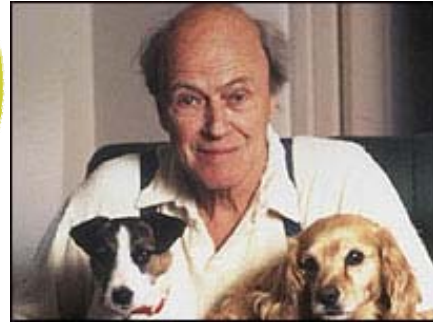


## ROALD DAHL

“When you’re writing a book, with people in it as opposed to animals, it is no good having people who are ordinary, because they are not going to interest your readers at all.”



Roald Dahl was born in Wales in 1916. He first began writing in 1942, and although for the first fifteen years of his career he wrote short stories for adults, he is most well-known for his children's books. His first book, *James and the Giant Peach*, had its roots in bedtime stories for his daughters. Several years later, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was published, which became a success, and his successive children's books were all bestsellers. Several of his children's books have been made into movies, the classic being *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, and the later 2005 version *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*.

Given name is pronounced "Roo-aal";  
Born September 13, 1916, in Llandaff, South Wales;  
Education: Graduate of British public schools, 1932.  
Military/Wartime Service: Royal Air Force, fighter pilot, 1939-45; became wing commander.

# Matilda

By Roald Dahl

## About this book:

Matilda is an extraordinary girl, a child of wondrous intelligence- unfortunately she has neglectful and deeply stupid parents. Harry and Zinnia Wormwood are too wrapped up in their own little lives to care, or even to notice, that their daughter is a budding genius. Matilda is in love with books and learning. When the Wormwoods finally grant Matilda's wish to attend school, they bundle her off to Crunchem Hall, a bleak brick prison where students cower before the whip-hand and fist of a hulking monster-Principal, Agatha Trunchbull. Amid Crunchem's darkness, Matilda finds a single light in warm-hearted Miss Honey, the first grade teacher who recognizes the girl's remarkable skills. Miss Honey also sees a very special talent that allows the spirited girl to turn the tables on the wicked grown-ups in her world. Matilda is a modern fairytale.

## Discussion Questions:

1. Matilda's parents treat her very badly, and they don't seem to realize how special and talented she really is. How would you react if you were treated this way by your parents?
2. Visiting the library becomes a very important part of Matilda's daily routine. Why? Who teaches Matilda how to read? Why do her parents feel that watching TV is more important than reading? Which do you prefer?
3. What does Matilda's father do for a living? Matilda feels her father's business dealings are dishonest; do you agree? Is Mr. Wormwood really as smart as he thinks he is? What does Mrs. Wormwood do all day?
4. Why does Matilda play pranks on her father? Does he deserve it? Do you find the pranks funny?
5. Matilda is very pleased to be allowed to go to school. What is her first day like? Miss Honey instantly recognizes that Matilda is a special student. What does she do about it? Why won't The Trunchbull or the Wormwood's listen?
6. Have you ever had a teacher like The Trunchbull? What terrible things does she do to the students at Crunchem Hall? Why do some of the children stand up to her? How do they do it?
7. What is Matilda's special gift? How does she use this gift to help Miss Honey?

Resources referenced:

kidsreads.com, teenreads.com, bookrags.com, teachingbooks.com, multcolib.org, barnesandnoble.com,  
And MPL Staff.