

Book Report on Matilda

This story is, quite simply, Roald Dahl at his best. Opening the cover to find the slightly tattered pages filled with uncomplicated illustrations, I am instantly transported back to my childhood. I can picture the places I sat to read this story, acquaint myself with the feelings of comfort, inspiration and amusement I experienced whenever I read it. It is one of my all-time favourites. In this book, Matilda discovers her love of books and by the age of three, has taught herself to read. At four she has read all the children's stories in the library. She is oblivious to her brilliance and her parents are less than encouraging. "What's wrong with the telly, for heaven's sake?" her father demands, while her mother insists that brains never got a woman anywhere.

It is not until Matilda attends school and meets the lovely Miss Honey that anyone begins to nurture her talent. But things don't become easier for Matilda there. She must survive a place ruled by the frightening and larger-than-life Miss Trunchbull who has Matilda in her sights, insisting she is "a nasty little worm".

Within the familiar schoolground setting, Roald Dahl takes his readers into the world of one little girl enduring cruelty, loneliness and an overwhelming power to teach lessons to the adults in her life. The combination of speaking directly to the reader and crawling into the minds of his characters, is classic Dahl. Only he could be responsible for dreaming up the amazing tales of disciplinary proceedings at Crunchem Hall Primary School.

This story is beautifully heartwarming; a surprising mix of humour, adventure and mystery. And, as with any Dahl story, Matilda provides a strong message to children: you can do it.

Oh, plus a message to grown-ups – treat your children nicely, as they're not as helpless as you may imagine!