

# Stories and Seas and Similarities, Oh My!

## An ELA Lesson



**Objective:** The students will be able to compare and contrast the literary elements of magical realistic literature using *Haroun and the Sea of Stories* and *Alice in Wonderland*.

### Content Area TEKS:

English Language Arts and Reading, Grade 6:  
§110.22.b.5.F Comprehension skills:  
listening, speaking, reading, writing, and  
thinking using multiple texts; make  
inferences and use evidence to support  
understanding

### Theatre TEKS:

Theatre, Middle School 1: §117.211.c.1.F  
Foundations: inquiry and understanding;  
identify the structure and form in examples  
of dramatic literature

### Additional Application TEKS:

English Language Arts and Reading, Reading  
(Elective) §110.25.b.4.F The student  
comprehends selections using a variety of  
strategies: analyze and use both narrative  
and expository text structures: sequence,  
description, problem/solution,  
compare/contrast, and cause/effect;

Level of Blooms Taxonomy:  
Analyze

Recommended Grade Level:  
6th Grade

Time Needed: 30-40 minutes

### Materials Needed:

Haroun Handout (provided)

Alice Handout (provided)

Pencil

Paper

Link to hook video:

<https://tinyurl.com/harounalice>

- Alice in Wonderland Clip

Whiteboard/butcher paper on the  
wall

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### Instructions:

Hook: Show the students the Alice in Wonderland clip. Tell the students to begin to think about any similarities they can see between Haroun and Alice in Wonderland, but do not have them discuss yet. (3-4 minutes)

### Step by Step Activity Details:

1. Have the class divide in half— so that there are two groups. Pass out copies of the Haroun Handout to one group, and copies of the Alice Handout to the other group. Have the students individually read the summaries on their respective handout. (5 min)
2. Write down in columns the following literary elements on the whiteboard/paper— setting, protagonist, antagonist, supporting characters, conflict, and resolution— then, discuss the definition of each literary element in order to refresh the students' memories of the elements. In each group, have the students identify each literary element listed within their story. For example: the protagonist of Alice in Wonderland is Alice. The settings of Haroun include The Valley of K, The Sea of Stories, etc.. There may be multiple answers depending on each story. On the whiteboard/butcher paper, write down the answers the students have come up with in their groups. (13-15 min)
3. Have the students compare and contrast the literary elements of each story. Discuss: Are there more similarities or differences between the two works? Since Haroun was published after Alice, can the students see where Haroun's playwright — Salman Rushdie— might have drawn inspiration from parts of Alice, since both are a part of the magical realism genre? (10-12 min)

Closure: Ask the students: What do these literary elements do for the story in each piece individually? In relation to each other? Why are they important? (5 min)

Assessment: Did the students find a variety of similarities/differences between the two pieces? From the list of similarities/differences, were they surface-level, or were there deeper connections made?



## Haroun Handout

### *Haroun and the Sea of Stories:*

Haroun Khalifa lives with his father Rashid, a famous storyteller, and his mother Soraya, until she is seduced by their neighbor Mr. Sengupta and leaves. Rashid is hired to speak on behalf of local politician but fails and only manages to stutter. The two are taken to the Valley of K by Mr. Butt, to speak for another politician. Attempting to sleep aboard the politician's yacht, Haroun discovers Iff the Water Genie, assigned to remove Rashid's imagination, and demands conversation against this decision with Iff's supervisor. They are then carried to the Sea of Stories by an artificial intelligence, nicknamed Butt. Haroun learns that the Sea of Stories is endangered by Khattam-Shud. In the Kingdom of Gup, King Chattergy, Prince Bolo, General Kitab, and the Walrus announce their plans for war against the neighbouring kingdom of Chup, to recapture Bolo's betrothed Princess Batcheat. Rashid joins them here, having witnessed Batcheat's kidnapping. After, Haroun and his companions join the Guppee army of Pages toward Chup, where they befriend Mudra, Khattam-Shud's former second-in-command. Haroun, Iff, Butt the Hoopoe, and Mali, investigate the Sea's Old Zone, are captured by Khattam-Shud's animated shadow, who plans to plug the Story Source. Before he can, Mali destroys the machines used to poison the Sea, and Haroun destroys the shadow. In Chup, the Guppee army destroy the Chupwalas' army and release Princess Batcheat; and Khattam-Shud himself is crushed beneath a collapsing statue. After, the Walrus promises Haroun a happy ending of his own story. Back in the human world, Rashid reveals Haroun's adventures to local citizens, who expel Snooty Buttoo. When Rashid and Haroun return home, Soraya has returned to her son and husband.



## Alice Handout

A very bored Alice spots a White Rabbit in a waistcoat passing by, exclaiming that he is “late for a very important date.” She chases him, following him into a rabbit hole. She sees him leave through a tiny door, and shrinks down to fit through by drinking from a bottle marked “Drink Me.” As she continues to follow the Rabbit, she meets Tweedledum and Tweedledee. Alice finds the Rabbit again, and continues following him. Along the way, she meets a garden of talking flowers, and a Caterpillar. Alice meets the Cheshire Cat, who tells her to visit the Mad Hatter or the March Hare to find out where the Rabbit is. She finds them having a mad tea party. As she is about to leave, the Rabbit appears, continuing to exclaim that he is late. Alice decides to go home, but she gets lost. The Cheshire Cat reappears and advises Alice to ask the Queen of Hearts for directions home. The Queen invites (forces) Alice to play against her in a croquet match. The Cheshire Cat appears again and plays a trick on the Queen, and makes it look like Alice was the prankster. But before the Queen can order her execution, the King suggests they have a trial. As the Queen orders Alice's execution, Alice eats the pieces of the Caterpillar's mushroom and grows large again. The Queen orders her execution, so Alice flees, and the Queen, King, and other characters give chase. When she reaches the small door she encountered at the beginning, Alice sees she is actually already outside, asleep. She yells at herself to wake up; she does, and goes home for tea.