

Worksheet 1. The Adventure of Alice Hindman (teacher version)

1. Describe Alice's appearance. Is it grotesque? Why, or why not?

As a young girl, she was pretty, but now, at twenty-seven, she is just beginning to look a bit grotesque, with her large head and slightly stooped body.

2. What happened between Alice and Ned Currie years ago when he was still in Winesburg? Was it grotesque?

They were in love and shared a sexual experience that both found deeply moving and meaningful. There was nothing grotesque about it.

3. Why didn't the relationship between Alice and Ned grow and flourish?

He moved to Cleveland in search of a newspaper job and later to Chicago, where he nearly forgot about Alice. She, on the other hand, spent years waiting and longing for him. Time and distance intervened; he moved on, but she did not.

4. In what ways had Alice become grotesque by the time she was twenty-seven? Why?

She became rigid, fixated on saving money, and compulsive about her possessions. Her mind often dwelled in fantasy. She felt herself getting stranger and odder in her loneliness, but seemed unable to snap out of it.

5. With what qualities does the story associate youth and age?

Youth seems a time of promise, while age (even at twenty-seven) is associated with frustration and disappointment.

6. What does Will Hurley add to the story?

Will represents a lost opportunity for a real relationship. Alice, even eleven years later, cannot or will not let Ned Currie go.

7. What is grotesque about the "adventure" with the somewhat-deaf elderly man?

Everything! Alice's bizarre thoughts and behavior result from her loneliness and frustration.

8. How does the story as a whole connect with the insights expressed in the prologue story, "The Book of the Grotesque"?

Alice held on to the one truth she had found, her love for Ned Currie, disregarding all others. In time that became a falsehood, and a pretty young girl began the years-long process of becoming a twisted personality.