

Panning 'Alice in Wonderland'

By Kathryn Reed

Just because it's a classic doesn't mean it's a good book. Such is the case with "Alice in Wonderland."

That was my opinion and that of the majority of the book club I'm in. A classic was chosen for the December book, and this children's selection was the book of choice.

I'm not sure 92 pages have ever been so painful. As I was reading it, I kept thinking – no wonder I have never read this before.

I can handle talking animals just fine, after all, "Charlotte's Web" is one of my all-time favorite books. But there is something about Alice that isn't likable. This seems out of place in a children's book, that the main character is not someone you are rooting for, so to speak.

I really didn't like any of the characters. I didn't even like the story. I'm still trying to figure how it has relevance today and why it's still in circulation.

Alice is definitely adventurous. Precocious would be another word to describe her. All of that is good. The best part about this book is that a girl is the lead character – and that she is strong. Remember, this was written in 1865.

Each book club member rates the book on whether they liked it, would recommend it and its literary value. Most of us didn't like it and would not recommend it. I argued it had literary value. Any book this old, that is still being talked about, and is read by adults and children has staying power for some reason. I just can't figure out that reason.