APPENDICES

The Summary of the Story

Originally published in 1988, “Matilda” was one of the last books of Roald Dahl works before his death in 1990. The heroine of this books also carries its name. *Matilda*, the main character in the story, is small child with an incredible intelligence, even as a small child. Living with her boorish parent and oblivious brother, she teaches herself to read from the various magazine and newspapers that she found in the house. Her parents are completely indifferent to their only daughter and it is only by playing small tricks on them when they have been particularly nasty that little *Matilda* is able to keep a hold on her sanity. By age five and half *Matilda* has read all the children’s books in the library and quite a few of the adult ones as well. On entering school for the first time, our protagonist comes face to face with a very worthy enemy. The head teacher, Miss Trunchbull, is the worst kind of dangerous violent adult. It is only through *Matilda*’s cleverness that this child is able to come to the aid of her teacher, Miss Honey, and save the school from the Trunchbull insanity. The Trunchbul, *Matilda*’s head master is known as a monster. She keeps children in a horrific torture device called *The Chokey*, a thing which resembles a toned – down iron maiden, or swings them through the air, often without any evidence they have actually committed a crime or simply because she does not like them. The Trunchbul treatment of her students is nothing short of child abuse and she seems to believe intimidation is the best method of teaching. She says her ideas of a perfect school would be “one in which there were no children at all”.

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Meanwhile, Matilda discovers she has *telekinetic* powers, a secret which she confides only to Miss Honey. She learned this when her best friend, Lavender, puts a newt in Miss Trunchbul’s water, and when Miss Trunchbul blames Matilda for it, Matilda gets so angry, she tips the glass over with her eyes. Miss Honey is very curious about Matilda’s powers and she takes Matilda to her home. They arrived at her cottage, where Matilda discovers Miss Honey is extremely poor. Matilda asks why, Miss Honey explains how when she was two years old her mother died and her father was a doctor, who needed someone to look after everything at home, so he invited her mother’s sister to come and live with him, but she turned out to be a mean person who treated Miss Honey very badly when not in the father’s presence.

When Miss Honey was five her father died, and the police decided that he had killed himself. Miss Honey had become her aunt’s slave and did everything her aunt told her to: cooking, cleaning, ironing. When Miss Honey was an adult, she wanted to go to university but her aunt would not allow it: however there was a teacher’s college that was forty minutes away and she went under the condition that she would keep up with her work. When she found a job the aunt used for feeding and clothing and Miss Honey was so terrified of her so that she agreed. She found the tiny cottage and rented it from a rhubarb farmer for 10 pence a week, and she covered it in honeysuckle and she planted hundreds of wildflowers, and she moved out her aunt’s house she finally got her freedom. Matilda asks who the aunt is and Miss Honey reveals that it is none other that Miss Trunchbul. With this information, Matilda formulates a plan as to how she gets rid of the Miss Trunchbul for good.
When Miss Trunchbull investigates Miss Honey’s class, Matilda uses her powers to write on the blackboard. She pretends to be the spirit of Miss Honey’s father and demands that Miss Trunchbull give that Miss Honey her wages and her father’s house. At the sight of seeing this being written as though by an invisible hand, Miss Trunchbull faints and is carried from the school by the teachers. The day following the chalkboard incident, Miss Trunchbull disappears, abandoning her brother – in – law’s house. Also, his will turns up, it is discovered that Miss Honey is the rightful heir to his property. Thereafter, Miss Honey moves into her father’s house and, with the Trunchbull gone, Matilda is moved into the top from where she loses all of her powers. Miss Honey believes that Matilda’s brain now has to work hard instead of accumulating spare “brainpower” the powers would need.

Meanwhile, the law catches up with Matilda’s father, who has been selling stolen cars. He decides to move the whole family to Spain, but Matilda asks them to let her stay with Miss Honey. They agree, as it is less of a brother, sign the adoption papers, and drive away forever. Matilda and Miss Honey become a loving family and they live together in Miss Honey’s father’s house.
A. Biography of Roald Dahl

Roald Dahl was born in Wales, on September 13, 1916 in llandaff of Norwegian parents. He spent his childhood in England and, at age 18, went to work for the Shell Oil Company in Africa. When World War II broke out, he joined the Royal Air Force and became a fighter pilot. At the age of 26 he moved to Washington, D.C., and it was there he began to write. His, first short story, which recounted his adventures in the war, was bought by the Saturday Evening Post, and so began a long and illustrious career. After establishing himself as a writer for adults, Dahl began writing children’s stories in the early 1960s while living in England with his family. His first stories were written as entertainment for his own children, to whom many of his books are dedicated.

Roald Dahl is now considered one of the most beloved storytellers of our time. Although he passed away in 1990, his popularity continues to increase as his fantastic novels, including James and the Giant Peach, Matilda, The BFG and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, delight an ever – growing legion of fans.

Roald Dahl was born to parents who were from Norway, but he was actually born in Wales. The famlily used to spend the summer holidays on little Norweigian island, swimming, fishing and going by boat. When Dahl was four years old, his father died, so his mother haad to organize the trip alone for herself and her six children. At school, he was always homesick. At St. Peter’s Prep School, all the letters home were controlled by the headmaster, and afterwards at Repton Public School, he had to wear a horrible school uniform (with braces, waist caot, hat and lots of buttons, all black). After school, Roald
Dahl didn’t go to university, but applied for a job at the Shell Company, because he got the was sure they would and him abroad. He was sent to East Africa, where he got the adventure he wanted: great heat, crocodiles, snakes and safaris. He lived in the jungle, learned to speak Swahili and suffered from Malaria. When the Second World War broke out, he went to Nairobi to join the Royal Air Force. He was a fighter pilot and shot down German lanes and got shot down himself. After six months in hospital he flew again.

In 1942, he went to Washington as Assistant Air Attach. There, he started writing short stories. In 1943, he published his first children’s book *The Gremlins* with Walt Disney and in 1945, his book of short stories appeared in the US. His marriage with the actress Patricia Neal was unhappy. During the marriage she suffered a stroke and when she regained consciousness, she could hardly read, count and talk. But Roald managed to nurse her back to health, so that she could act again. Nevertheless, he got divorced in 1983 and married Felicity Crosland. He received several awards such as Edgar Allan Poe award. His collections of short stories have been translated into many languages and have been best-sellers all over the world. Among them are *Someone Likes You, Sweet Mystery of Life, Kiss Kiss*, and Roald Dahl’s Book of Ghost Stories *Tales of the Unexpected* and the novel *My Uncle Oswald*.

His book are mostly fantasy, and full of imagination. They are always a little cruel, but without humor – a thrilling mixture of the grotesque and comic. A frequent motif is, that people are not what they appear to be. Mary Maloney in *Lamb to the Slaughter*, for example, is not a friendly widow, but a clever murderess. In his stories, the background is perfectly worked out: details are very close to reality.
Roald Dahl wrote books not only for grown-ups but also for children, such as *James and the Giant Peach*, *Fantastic Mr. Fox* and *The Gremlins*. About his children’s stories he said once: “I make my points by the exaggerating wildly. That’s the only way to get through to children.” Roald Dahl is perhaps the most popular and best-selling children’s book author. However, these stories are so sarcastic and humorous, that also adults appreciate reading them. (ibid: 46)

Publish in 1988, “*Matilda*” was one of the last books Roald Dahl wrote before his death in 1990. Most authors as they age become more cynical and dour. Think of the final writing of Dickens or Twain and how bitter they seemed in their late years. Then look at “Matilda”. Here we have a sweet charming little piece of literature about a girl that is both and interesting. Creating characters that you identify intrinsically with is not only difficulty but (in children’s books) sometimes near impossible. Reading “*Matilda*”, it becomes clear that Roald Dahl never lost his touch for creating wonderful original characters and situations.

This novel is tells about *Matilda* who is an exceptionally bright young girl with an insatiable appetite for books and reading. Her parent, Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood, think she is just a nuisance. *Matilda* thinks, rightly, that all they are interested in is watching TV and making money by cheating people. She decides to punish them. She soon discovers that she has supernatural power – telekinetic which are not only going to prove useful at home but also at Crunchem Hall School where *Matilda* and her classmates must contend with the scariest headmistress of the all – Miss Trunchbull.

As I mentioned before, Matilda is just a nice kid ever. Nice without becomes precious. She is just a swell child around. Through her, Dahl takes some mighty
fine cracks as his fellow kiddies lit authors. I was especially fond of the portion in which Matilda points out that through C.S Lewis and Tolkein are fine writers, “they are not many funny bits”. And as well as all know, Dahl is the master of the funny bit for kids. This book is crook is full of them too. It contains all the usual peculiar Dahl touches (like kids being swung out of the playground by their pig tails) as well as practical jokes nd nasty adults. The Trunchbull is perhaps the nastiest adult ever to grace the pages of the Dahl’s world. Definitely unhinged, she abuses the children around her, coming just shy of actual physical contact. It is amazing then that Dahl does not dispatch of her in a violent or crazy fashion. Dahl was quite soft in his old age, it seems. Roald Dahl died in 1990, at the age of 74.

The novel has awarded Federation of Children’s book Group Award (UK 1988) and voted “Nation’s Favorite Children’s book” in BBC Bookworm Poll (UK 1998)