

The Alice Sound



VICTORIAN WORDS - SYNONYMS

WRITING RESOURCE



VICTORIAN WORDS - SYNONYM EXERCISE

Languages change and evolve over time. The English that the Victorians used was often quite different to our own.

Here are a few examples

'Let's pretend the glass has gone all soft like gauze, so that we can get through. Why, it's turning into a sort of mist now, **I declare!**' = it really is turning into (*Looking-Glass*, chapter 1) [gauze = a thin, see-through fabric]

'They stood so still that she quite forgot they were alive [...]' 'If you think we're wax-works,' he said, 'you ought to pay, you know. Wax-works weren't made to be looked at for nothing. **Nohow!**' '**Contrariwise,**' added the one marked 'DEE', 'if you think we're alive, you ought to speak.' (*Looking-Glass*, chapter 4) = No way! On the contrary/Just the opposite... [wax-works = life-size models of people made of wax].

Today we might say 'Wax-works so weren't made to be looked at for nothing'

'I hope you're not much tired?' she said at last. 'Nohow. And thank you very much for asking,' said Tweedledum. 'So much **obliged!**' added Tweedledee. = I'm very grateful (*Looking-Glass*, chapter 4)





VICTORIAN WORDS - SYNONYM EXERCISE

In addition, Carroll loves words! Some of them might not be very familiar to you. Have a look at the lines from the two books below – which are all used in the lyrics of Paul Rissmann's concert suites – and have a go at finding and circling another word which means the same thing:

TASK:

Wonderland

'Oh! The Duchess, the Duchess! Oh! Won't she be **savage** if I've kept her waiting!' (chapter 2)

- a) exhausted b) starving c) fierce
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'Please, Ma'am, is this New Zealand? Or Australia? [...] And what an **ignorant** little girl she'll think me for asking!' (chapter 1)

- a) smelly b) stupid c) adorable
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'I speak **severely** to my boy, I beat him when he sneezes;
For he can thoroughly enjoy the pepper when he pleases' (chapter 6)

- a) loudly b) through a sieve c) harshly



Looking-Glass

'It isn't **manners** for us to begin, you know' said the Rose (chapter 2)

- a) helpful b) polite c) legal
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'That's the effect of living backwards,' the Queen said kindly: 'it always makes one a little **giddy** at first - ' (chapter 5)

- a) hungry b) political c) dizzy
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'...one can't believe impossible things.' 'I **daresay** you haven't had much practice,' said the Queen. 'When I was your age, I always did it for half-an-hour. Why, sometimes I've believed as many as six impossible things before breakfast.' (chapter 5)

- a) expect b) hear c) bet you 50 pence
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'It's very **provoking**,' Humpty Dumpty said after a long silence, looking away from Alice as he spoke, 'to be called an egg – very!' (chapter 6)

- a) flattering b) annoying c) inspiring

