

Alice's Adventures in Wonderland

Lewis Carroll

What is wrong with the Cat's proof that Alice must be mad?

TOTAL TIME

PASSAGE

30 minutes	We're all mad here
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FIND THE ANCHOR TEXT

Use the Anchor Text Table of Contents in the Enhanced Reader to open the START anchor. Then use the dropdown to select the END anchor.

SECTION / LOCATION	Chapter VI · Pig and Pepper
START	But I don't want to go among mad people
END	You must be, said the Cat, or you wouldn't have come here.
PASSAGE ID	sec-alice-02

THE MOVE

Test circular reasoning inside comic dialogue

WHY THIS PASSAGE

The Cat's argument says Alice must be mad because she came to a place where everyone is mad. The conclusion is hidden inside the premise, so the proof never gives independent evidence for what it claims.

MARK

Number the Cat's steps of reasoning. Circle any step that assumes the conclusion before proving it. Write CIRCULAR beside the point where 'you are here' becomes evidence that 'you are mad.'

NOTICE

- What would the Cat need to prove independently for the argument to work?
- How does the premise already contain the conclusion?

- Why does circular reasoning sound playful in dialogue even though it proves nothing?

THINK

Answer provisionally: What is wrong with the Cat's proof that Alice must be mad? Choose the strongest interpretation you can defend from this passage alone.

WRITE

Write a short evidence-based response to: What is wrong with the Cat's proof that Alice must be mad? Use at least two details from the assigned passage and explain how they support your interpretation.

CLOSE

Name the single detail that most changed or sharpened your interpretation, and explain why.

STRONG ANSWER	The Cat's proof is circular because being in a place where everyone is mad becomes the evidence that Alice is mad, which already assumes the rule it needs to prove. No independent test is supplied.
EVIDENCE	Lay out the Cat's reasoning step by step and identify where the conclusion is smuggled into the premise.
WATCH FOR	Do not get distracted by whether Wonderland really is mad. Evaluate the structure of the argument.
SOLO	Read the exact passage independently.
SUPPORTED	Use narration and sentence highlighting while reading the same passage.
LISTENING	Listen to the exact passage; visual following is optional. Same question and evidence demand.

STUDENT PAGE · SAME PASSAGE, SAME THINKING

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What is wrong with the Cat's proof that Alice must be mad?

START ANCHOR	But I don't want to go among mad people
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END ANCHOR

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

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OPEN THE MARKED PASSAGE IN TUMBLELIT

SOLO: read independently. SUPPORTED: use narration + highlighting. LISTENING: listen to the exact passage. The question and evidence task stay the same.

1. MARK - Number the Cat's steps of reasoning. Circle any step that assumes the conclusion before proving it. Write CIRCULAR beside the point where 'you are here' becomes evidence that 'you are mad.'
2. NOTICE - What would the Cat need to prove independently for the argument to work? How does the premise already contain the conclusion? Why does circular reasoning sound playful in dialogue even though it proves nothing?
3. THINK - Answer provisionally: What is wrong with the Cat's proof that Alice must be mad?
4. WRITE - Write a short response using at least two pieces of evidence from this passage.

Use evidence from the assigned passage. Show what you noticed and how the text supports your interpretation.