

Alice in Wonderland

This extract comes from Chapter 1. Alice has been falling down a well for what seems like a surprisingly long time.

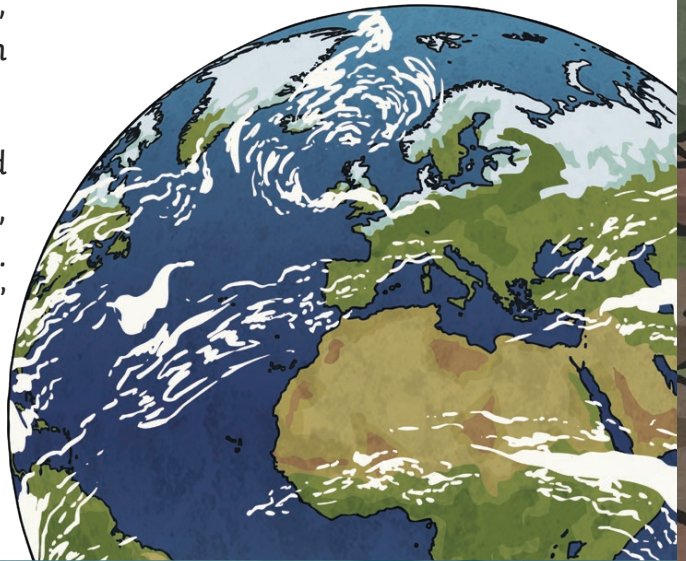
The well was either very deep or Alice was falling very slowly. Either way, she had plenty of time to look around and to wonder what was going to happen next. First, she looked down to see if she could see the end but it was too dark to see anything. Next, she decided to look at the walls and noticed they were filled with cupboards, bookshelves, maps and pictures. As she continued falling, Alice took a jar of orange marmalade from one of the shelves. Excitedly, she removed the lid... only to discover that the jar was empty. Disappointed, Alice put it back inside a different cupboard as she fell past.



“Well,” Alice thought to herself, “after a fall this long, I won’t even mind falling down the stairs any more! In fact, I don’t think I’d even mind falling from the top of a house!”

Down, down, down. As she continued falling, Alice wondered how many miles she had fallen down and whether she would soon reach the middle of the Earth. Then, she wondered whether she would fall straight through the Earth and emerge in a different country altogether. “I shall have to ask whether I am in Australia or New Zealand,” Alice decided out loud, pleased with herself for having such an excellent knowledge of geography.

Down, down, down. The fall continued and, as there was nothing else to do, Alice began to think out loud again. “Dinah will be missing me tonight,” she thought.



Dinah was the name of her pet cat: a ginger ball of fluff who was likely to be asleep on Alice's bed without a care in the world. "I hope someone will remember to feed her tonight," she continued.

"Dinah, I wish you were with me right now. There are no mice to catch in the air but we might find you a nice bat during this fall." She paused for a second and then added, "Do cats eat bats?" She liked this question so much that she continued repeating it, "Do cats eat bats? Do cats eat bats? Do cats eat bats?"

Before long, the question had become, "Do bats eat cats?" but Alice hadn't noticed because she had now become rather tired. She was just slipping into a dream in which she was asking a confused Dinah, "Do cats eat bats?" when there was suddenly a large thump. Alice landed upon a pile of sticks and dry leaves. At last, the fall was over.



Alice was not hurt and immediately jumped to her feet. Ahead of her was a long passage. The same white rabbit that she had seen earlier was running along it. She began to chase the rabbit along the corridor. However, the moment Alice turned a corner, the rabbit could no longer be seen. Alice looked around and noticed that she was now in a long, low hall which was lit by faintly glowing lanterns.

