



ROALD DAHL MATILDA

Illustrated by
Quentin Blake



Some reviews of *Matilda*

'Mischievous though she may be, there could hardly be a better heroine for today's children. Matilda is super-intelligent and, above all, a voracious reader!'

– *The Times*

'*Matilda* is the nation's favourite children's book, according to a poll of more than ten thousand people conducted by Waterstone's and BBC1's *Bookworm* programme' – *Sunday Times*

'One of the most popular children's books ever' – *Ottaker's Top Ten Favourite Children's Books* survey

'Roald Dahl and Quentin Blake have made an important and lasting contribution to children's literature'

– *Guardian*

Other books by Roald Dahl

THE BFG

BOY: TALES OF CHILDHOOD

BOY *and* GOING SOLO

CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY

CHARLIE AND THE GREAT GLASS ELEVATOR

THE COMPLETE ADVENTURES OF CHARLIE AND MR WILLY
WONKA

DANNY THE CHAMPION OF THE WORLD

GEORGE'S MARVELLOUS MEDICINE

GOING SOLO

JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH

THE WITCHES

For younger readers

THE ENORMOUS CROCODILE

ESIO TROT

FANTASTIC MR FOX

THE GIRAFFE AND THE PELLY AND ME

THE MAGIC FINGER

THE TWITS

Picture books

DIRTY BEASTS(*with Quentin Blake*)
THE ENORMOUS CROCODILE(*with Quentin Blake*)
THE GIRAFFE AND THE PELLY AND ME (*with Quentin Blake*)
THE MINPINS (*with Patrick Benson*)
REVOLTING RHYMES (*with Quentin Blake*)

Plays

THE BFG: PLAYS FOR CHILDREN (*Adapted by David Wood*)
CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY: A PLAY(*Adapted
by Richard George*)
FANTASTIC MR FOX: A PLAY(*Adapted by Sally Reid*)
JAMES AND THE GIANT PEACH: A PLAY (*Adapted by Richard
George*)
THE WITCHES: PLAYS FOR CHILDREN(*Adapted by David
Wood*)

Teenage fiction

THE GREAT AUTOMATIC GRAMMATIZATOR AND OTHER
STORIES
RHYME STEW
SKIN AND OTHER STORIES
THE VICAR OF NIBBLESWICKE
THE WONDERFUL STORY OF HENRY SUGAR AND SIX MORE

Find out more about Roald Dahl
by visiting the web site at
www.roalddahl.com



PUFFIN BOOKS

Published by the Penguin Group

Penguin Books Ltd, 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, England

Penguin Putnam Inc., 375 Hudson Street, New York, New York 10014, USA

Penguin Books Australia Ltd, 250 Camberwell Road, Camberwell, Victoria 3124, Australia

Penguin Books Canada Ltd, 10 Alcorn Avenue, Toronto, Ontario, Canada M4V 3B2

Penguin Books India (P) Ltd, 11 Community Centre, Panchsheel Park, New Delhi – 110 017, India

Penguin Books (NZ) Ltd, Cnr Rosedale and Airborne Roads, Albany, Auckland, New Zealand

Penguin Books (South Africa) (Pty) Ltd, 24 Sturdee Avenue, Rosebank 2196, South Africa

Penguin Books Ltd, Registered Offices: 80 Strand, London WC2R 0RL, England

www.penguin.com

First published by Johnathan Cape Ltd 1988

Published in Puffin Books 1989

Published in Puffin Modern Classics 2003

9

Text copyright © Roald Dahl Nominee Ltd, 1988

Illustrations copyright © Quentin Blake, 1988

Introduction copyright © Julia Eccleshare, 2003

All rights reserved

The author and publisher are grateful to the Trustees of the Estate of Dylan Thomas for permission to quote lines from 'In Country Sleep', from *The Poems* by Dylan Thomas, published by J. M. Dent & Sons

Except in the United States of America, this book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not, by way of trade or otherwise, be lent, re-sold, hired out, or otherwise circulated without the publisher's prior consent in any form of binding or cover other than that in which it is published and without a similar condition including this condition being imposed on the subsequent purchaser

British Library Cataloguing in Publication Data

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978-0-14-192945-3

Introduction

by Julia Eccleshare

Puff in Modern Classics series editor

How strange to be a child who loves books and reading, but who is criticized for it by her parents; how unusual to find a pupil who can do maths perfectly, yet is accused of cheating by her father when she answers a question correctly. Such a child is Matilda.

Roald Dahl's *Matilda* is a story of enormous warmth, celebrating intelligence, good teaching and, above all, a love of reading. And all of it is conveyed with the hallmarks of Dahl's storytelling: larger than life characters, scenes of comic excess that are sometimes tinged with savage overtones and just a little bit of magic to allow for unusual possibilities.

The characters – from Matilda's vile and despicable parents, Mr and Mrs Wormwood, and her villainous headmistress, the terrifying Miss Trunchbull, to the gloriously sweet-natured Miss Honey and Matilda – are as representative of the good and the bad as any of Dahl's creations. Their various faults are as ridiculous as their virtues are too good to be true.

And yet, through them, Dahl does, more than entertain. Juxtaposing these extremes, especially the underhand dealings of the Wormwoods and the terrifying scenes of

humiliation played out by Miss Trunchbull (only Dahl could turn a chocolate cake into a weapon of torture!), he makes a barbed commentary on some of the things that he most disliked about contemporary society. The bullying of children by adults stands at the top of the list.

For a generation and more, Roald Dahl has consistently topped the polls of children's favourite authors. His ability to speak directly to his readers, siding with them against adults where necessary while entertaining them with magical possibilities, has given him a unique position as a creator of empowering fantasies.



Now a musical on Broadway and streaming on Netflix!

Matilda is a sweet, exceptional young girl, but her parents think she's just a nuisance. She expects school to be different but there she has to face Miss Trunchbull, a kid-hating terror of a headmistress. When Matilda is attacked by the Trunchbull she suddenly discovers she has a remarkable power with which to fight back. It'll take a superhuman genius to give Miss Trunchbull what she deserves and Matilda may be just the one to do it! 'Matilda will surely go straight to children's hearts.' —The New York Times Book Review

