

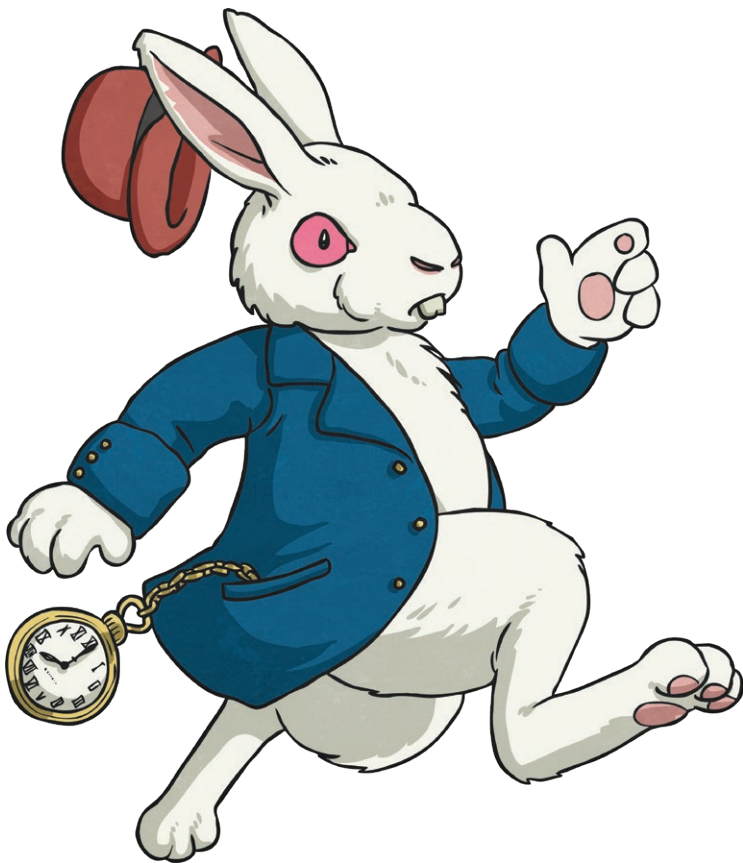
Making Inferences

When things aren't explained literally in a text, you can use clues to reach a logical conclusion. This is called inference.

Read the short story then answer the questions in full sentences.

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

by Lewis Carroll - Down the Rabbit Hole



Alice was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do: once or twice she had peeped into the book her sister was reading, but it had no pictures or conversations in it, 'and what is the use of a book,' thought Alice 'without pictures or conversation?'

So she was considering in her own mind (as well as she could, for the hot day made her feel very sleepy and stupid), whether the pleasure of making a daisy-chain would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies, when suddenly a White Rabbit with pink eyes ran close by her.

There was nothing so very remarkable in that; nor did Alice think it so very much out of the way to hear the rabbit say to itself,

'Oh dear! Oh dear! I shall be late!' (when she thought it over afterwards, it occurred to her that she ought to have wondered at this, but at the time it all seemed quite natural); but when the rabbit actually took a watch out of its waistcoat pocket, and looked at it, and then hurried on, Alice started to her feet, for it flashed across her mind that she had never before seen a rabbit with either a waistcoat-pocket, or a watch to take out of it, and burning with curiosity, she ran across the field after it, and fortunately was just in time to see it pop down a large rabbit-hole under the hedge.

In another moment down went Alice after it, never once considering how in the world she was to get out again.

Questions

1. Why does Alice feel tired if she is doing nothing?

2. Why do you think Alice believes that a book with no pictures is useless?

3. Alice says that a hot day makes you feel stupid. Do you agree with her? Explain your opinion.

4. If the White Rabbit had not come along, do you think Alice would have made a daisy chain? Why do you think that?

5. If Alice had thought for a moment about following the White Rabbit, do you think she would have jumped into the hole? Why do you think that?

Answers

1. Why does Alice feel tired if she is doing nothing?
Alice feels tired even though she isn't doing anything because when you relax and do nothing it can make you feel sleepy and more exhausted than if you were busy.
2. Why do you think Alice believes that a book with no pictures is useless?
I think that Alice believes a book with no pictures in it is dull and not very interesting. Pictures to illustrate a book can bring the words to life and make the pages attractive and inviting to the reader.
3. Alice says that a hot day makes you feel stupid. Do you agree with her?
Explain your opinion.
A hot day can make you feel stupid because it can seem to take more energy to think properly when all you want to concentrate on is to sit in the shade and cool down.
4. If the White Rabbit had not come along, do you think Alice would have made a daisy chain? Find and copy evidence from the text to back up your opinion.
I think Alice would have made a daisy chain if the White Rabbit hadn't come along because she 'was beginning to get very tired of sitting by her sister on the bank, and of having nothing to do'.
Or
I don't think Alice would have made a daisy chain if the White Rabbit hadn't come along because she wondered if it 'would be worth the trouble of getting up and picking the daisies'.
5. If Alice had thought for a moment about following the White Rabbit, do you think she would have jumped into the hole? Why do you think that?
If Alice had thought for a moment about how she was going to get out of the hole, she may have decided not to follow the White Rabbit. If she got stuck down the hole, who would know she was there and who could find her and pull her out?
Or
If Alice had thought for a moment about how she was going to get out of the hole, she may still have decided to follow the White Rabbit. If she was hot and bored, she may have wanted an adventure and following the rabbit may have been more exciting than sitting with her sister on the bank.

These are the most probable answers, using evidence from the text. Other answers are acceptable if they are consistent with the text and are plausible.

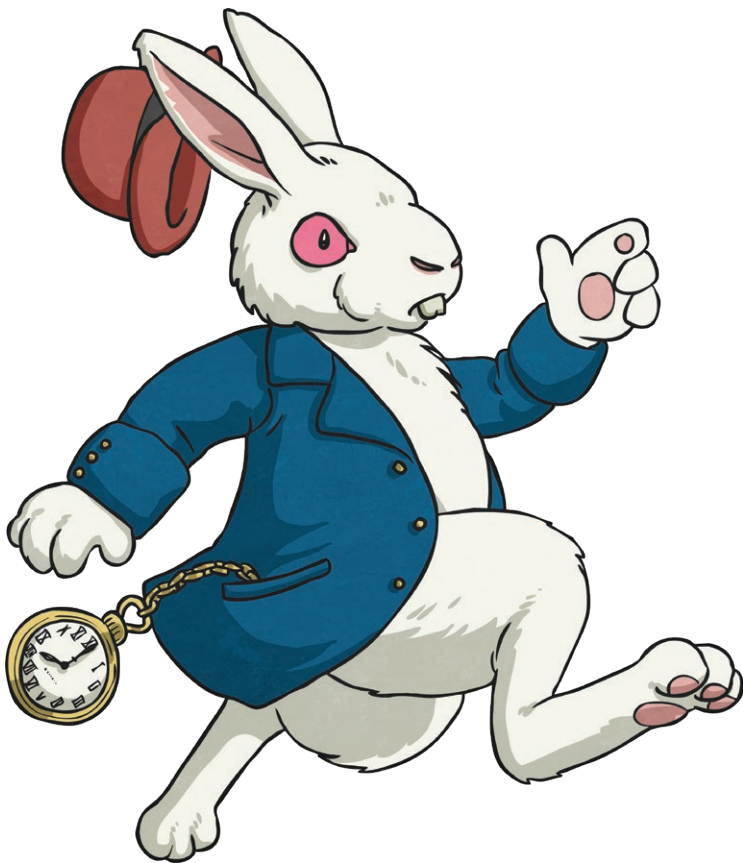
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The rabbit-hole went straight on like a tunnel for some way, and then dipped suddenly down, so suddenly that Alice had not a moment to think about stopping herself before she found herself falling down a very deep well.

Either the well was very deep, or she fell very slowly, for she had plenty of time as she went down to look about her and to wonder what was going to happen next. First, she tried to look down and make out what she was coming to, but it was too dark to see anything; then she looked at the sides of the well, and noticed that they were filled with cupboards and book-shelves; here and there she saw maps and pictures hung upon pegs. She took down a jar from one of the shelves as she passed; it was labelled 'ORANGE

MARMALADE', but to her great disappointment it was empty: she did not like to drop the jar for fear of killing somebody, so managed to put it into one of the cupboards as she fell past it.

'Well!' thought Alice to herself, 'after such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs! How brave they'll all think me at home! Why, I wouldn't say anything about it, even if I fell off the top of the house!' (Which was very likely true.)

Questions

1. If Alice couldn't stop herself from tumbling down the hole, how do you think she felt as she began her fall?

2. If you were Alice, how would you describe her reaction when she saw cupboards and bookshelves on the walls?

3. Why do you think that Alice was disappointed that the jar of marmalade was empty?

4. Alice says she wouldn't hurt herself even if she fell from the top of her house. Why does she think this?

5. How do you think Alice could get out of the well and back to the top?

Answers

1. If Alice couldn't stop herself from tumbling down the hole, how do you think she felt as she began her fall?

As Alice decided to follow the rabbit and have an adventure, I think she may have been quite excited at the thought of falling through the air to the bottom of the well.

Or.

After the excitement of following the rabbit down the hole, I think Alice may have been a bit nervous and anxious when she began to fall 'down a very deep well'.

2. If you were Alice, how would you describe her reaction when she saw cupboards and bookshelves on the walls?

If I was Alice, I would be amazed at the sight of shelves and books on the walls of the well. I have never been down a well but I know it's for water not for bookshelves, so I would be puzzled at the sight of books and jars.

3. Why do you think that Alice was disappointed that the jar of marmalade was empty?

Alice may have been disappointed that the marmalade jar was empty because it could have been her favourite preserve and she may have wanted a spoonful on her way down.

4. Alice says she wouldn't hurt herself even if she fell from the top of her house. Why does she think this?

Alice might think that if she could fall all the way down the well without hurting herself, then she could surely fall from the top of her house unharmed. She says, 'after such a fall as this, I shall think nothing of tumbling down stairs!'

5. How do you think Alice could get out of the well and back to the top?

Alice may get out of the well by climbing up the bookshelves and the cupboards. Once she reached the rabbit hole, she may be able to scramble up the earth walls to the top.

These are the most probable answers, using evidence from the text. Other answers are acceptable if they are consistent with the text and are plausible.

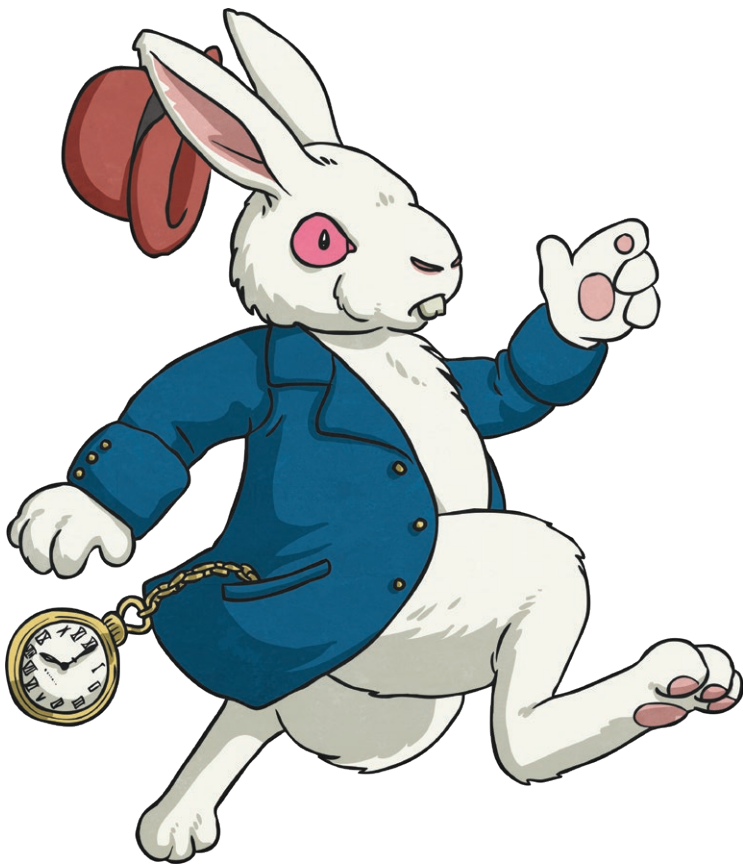
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Down, down, down. Would the fall NEVER come to an end! 'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud. 'I must be getting somewhere near the centre of the earth. Let me see: that would be four thousand miles down, I think - ' (for, you see, Alice had learnt several things of this sort in her lessons in the schoolroom, and though this was not a VERY good opportunity for showing off her knowledge, as there was no one to listen to her, still it was good practice to say it over) '- yes, that's about the right distance - but then I wonder what Latitude or Longitude I've got to?' (Alice had no idea what Latitude was, or Longitude either, but thought they were nice grand words to say.) When suddenly, thump! thump! Down she came upon a heap of sticks and dry leaves, and the fall was over.

Alice was not a bit hurt, and she jumped up on to her feet in a moment: she looked up, but it was all dark overhead; before her was another long passage, and the White Rabbit was still in sight, hurrying down it. There was not a moment to be lost: away went Alice like the wind, and she was just in time to hear it say, as it turned a corner, 'Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!' She was close behind it when she turned the corner, but the rabbit was no longer to be seen: she found herself in a long, low hall, which was lit up by a row of lamps hanging from the roof.

Questions

1. What clues from the text tell you whether Alice was anxious about her tumble or not?

2. What made Alice think that she was near the centre of the earth?

3. After tumbling so far down the well and landing on some sticks and leaves, why do you think Alice's landing didn't hurt?

4. What do you think the White Rabbit could have been hurrying for?

5. If Alice was so close behind the rabbit as she turned the corner, where could it have disappeared to?

6. Did the rabbit know that he was being followed? Explain your opinion.

Answers

1. What clues from the text tell you whether Alice was anxious about her tumble or not?
In the text it says 'I wonder how many miles I've fallen by this time?' she said aloud, which may mean that she was anxious about her tumble. However, she also chatters to herself about the centre of the earth and other geographical words, which could mean that she was quite calm about her situation as her conversation doesn't mention that she is worried.
2. What made Alice think that she was near the centre of the earth?
Alice had remembered some facts from her geography lessons, and she doesn't seem quite sure but she thinks that she has fallen so far down that she must be 'four thousand miles down, I think'. She will have been disorientated during her fall and even though it would take much longer to fall that far, she thinks it must have done so.
3. After tumbling so far down the well and landing on some sticks and leaves, why do you think Alice's landing didn't hurt?
If Alice had tumbled a long, long way down then she would surely have been hurt badly – even falling on sticks and leaves. Perhaps she didn't fall as far as she thought or perhaps there was some magic that cushioned her landing.
4. What do you think the White Rabbit could have been hurrying for?
The White Rabbit was heard to mutter, 'Oh my ears and whiskers, how late it's getting!' I think he may have been late to meet someone, or perhaps he was late for his tea.
5. If Alice was so close behind the rabbit as she turned the corner, where could it have disappeared to?
Alice was so close to the rabbit as she turned the corner that he must have disappeared down another hole that she couldn't see, gone through a door off the hall, or have run so fast that she couldn't keep up with him.
6. Did the rabbit know that he was being followed? Explain your opinion.
I don't think the rabbit knew he was being followed because it doesn't say he turned around to look at Alice and he didn't talk to her.
Or
I think the rabbit must have known he was being followed because Alice was so close behind. Maybe that is why he disappeared from view.

These are the most probable answers, using evidence from the text. Other answers are acceptable if they are consistent with the text and are plausible.