups of four, ask the students to write a story that connects each of the four dream moments.
- As a group they will determine the plot points that lead up to and beyond each of the selected dream moments. For example, the four dream moments are:
  a. swimming in a waterfall,
  b. flying through the treetops,
  c. arriving at school and no one else is there,
  d. your brother’s toy fire truck starts moving on its own.
- The group will determine in what order each of the moments occurs.
- And then they will use their imagination to decide what happens in between each moment and how it leads to the next moment.
- Once the story is complete the group will give the story a title.
Example 1:
Sally woke up this morning to her brothers Jimmy’s toy fire truck honking and driving toward her. Inside the truck a model fire fighter yelled out to Sally. “Quick, come save Jimmy. He is stuck in the tree in the back yard.” Sally got out of bed and in her pajama’s with the help of the model fire fighter, she opened her bedroom window and leapt onto the nearest tree branch. Sally had never felt so free before. She was flying through the treetops. She was enjoying herself so much that she forgot all about Jimmy and flew all the way to the town park, a beautiful park with a waterfall in the middle. Sally was so hot from all the flying that she dove into the water. Time seemed to stand still. She had no idea how long she had been swimming in the waterfall, when she remembered that she had left Jimmy up in the tree somewhere. She decided to go for help. She ran as fast as she could to her school. It was just on the other side of the park. But when she arrived at school no one else was there. All of the classes were empty. What was Sally to do?

CULMINATING EXERCISE
Directions:
• Each group will record their story into a book that they design and create.
• Build a library with all of the books.
• Have each group share their Dream Stories with the class.

EXERCISE
Note: This exercise can be done as a post-show activity as well. Although the content may be highly influenced by the story of Alice In Wonderland.

Directions:
• Choose one of the stories and develop it into a play. You can do so using tableaux.
• The group will create a tableau, a frozen picture in action, to express each plot point in the story. One or more person(s) can act as narrator to read the story aloud as the rest of the group transitions from one tableau to the next.

POST-SHOW UNITS
DISCUSSION QUESTIONS — ALL GRADES
• Which characters were the most fun to watch? Why?
• What did students like about the play? What didn’t they like about the play?
• Whose story is being told?
• What did you see that was different from other plays that you have seen before?
• What surprised you about the play?
• How imaginative was this production?
**WARM-UP ACTIVITY**

*Materials: Pastels, crayons, magazine images, pencil crayons.*

**Directions:**
- With your class brainstorm a list of possible character traits that describe Alice and record them on chart paper. (e.g. Curious, Assertive, etc.)
- Once the class has generated a list of 10-20 character traits, distribute the Alice Character Sketch Sheet (on pg 9).

**ACTIVITY 1**

**Directions:**
- Ask students (in groups or individually) to draw where these character traits live in Alice’s body. For example curiosity could live in the head and in the gut.
- Ask students to think about colour and visual representation of the trait.
- Once they have placed each of the character traits from the list on Alice, ask each student or group of students to present their “Alice”.
- Discuss the placement of each trait. How did the placement differ between students and why? Were there any traits that were consistently placed in the same location of the body?

**CULMINATING ACTIVITY**

**Directions:**
- Choose four character traits from the list. For example, curious, kind, fearless, bold.
- The students will physically express each trait through gesture.
- Ask the students what would “bold” look like if you expressed it physically. How does it feel. Where does it live in your body?
- Once the class has explored each of the four traits, divide the class into groups of 5.
- Each group will show each other their version of each of the four character traits from the list. For example, they will present to each person in their group their version of ‘kind’.
- They will then pick the gesture they like most for each trait.
- The student whose gesture was chosen will teach the rest of their group the gesture until everyone can repeat it together.
- Once every trait has a gesture agreed upon by the group, the group will create a “movement phrase”. Performing in unison each character trait through gesture in a sequence.

**EXTENSION ACTIVITY**

**Directions:**
- Ask each group to present their “movement phrase”.
- Combine two or more groups and present their phrase together.
- Add music to each piece and present.
REVIEWING A PLAY
JON KAPLAN’S INTRODUCTION TO STUDENT REVIEWERS
(ADAPTED FOR GRADES 1-6)

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 play the role of _________________________________

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 _________________________________________________________

_________________________
Alice In Wonderland
The set and props morph from simple objects into something magical and masks and puppetry are ingeniously integrated into the action.

THEMES:
Imagination, Creativity, Self-Confidence

BOOKS:
Tuesday by David Wiesner Clarion Books, 1991
June 29, 1999 by David Wiesner Clarion Books, 1992
Wreck of the Zephyr by Chris Van Allsburg, 1983
Jumanji by Chris Van Allsburg, 1981

These titles emphasize that magic happens when you least expect it. And that things are not always what they seem.

SOURCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY


http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/teachers/curriculum.html