A parody is a piece of writing, a film or a piece of music that either copies the style of someone well known or portrays a familiar situation but exaggerates it and ridicules it.

**The Author**

Lewis Carroll (1832-1898) or Charles Lutwidge Dogson to give his real name was a deacon (in the Anglican church) and taught mathematics. Although he published several mathematical treatises, his fame rests on two books he wrote for children *Alice in Wonderland* and *Alice through the Looking Glass*. These books are popular with children but can be read at different levels.

**The Novel**

*Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland* is one of those books, which, like Swift’s Gulliver’s Travels and Saint-Exupery’s *Le Petit Prince*, are enjoyed by children and adults alike, because they appeal to the imagination while satisfying the need for meaning.

Alice, who is a lively and curious little girl, escapes her older sister’s company during a walk in the countryside; she falls asleep and disappears down a rabbit hole. At the bottom, she finds herself in a baffling topsy-turvy world where she meets several peculiar characters, among whom there are a White Rabbit, a Caterpillar, a Cheshire Cat, a March Hare, a Mad Hatter. Wherever she goes, things do not work as in the world above, so she is constantly nonplussed by seemingly absurd rules and conventions.

**Nonsense**

The well-known representatives of the genre are Lewis Carroll and Edward Lear (1812-1888). Nonsense makes use of the established forms of a literary genre – fairy tales in Lewis Carroll’s case, limericks¹ – to develop a strain that goes against all logic. Situations soon become absurd, and the language is often defilirously creative.

Both Lear and Carroll took a great interest in the illustrations of their works. Lear drew them himself, and his *Book of Nonsense* (1855) associates an illustration with each limerick. As for Carroll, after an unsatisfactory attempt at illustrating *Alice* himself, he asked John Tenniel, a famous caricaturist, to illustrate his books with engravings.

Although it only represents a relatively minor part of 19th-century literature as far as volume is concerned, nonsense had a decisive influence on the development of the literary currents of the 20th century. Its echoes can be traced down to the absurd movement and the surrealists.

¹ limerick: poème humoristique
Alice in Wonderland

'TIS FOLLY TO BE WISE

Alice has seen the Cheshire Cat at the Duchess's. The Cat's peculiar feature is that it never stops smiling and can disappear at will.

She was a little startled by seeing the Cheshire Cat sitting on a bough of a tree a few yards off. The Cat only grinned when it saw Alice. It looked good-natured, she thought: still it had very long claws and a great many teeth, so she felt that it ought to be treated with respect.

"Cheshire Puss," she began, rather timidly, as she did not know at all whether it would like the name; however, it only grinned a little wider. "Come, it's pleased so far," thought Alice, and she went on.

"Would you tell me, please, which way I ought to go from here?"

"That depends a good deal on where you want to go," said the Cat.

"I don't much care where —" said Alice.

"Then it doesn't matter which way you go," said the Cat.

"- so long as I get somewhere," Alice added as an explanation.

"Oh, you're sure to do that," said the Cat, "if you only walk long enough."

Alice felt that this could not be denied, so she tried another question. "What sorts of people live about here?"

"In that direction," the Cat said, waving its right paw round, "lives a Hatter: and in that direction," waving the other paw, "lives a March Hare. Visit either you like: they are both mad."

"But I don't want to go among mad people," Alice remarked.

"Oh, you can't help that," said the Cat, "we're all mad here. I'm mad. You're mad."

"How do you know I'm mad?" said Alice.

"You must be," said the Cat, "or you wouldn't have come here."

Alice didn't think that proved it at all, however, she went on: "And how do you know that you're mad?"

"To begin with, a dog's not mad. You grant that?"

"I suppose so," said Alice.

"Well, then," the Cat went on, "you see a dog growls when it's angry, and wags its tail when it's pleased. Now I growl when I'm pleased, and wag my tail when I'm angry. Therefore I'm mad."

"I call it purring, not growling," said Alice.

"Call it what you like," said the Cat. "Do you play croquet with the Queen today?"

"I should like it very much," said Alice, "but I haven't been invited yet."

"You'll see me there," said the Cat, and vanished.


THE TEXT

1. Answer the questions: Who? Where? What about?
2. Describe Alice's attitudes and feelings towards the Cat: *At first, ... Then, ... Finally,*
3. How does Alice address him? Why?
4. Pick out:
   a) what Alice says;
   b) what Alice thinks;
   c) what the Cat says;
   d) what the Cat thinks.
5. Analyze and compare the use of pronouns and punctuation in a) and in c).
6. Keeping b) and d) in mind, what can you conclude about the narrator's point of view in this text?

---

2 Puss: Pussy
3 grant: agree with
7. Why does the first verbal exchange between Alice and the Cat (l. 4-11) end so unsatisfactorily?
8. What two stock phrases do the names of the other inhabitants of the area evoke?
9. L. 20: "Alice didn't think that proved it at all." What do the pronouns "that" and "it" refer to? Explain the meaning of this sentence.
10. What do you think of the Cat's logic? What is this type of demonstration called?
11. Comment on Alice's reaction (l. 26).
12. What is the effect produced by the last sentence (l. 29)?
13. What literary genre would you say this passage belongs to? Justify your answer with elements from the text.

TRANSLATION

Read *Techniques de traduction* p. 8 and translate the passage from l. 1 to l. 7.

**LA PRONONCIATION DES TERMINAISONS EN ""-ED"" DES VERBES**

La désinence -ed du prétérit et du participe passé des verbes réguliers se prononce :

- [d] après un son vocalique: *The Cat suddenly disappeared.*
- [d] après une consonne sonore: *He changed his mind.*
- [t] après une consonne sourde: *Alice stopped trying to understand.*
- [Id] après un [t] ou un [d]: *Alice waited for the Cat to answer.*

Classify these verbal forms according to their pronunciation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Verbs</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>startled</td>
<td>[d]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grinned</td>
<td>[d]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>treated</td>
<td>[t]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleased</td>
<td>[t]</td>
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<tr>
<td>added</td>
<td>[t]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>denied</td>
<td>[t]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tried</td>
<td>[Id]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remarked</td>
<td>[Id]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proved</td>
<td>[Id]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>invited</td>
<td>[Id]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talked</td>
<td>[Id]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>watched</td>
<td>[Id]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pronounced</td>
<td>[Id]</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**EITHER, BOTH, NEITHER**

“The Hatter and the March Hare **both** live nearby. Which of them should Alice visit?” “**Neither** of them, they are **both** mad.”

(Le Chapelier et le Lièvre de Mars habitent tous deux non loin d’ici. Lequel des deux Alice devrait-elle aller voir? - Aucun des deux, ils sont tous les deux.)

- both = les deux
- neither (of them) = aucun des deux
- both of them = les deux
- either = n’importe lequel

Complete the sentences with “**either**”, “**both**” or “**neither**”.

1. …………………. Alice and her sister liked the countryside.
2. …………………. of them had ever seen a White Rabbit.
3. The Cat thinks that …………………. he and Alice are mad.
4. It does not matter whether she goes right or left, she can go …………………. way.
5. "Which of the two cakes is she going to eat?" "She will probably choose ………………….”
EITHER... OR, NEITHER... NOR

- **Either** the Cat is mad or he isn't. *(Ou bien le chat est fou, ou bien il ne l’est pas.)*
- **Neither** the Hatter nor the March Hare had ever met Alice. *(Ni le Chapelier, ni le Lièvre de Mars n’avait jamais rencontré Alice.)*

Cette structure s’utilise uniquement dans des phrases dont le verbe est à la forme affirmative.

**Complete the sentences with the appropriate structure.**

1. ……………….. she follows the Cat's directions…………………..she goes her own way.
2. She can go…………………………this way………………………the other.
3. She didn't know what to make of the Cat's logic, it seemed to be………………fish………………fowl.
4. ………………..the Caterpillar ………………..the White Rabbit had startled her as much as the Cat did.
5. She didn't know what to do: ……………………..she went to the tea party and she met the Cat again,
…………………..she visited the Hatter, who was just as mad.

**TRANSLATE INTO ENGLISH**

1. Soit on adore Lewis Carroll, soit on le déteste.
2. Sur une île déserte, j'emporterais ou Alice au Pays des Merveilles ou De l'autre côté du miroir, ou les deux.
3. Lewis Carroll et Edward Lear écrivirent tous deux des chefs-d’œuvre d'humour, et ni l'un ni l'autre ne se prenait au sérieux.
4. Je ne crois pas que l'un ou l'autre aurait imaginé que des élèves étudieraient ses œuvres à l'école.
5. Les limericks de Lear sont à la fois amusants et faciles à retenir.
6. Si les livres de Lewis Carroll plaisent à la fois aux adultes et aux enfants, c'est qu'ils ne sont ni futile ni pédants.

**EXPRESSION**

1. At the end of the day, Alice writes in her diary about her encounter with the Cheshire Cat.
2. In your opinion, what is madness?
3. Do you like fantasy in literature? Why or why not? Give examples to make your point.

**THE CATERPILLAR**

Analyze the difficulties of communication in the following excerpt, and compare with the text you have just studied.

"Who are you?" said the Caterpillar.
This was not an encouraging opening for a conversation. Alice replied, rather shyly, "I – I hardly know, Sir, just at present - at least I know who I was when I got up this morning, but I think I must have been changed several times since then."
"What do you mean by that?" said the Caterpillar sternly. "Explain yourself!"
"I can't explain myself, I'm afraid, Sir," said Alice, "because I'm not myself, you see."
"I don't see," said the Caterpillar.
"I'm afraid I can't put it more clearly," Alice replied very politely, "for I can't understand it myself to begin with; and being so many different sizes in a day is very confusing."
"It isn't," said the Caterpillar.
"Well, perhaps you haven't found it so yet," said Alice, "but when you have to turn into a chrysalis – you will some day, you know – and then after that into a butterfly, I should think you'll find it a little queer, won't you?"
"Not a bit," said the Caterpillar.
"Well, perhaps your feelings may be different," said Alice, "all I know is, it would feel very queer to me."
"You!" said the Caterpillar contemptuously. Who are you?"

“Give your evidence⁴,” said the King; "and don't be nervous, or I'll have you executed on the spot⁵.”

This did not seem to encourage the witness at all: he kept shifting from one foot to the other, looking uneasily at the Queen, and in his confusion he bit a large piece out of his teacup instead of the bread-and-butter.

Just at this moment Alice felt a very curious sensation, which puzzled her a good deal until she made out what it was: she was beginning to grow larger again, and she thought at first she would get up and leave the court, but on second thoughts she decided to remain where she was as long as there was room for her.

"I wish you wouldn't squeeze so," said the Dormouse⁶, who was sitting next to her. "I can hardly breathe."

"I can't help it," said Alice very meekly⁷: "I'm growing."

"You've no right to grow here," said the Dormouse.

"Don't talk nonsense," said Alice more boldly: "You know you're growing too."

"Yes, but I grow at a reasonable pace," said the Dormouse: "not in that ridiculous fashion." And he got up very sulkily⁸ and crossed over to the other side of the court.

All this time the Queen had never left off staring at the Hatter, and, just as the Dormouse crossed the court, she said to one of the officers of the court, "Bring me the list of the singers in the last concert!" on which the wretched⁹ Hatter trembled so, that he shook both his shoes off.

"Give your evidence," the King repeated angrily, "or I'll have you executed, whether you're nervous or not."

"I'm a poor man, your Majesty," the Hatter began, in a trembling voice, "– and I hadn't begun my tea – not above a week or so – and what with the bread-and-butter getting so thin – and the twinkling of the tea –"

"The twinkling of the what?" said the King.

"It began with the tea." the Hatter replied.

"Of course twinkling begins with a T!" said the King sharply. "Do you take me for a dunce¹⁰? Go on!"

"I'm a poor man," the Hatter went on, "and most things twinkled after that - only the March Hare¹¹ said -" "I didn't!" the March Hare interrupted in a great hurry.

"You did!" said the Hatter.

"I deny it!" said the March Hare.

"He denies it," said the King: "leave out that part."

"Well, at any rate, the Dormouse said –" the Hatter went on, looking anxiously round to see if he would deny it too: but the Dormouse denied nothing, being fast asleep.

"After that," continued the Hatter, "I cut some more bread-and-butter –"

"But what did the Dormouse say?" one of the jury asked.

"That I can't remember," said the Hatter.

"You must remember," remarked the King, "or I'll have you executed."

The miserable Hatter dropped his teacup and bread-and-butter, and went down on one knee. "I'm a poor man, your Majesty," he began.

"You're a very poor speaker," said the King.

Here one of the guinea pigs¹² cheered, and was immediately suppressed by the officers of the court. (As that is rather a hard word, I will just explain to you how it was done. They had a large canvas bag which tied up at the mouth with strings: into this they slipped the guinea-pig, head first, and then sat upon it.)

"I'm glad I've seen that done," thought Alice. "I've so often read in the newspapers, at the end of trials, 'There was some attempt at applause, which was immediately suppressed by the officers of the court,' and I never understood what it meant till now."

"If that's all you know about it, you may stand down," continued the King.

"I can't go no lower," said the Hatter: "I'm on the floor, as it is."

"Then you may sit down," the King replied.

Here the other guinea pig cheered, and was suppressed.

"Come, that finishes the guinea-pigs!" thought Alice. "Now we shall get on better."

"I'd rather finish my tea," said the Hatter, with an anxious look at the Queen, who was reading the list of singers.

"You may go," said the King; and the Hatter hurriedly left the court, without even waiting to put his shoes on.

"– and just take his head off outside," the Queen added to one of the officers; but the Hatter was out of sight before the officer could get to the door.

Lewis Carroll Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland (1865) (Chapter XI - Who Stole the Tarts?)
READ & UNDERSTAND

1. Read the whole excerpt and make a list of the characters.

2. The passage can be divided into seven parts. Say where each begins and ends. Give the main points or themes for each of them.

3. Re-read the statements made by Alice’s sentences in direct speech and the passages in which her inner thoughts are revealed. What conclusions can you draw?

4. Why is no date mentioned?

5. Find an example that shows the narrator-author is omniscient.

ANALYZE THE LANGUAGE

1. Focus on all the adverbs in –ly. What do you notice? What impression does it convey?

2. Pick out six words that belong to the lexical field of the law. What can you infer from this?

3. Read this definition of a pun: “an amusing use of a word or phrase that has two meanings, or of words having the same sound but different meanings.” (Longman Dictionary of Contemporary English). Try and find some puns in the passage.

4. Lewis Carroll often makes his point by inventing illogical situations. Select six examples.

STUDY CHARACTERIZATION

1. Pick out:
   a) the three ways in which the Hatter is referred to;
   b) the four sentences in which his physical attitude is depicted.

2. Tick among the following assertions those that may apply to the King. Be ready to quote the text orally to justify your answers:
   a) He wants to have the last word.
   b) He is threatening.
   c) He is quite fair.
   d) He is pitiless.
   e) He feels superior.
   f) He is spiteful (i.e. he wants to harm).
   g) He is impartial.

SEE HOW IT IS DONE

1. The text is
   a) an eye-witness account of a trial
   b) a parody of a trial
   c) the recapitulation of a trial

2. Where might such a trial take place?

3. Show how the witness is totally unsettled by the method of interrogation.
4. What people are present in the court? Give the functions of those whose role is described. What might be the role of the others? What is expected of them?

5. Has the Hatter any important evidence to give?

6. Do you think the March Hare and the Dormouse actually said anything?

7. Look at the quotations from the text below and match them with the characteristics of trials in totalitarian regimes.

   a) Give your evidence or I'll have you executed.  
   b) The Queen never stopped staring at the Hatter.  
   c) I'm a poor man.  
   d) He denies it, leave out that part!  
   e) One of the guinea pigs was immediately suppressed.  
   f) And just take his head off.

   a) suppression of applause  
   b) bullying of witnesses  
   c) summary execution  
   d) eradication of witnesses' comments  
   e) intimidation  
   f) defense in terms of class.

8. What impression do you have of the King and the Queen?

LITERARY APPRECIATION

1. There is in the text a great deal of word play that satirizes the kind of authority of court hearings. Give two examples.

2. Lewis Carroll is a satirist who criticizes morals and manners but he is also a humorist who mocks human nature with sympathy. Illustrate this by analyzing the exchange between Alice and the dormouse.

3. Give a list of all the things that the Hatter did that are meant to make you laugh.

4. Pick out the humorous remark that is based on a rather weak play on the word "tea". Explain the confusion.

5. What characterizes Lewis Carroll's attitude to authority? Do you share it?

WRITE ABOUT IT

Rewrite the King's remarks, as they would be pronounced by a judge in a democracy.

LANGUAGE IN CONTEXT

1. Find all the synonyms of to kill in the text.

2. Comment on the sentence I can't go no lower. What does it tell us about the speaker?

3. Rephrase the sentence: I'll have you executed, starting: I'll order the executioner ...

4. Turn the passage: She thought at first → for her (l. 5-6) into direct speech.

5. What is the value of may l. 44 and l. 48?

LIMERICK

Read this limerick and try to write your own.

There was an Old Man with a beard,  
Who said, “It is just as I feared!  
Two Owls and a Hen,  
Four Larks and a Wren,  
Have all built their nests in my Beard!”

Edward Lear, Book of Nonsense, 1855.
TRADUCTION

I. TECHNIQUES DE TRADUCTION

1. La transposition
Il s'agit d'un changement de catégorie grammaticale : un nom traduit par un verbe, un adjectif par un nom, etc.

*a medical student* → *un étudiant en médecine*

*What's your name?* → *Comment t'appelles-tu?*


No entry → Défense d'entrer

He hurried past the store. → *Il passa devant le magasin en courant.*

2. La modulation
C'est le changement de point de vue. Là où une langue voit un verre à moitié plein, l'autre peut préférer voir le verre à moitié vide. Là où une langue voit un tout, l'autre ne voit qu'une partie.

*He didn't mind doing the washing up.* → *Il faisait volontiers la vaisselle.*

*Who knows? You may be right.* → *Qui sait ? Tu n'as peut-être pas tort.*

*I came face to face with my enemy.* → *Je me suis retrouvé nez à nez avec mon ennemi.*

3. L'équivalence
Elle s'impose lorsque la traduction littérale aboutit à des non-sens ou ne connoté rien dans la langue cible.

*They are as like as two peas.* → *Ils se ressemblent comme deux gouttes d'eaux*

*He came in like a bull in a china shop.* → *Il est entré comme un chien dans un jeu de quilles.*

*Il est entré comme un éléphant dans un magasin de porcelaine.*

4. L'adaptation
Il s'agit de permettre au lecteur de la traduction de comprendre une situation dont il n'a pas l'expérience dans son pays.

*He kissed his little daughter on the mouth.* → *Il embrassa tendrement sa petite fille.*

II. POINTS-FAUTES
Les correcteurs du bac ont recours à un système dit de "points-fautes" dont il faut avoir une idée au moins approximative:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>type d'erreur / type de « trouvaille »</th>
<th>pénalité / bonification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>faute d'orthographe (usage)</td>
<td>-1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faute d'orthographe (accord, conjugaison)</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faux-sens</td>
<td>-2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>calque de structure anglaise</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faute de temps</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faute de mode</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contresens sur un mot</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mot oubliéd</td>
<td>-3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contresens sur un segment de phrase</td>
<td>-5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>contresens sur proposition :</td>
<td>le total des points-fautes prévus sur cette proposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>faute de construction</td>
<td>-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-sens</td>
<td>-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>omission d'une proposition:</td>
<td>maximum de points-fautes pouvant être appliqués à cette proposition</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>absence régulière de majuscule et de ponctuation:</td>
<td>une seule fois -5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trouvaille sur un mot</td>
<td>+2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>traduction qui témoigne d'un sens de ta langue, d'une bonne perception du ton, bonne reformulation sur tout un segment</td>
<td>+3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>