

A Reader's Theater adaptation of Barbara Kerley's book *What to Do About Alice?*
How Alice Roosevelt broke the rules, charmed the world, and drove her father Teddy
CRAZY!

by Dorcas Hand, January, 2009

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Characters

Narrator 1

Narrator 2

Narrator 3

Narrator 4

Narrator 5

Narrator 1: Theodore Roosevelt had a small problem.

Narrator 2: It wasn't herding thousands of cattle across the Dakota badlands. He'd done that.

Narrator 3: It wasn't leading the Rough Riders as they charged up Kettle Hill. He'd done that, too.

Narrator 4: He'd bagged a grizzly bear, captured outlaws, governed the state of New York, and served as vice president of the United States, and *still* he had a problem.

Narrator 5: Her name was Alice. Alice Lee Roosevelt was hungry to *go* places, *meet* people, *do* things.

Narrator 3: Father called it "Running Riot". Alice called it "Eating Up the World".

Narrator 2: From the time she was a little girl, Alice ate up the world.

Narrator 4: Her mother had died in 1884, two days AFTER Alice was born. Father was sad. Everyone was sad for Alice.

Narrator 1: But she didn't remember her mother. She did not want to grow up hearing them say, "The Poor Little Thing." She wanted to see how high the springs sprang on her grandmother's favorite sofa.

Narrator 5: Father remarried and had more children. But every morning Alice still cried, "Now, Pig!" until Father gave her a piggyback ride downstairs to breakfast.

Narrator 2: The family moved between New York and Washington DC following Father's jobs. Wherever they went, Alice ate up the world.

Narrator 4: She rowed across Oyster Bay for picnics on the beach. She gamboled through the parks of Washington pretending to be a fiery horse.

Narrator 3: She learned to love crusty French rolls and English tea served "piping hot".

Narrator 1: She read voraciously and drank in Father's tales of Davy Crockett, George Armstrong Custer, and Daniel Bpoone.

Narrator 2: Instead of going to school, Alice was taught at home, with lots of time for exploring.

Narrator 3: In New York City, she watched students of Miss Spence's boarding school walk oh-so-primly down the sidewalk.

Narrator 4: That didn't look like much fun to Alice. She wanted to own a pet monkey and wear pants.

Narrator 5: As Alice got older, doctors noticed that her legs weren't growing properly. For the next several years, she'd have to wear braces. Sometimes while she walked or ran, the braces would lock up, pitching Alice face-first to the ground. She did not want anyone saying, "The Poor Little Thing!" about *that* either.

Narrator 4: When Alice's leg braces finally came off, Father encouraged her to ride a bicycle. He hoped it would help her feel less "cautious".

Narrator 3: Alice loved her new freedom. She roamed the streets of Washington from the Capitol steps to the gypsy camps by the racetrack.

Narrator 2: She joined an all-boys club. The boys arrived in disguise...until Father discovered the ruse. He grumbled Alice was UNRULY and INCONSIDERATE. She was turning into a TOMBOY!

Narrator 1: Enough was enough. It was time for Alice to attend Mss Spence's boarding school and learn to be a proper young lady.

Narrator 3: Will Alice go to Miss Spence's? To find out, you'll have to read Barbara Kerley's *What to Do About Alice?* It's short and fun with great illustrations by Edwin Fotheringham.