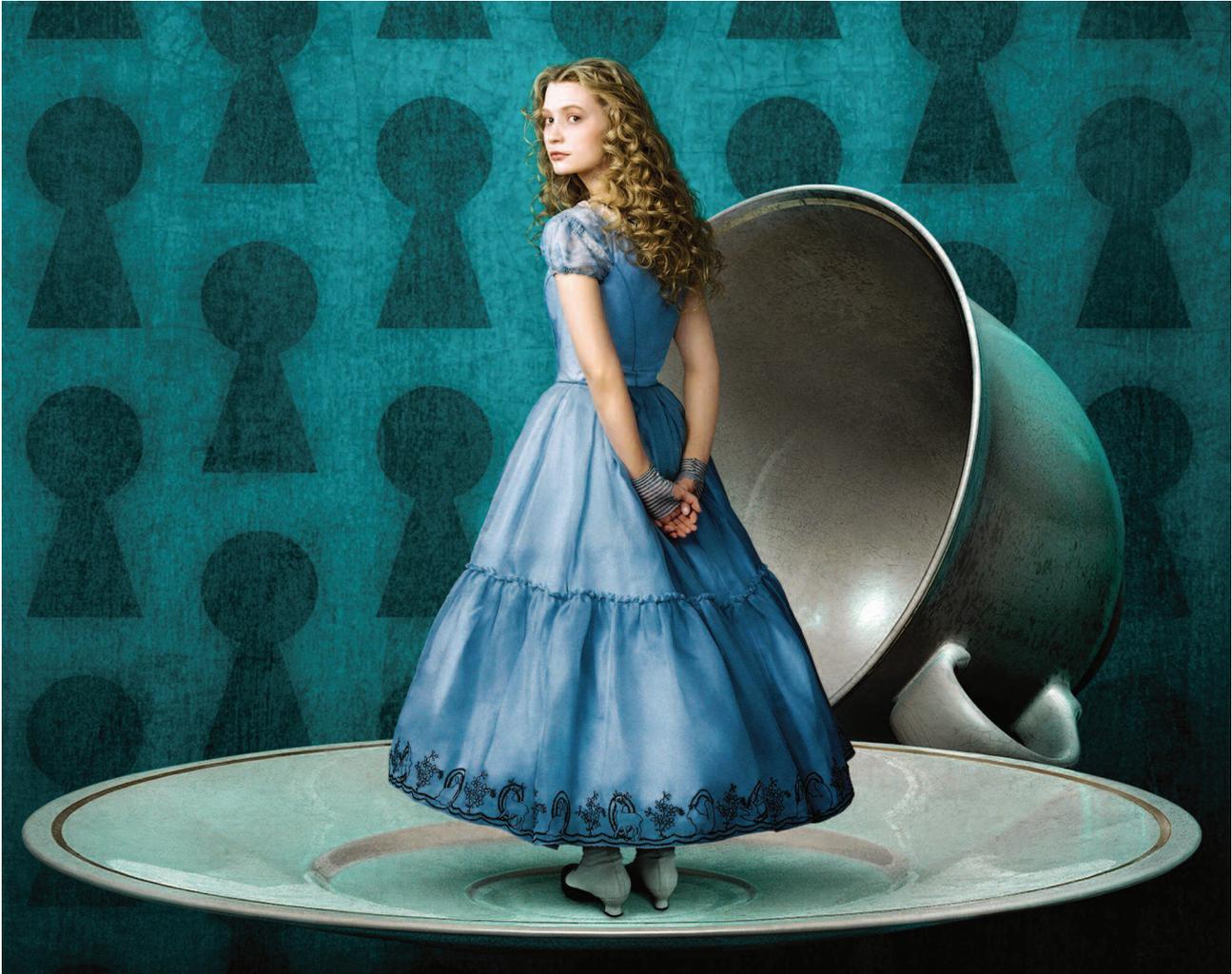


Alice in Wonderland

Study Notes



Directed by: Tim Burton
Certificate: PG (contains moderate fantasy violence)
Running time: 108 mins
Release date: 5 March 2010

Synopsis

Nineteen-year-old Alice returns to the whimsical world she first encountered as a young girl, reuniting with her childhood friends: the White Rabbit, Tweedledee and Tweedledum, the Dormouse, the Caterpillar, the Cheshire Cat, and of course, the Mad Hatter. Alice embarks on a fantastical journey to find her true destiny and end the Red Queen's reign of terror.

This resource offers suggestions for activities suitable for use at KS2 and KS3 and could form the basis of a unit of work in either Key Stage.

Introductory/KS2 activities

Before seeing the film

1. The film is a continuation of Alice's story in both of Lewis Carroll's Alice's Adventures in Wonderland and Through the Looking Glass, written in 1865 and 1871. Read one or both in class.

- What do you think might happen in the film?
- How will Alice get to Wonderland again?
- Which characters from the books do you hope to meet again?

2. Compare how the characters look in the many different versions of Alice in Wonderland. Look at illustrations from the original books as well as images from the various animated and filmed versions of the story.

- How can you tell the difference between illustrations from older editions of the books and ones from recent years? Discuss the similarities and differences between them.
- How do you think the characters might look in the new film?

3. Hold a tea party like the Mad Hatter! Design invites to send to the different characters in Wonderland. Decide on a menu as well as games and riddles to entertain your guests.

After seeing the film

1. List adjectives that you would use to describe Alice in the film. Discuss what she does that makes her different to female characters in other Disney films. Is she a good role model?

2. In the film the Mad Hatter keeps asking the riddle 'Why is a raven like a writing desk?' Try making up some of your own riddles that compare one thing to another. Test them on your friends in class!

3. Alice has to fight the Jabberwocky to save Wonderland. Read Lewis Carroll's poem 'Jabberwocky' that first appeared in his second story about Alice, Through the Looking Glass. Look for words and names in this famous 'nonsense' poem that featured in the film.

4. The poem features 'portmanteau' words, these are when two or more words are mixed together to create a new word. For example, 'mimsy' mixes flimsy and miserable whilst 'frumious' blends fuming and furious. Create a new frightening beast to live in Wonderland and try to make some portmanteau words of your own to describe it.

Extension/ KS3 activities

Before seeing the film

1. What can you find out about the inspiration for Lewis Carroll's 'Alice' stories? Think about the purpose and audience for the stories when they were told for the first time, and then later when they were written down and published.
2. Look online for images of the DVD cover for this film version of Alice in Wonderland.
 - What are the most prominent elements on the cover?
 - What colours are used, and why do you think these have been chosen?
 - What can you say about the characters' expressions and posture? What do these suggest about the film?
 - Think about what characters from the Alice stories you can see, and which ones you know that are missing from the cover. Are you surprised by any of these choices?

After seeing the film

3. In Lewis Carroll's novel 'Alice in Wonderland', Alice arrives in Wonderland by falling down a rabbit hole: however, by the end of the story, it appears she has fallen asleep and dreamed her fantastical adventures.
 - Think about how the film shows Alice's return to Wonderland. What is different this time?
 - What other 'devices' can you think of for introducing unusual or fantastical events within a story? Choose one technique and use this to write an exciting story opening suitable for readers aged 7-11.

4. How effectively would you say the latest film version used the following elements to update the story and to appeal to modern audiences (children and adults):

	Example	Effectiveness
People's awareness of the 'Alice' stories		
Comedy		
Special effects		
'Star' appeal		
Tim Burton's style		

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