

Character Descriptions for Alice in Wonderland

Alice: Alice is young. As such, she is inherently curious yet painfully naïve. When Alice first tumbles into Wonderland, she is more interested in talking cats and being home by five than she is in where she is or how she got there. The story follows her misadventures as she encounters the weird and wonderful characters of Wonderland. Alice appears in every scene of the play. Thus, the actress playing her must be confident on stage and with learning lines.

Cheshire Cat: The Cheshire Cat is a mischievous and knowing character who acts as a guide throughout the play. He addresses the audience directly and both opens and closes the action on stage. The Cheshire Cat requires a confident and commanding actor who isn't afraid to be cheeky.

Queen of Hearts: The Queen of Hearts is a severe and surreal dictator. She rules Wonderland with an iron fist and controls her subjects through fear and fury. Her famous catchphrase – “Off with their heads!” – encapsulates her entire leadership strategy. The Queen of Hearts commands the stage and everyone on it – with the exception, perhaps, of Alice. She requires a strong, bold actress.

King: The King is the Queen of Hearts' loyal consort. He is a figure of authority on the stage but bends always to his wife. The King is, in many ways, a cold and detached presence – at times, monotonous, droning and dull – and acts as a contrast to the Queen's fiery personality.

Duchess: The Duchess is a surreal and abrasive character. She is cruel, haughty and abrupt. Her actor must be confident and commanding on stage with the ability to enunciate and, of course, scream.

White Rabbit: A relatively minor role, the White Rabbit is a frazzled and excitable character who conforms to (and is frightened of) the laws of Wonderland and the Queen of Hearts.

Mad Hatter: The Mad Hatter is a bold and bizarre character who very much lives up to his name. He exists in a world of his own and, as such, is very self-serving. While 'mad', the Hatter is also dominant, self-assured and, at times, intimidating. His actor must have a strong and confident stage presence.

March Hare: The March Hare is quite a rude character. He doesn't much care for Alice or her questions and chooses instead to provoke and demean her.

Dormouse: The Dormouse spends much of his time either sleepy or asleep. He is a small and silly character who is secondary to the Mad Hatter and March Hare.

Tweedledee and Tweedledum: Like many of the characters Alice encounters in Wonderland, Tweedledee and Tweedledum make little sense. However, they present themselves as both sensible and polite (in spite of the opposite being true) in their interactions with her. The actors cast in these roles must work well together and have a good understanding of comedic timing.

Caterpillar: The Caterpillar has an air of superiority and, as such, is languid and condescending in manner. He presents himself as a 'wise man' but is anything but.

Cook: A minor character who works for the Duchess. They are old and uppity.

Humpty Dumpty: Humpty Dumpty is a nervous and doleful character. Like many of the inhabitants of Wonderland, he is quite disdainful or unkind in his manner towards Alice.

Mock Turtle: The Mock Turtle is a drawling and sorrowful character. He is dull, droning and attention-starved. The Mock Turtle tells stories in the stereotypical manner of a grandfather.

Gryphon: The Gryphon has all the energy his companion, the Mock Turtle, is missing. He is upbeat and excitable. The Gryphon must be able to bounce off and build upon the Mock Turtle in performance.

Knave: An underling to the King and Queen. They are overly fond of fruit tarts.

Courtier: An attendant to the Queen.

Executioner: The Queen's Executioner. A cold and mercurial man.

Soldiers: Members of the Queen's army.

Ladies: Ladies of the Queen's court.

Heart Children: The Queen's children.

Gardeners: The Queen's Gardeners.

Flower-girls: A group of talking flowers.

Prop Men: Stagehands – responsible for moving the scenery during the play.