

# Matilda



By

Roald Dahl

A Novel Study  
by Joel Michel Reed

# Matilda

By Roald Dahl



## Table of Contents

Suggestions and Expectations	3
List of Skills	4
Synopsis / Author Biography	5
Student Checklist	6
Reproducible Student Booklet	7
Answer Key	45

**About the author:** Joel Reed has over 70 published novel studies and is the author of four novels. For information on his work and literature, please visit [www.reednovelstudies.com](http://www.reednovelstudies.com)

Copyright © 2013 Joel Reed

Revisions Completed in 2022

All rights reserved by author.

Permission to copy for single classroom use only.

Electronic distribution limited to single classroom use only.

Not for public display.

# Matilda

By Roald Dahl



## Suggestions and Expectations

This curriculum unit can be used in a variety of ways. Each chapter of the novel study focuses on three chapters and is comprised of five of the following different activities:

- Before You Read
- Vocabulary Building
- Comprehension Questions
- Language Activities
- Extension Activities

### Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases. . . including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story . . . **and many others.**

A principal expectation of the unit is that students will develop their skills in reading, writing, listening and oral communication, as well as in reasoning and critical thinking. Students will also be expected to provide clear answers to questions and well-constructed explanations. It is critical as well that students be able to relate events and the feelings of characters to their own lives and experiences and describe their own interpretation of a particular passage.

A strength of the unit is that students can work on the activities at their own pace. Every activity need not be completed by all students. A **portfolio cover** is included (p.7) so that students may organize their work and keep it all in one place. A **Student Checklist** is also included (p.6) so that a record of completed work may be recorded.

# Matilda

By Roald Dahl

## List of Skills

### Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homonyms
3. Identifying/creating *alliteration*
4. Use of capitals and punctuation
5. Identifying syllables
6. Identify *foreshadowing*.
7. Identify *personification*
8. Use of singular / plural nouns
9. Identifying parts of speech
10. Determining alphabetical order
11. Identify/create *similes*
12. Identify *anagrams*

### Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

### Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Identify conflict in the story
3. Complete Five W's Chart
4. Identify *cliffhangers*
5. Identify the climax of the novel.

### Character Activities

1. Determine character traits
2. Relating personal experiences

### Creative and Critical Thinking

1. Research
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Complete an Observation Sheet

### Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a collage
3. Create an Information Card
4. Design a cover for the novel
5. Create a comic strip
6. Design a Brochure

# Matilda

By *Roald Dahl*

## Synopsis

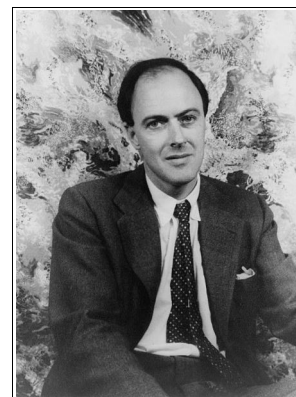
Matilda Wormwood`s father is a mean crooked crook. And her mother`s just plain stupid. They think Matilda is a nuisance who should watch more TV and read fewer books! But her lovely teacher Miss Honey thinks Matilda is a genius. Matilda has a few extraordinary tricks up her sleeve, so her horrible parents and even more horrible head mistress had better watch out. (Courtesy of the publisher – Puffin Books)

A complete synopsis and other helpful reviews can be found on the following website:  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matilda\\_\(novel\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Matilda_(novel))

## Author Biography

*Roald Dahl*

Few authors of children`s books have been as prolific or successful as **Roald Dahl** (1916-1990). His novels have been read and enjoyed by countless children the world over and include such classics as ***Charlie and the Chocolate Factory***, ***Danny the Champion of the World***, ***James and the Giant Peach*** and ***George's Marvelous Medicine***. Shortly before his death, the top five selling children`s books in Great Britain were all authored by Dahl.



Born to Norwegian immigrants, Roald Dahl hailed from Llandaff, Wales. Despite losing his father when he was only four, Roald claimed to have had a most happy and eventful childhood. Although not a particularly good student, Roald did excel at athletics.

Dahl was married to the famous actress, **Patricia Neal**, for many years and they had five children together. The couple were, however, divorced after thirty years of marriage. Roald began his writing career as a short story writer, and didn`t pen his first children`s novel until 1961 – ***James and Giant Peach***. This was followed by several more bestsellers.

Roald Dahl passed away in 1990 at the age of 74. In Great Britain the anniversary of Dahl's birthday on 13 September has become widely celebrated as **Roald Dahl Day**.



# Matilda



*By Roald Dahl*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

# Matilda

By Roald Dahl

Chapters 1-3

*The Reader of Books – Mr Wormwood, the Great Car Dealer – The Hat and the Superglue*



## Before you read the chapter:

Write a brief summary about what you believe the plot-line of 'Matilda' will be about.




## Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

mystery	occasionally	normal	mooch
mother	book	customers	discovered

1. Matilda's brother Michael was a perfectly \_\_\_\_\_ boy, but the sister, as I said, was something to make your eyes pop.
2. We've got a lovely telly with a twelve-inch screen and now you're asking for a \_\_\_\_\_!
3. 'I thought some were very poor,' Matilda said, 'but others were lovely. I liked The Secret Garden best of all. It was full of \_\_\_\_\_.'
4. During the first week of Matilda's visits Mrs Phelps had said to her, 'Does your \_\_\_\_\_ walk you down here every day and then take you home?'
5. 'Just \_\_\_\_\_ around and watch the telly.'
6. She was someone who minded her own business and had long since \_\_\_\_\_ it was seldom worth while to interfere with other people's children.
7. \_\_\_\_\_ she made Bovril or Ovaltine.
8. 'No one ever got rich being honest,' the father said. '\_\_\_\_\_ are there to be diddled.'



# Questions



1. Describe the **setting** of the story as Chapter One begins.


2. What do parents often do with their children that many people find so revolting?


3. How did Matilda's father use sawdust in order to trick his customers?


b. How did Matilda's father manage to turn back the mileage in the cars he sold?


c. What trick did Matilda play on her father because he was cheating his customers?


## Language Activity



**A.** The author seems to enjoy using **alliteration** – a literary device where the author repeats the same sound at the beginning of several words. Here's an example: “. . . **g**rouching, **g**rouching, **g**rumbling about something or other.”



Using your imagination, create your own examples of **alliteration** from the following topics. Each example must contain a minimum of three words.

The purr of a kitten.	
Someone using a typewriter.	
A lion roaring.	

**B.** A **simile** is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. An example from Chapter One is “. . . *Where the inner band had stuck to the hair all around the sides and back, she had to chop the hair right off right to the skin so that he finished up with a bald white ring round his head, like some sort of a monk.*”



What two things are being compared in this example?

--	--

Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) a car speeding away from a traffic light

--

b) a man kicking a soccer ball

--

## Extension Activity

### A. A Book Cover

Create a book cover for *Matilda*. Be sure to include the title, author, and a picture that will make other students want to read the novel.



## B. Storyboard

A storyboard is a series of pictures that tell about an important event in a story. A storyboard can describe one scene – or the entire novel.



Complete the storyboard below illustrating the events described in the first 3 chapters of *Matilda*. You may wish to practice your drawings on a separate piece of paper.

1	2
3	4
5	6