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# Introduction

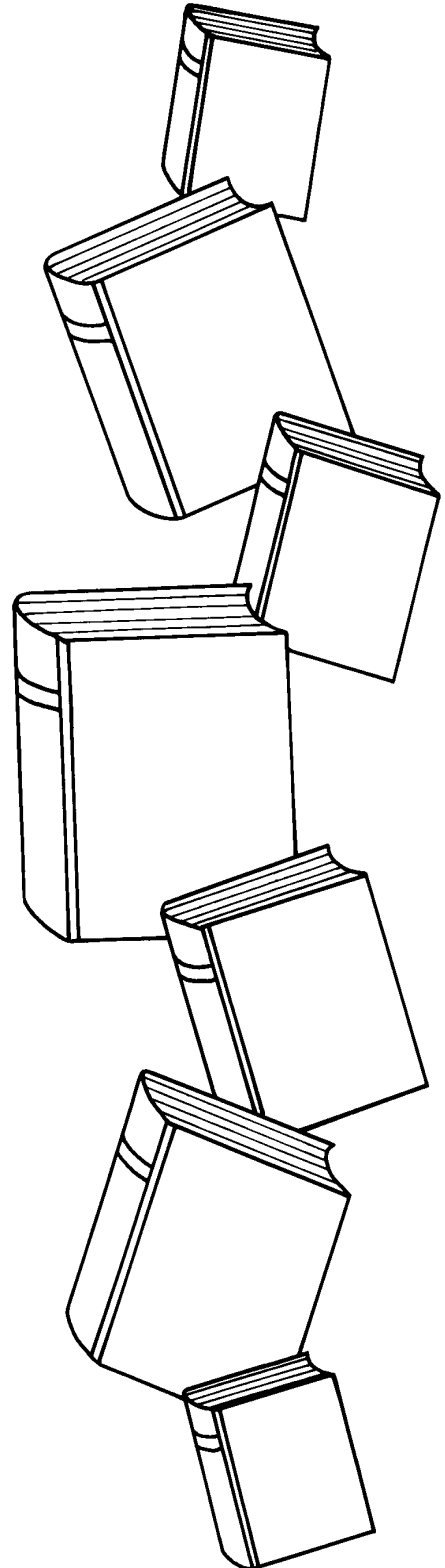
A good book can touch our lives like a good friend. It can stimulate our imaginations, inform our minds, inspire our higher selves, and fill our time with magic! With a good book, we are never lonely or bored. And a good book only gets better with time, because each reading brings us new meaning. Each new story is a treasure to cherish forever.

In *Literature Units*, we take great care to select books that will become treasured friends for life.

Teachers using this unit will find the following features to supplement their own valuable ideas.

- Sample Lesson Plans
- Pre-reading Activities
- A Biographical Sketch and Picture of the Author
- A Book Summary
- Vocabulary Lists and Suggested Vocabulary Activities
- Chapters grouped for study, with each section including
  - *quizzes*
  - *hands-on projects*
  - *co-operative learning activities*
  - *cross-curriculum connections*
  - *extensions into the reader's own life*
- Post-reading Activities
- Book Report Ideas
- A Culminating Activity
- Three Different Options for Unit Tests
- Bibliography of Related Reading
- Answer Key

We are confident that this unit will be a valuable addition to your literature planning and that as you use our ideas, your students will learn to treasure the stories to which you introduce them.



# Matilda

by Roald Dahl

(Transworld Publishers)

Matilda is a very unusual child. She is brilliant. Although she comes from a very ordinary and quite unconcerned family, she excels in everything she does. At the age of three, Matilda can read classics! Matilda begins to realise she is different by noticing that she and her family do not see eye to eye on many issues. Her father and mother are concerned with watching the “tellie” and other things that Matilda really has no interest in at all. She almost seems to have been born into the wrong family.

As Matilda’s thirst for knowledge grows, so does her need for information. She walks to the local library and befriends a kind librarian who helps her select books. Mrs. Phelps, the librarian, is the first person to realise Matilda’s genius.

Soon Matilda enters school and is put in the class of a wonderful and caring teacher, Miss Honey. She quickly sees Matilda is a genius, but, unfortunately, no one but she herself seems to care. The headmistress of the school, a mean and terrible woman—Miss Trunchbull—hates children and despises everyone. Miss Honey’s attempts to tell Matilda’s parents and the headmistress about Matilda fail.

Matilda’s school is an odd place. Miss Trunchbull runs it like a dictator, frightening and abusing children. Some of the children get back at Trunchbull by playing tricks on the mean headmistress, ones she truly deserves. Hortensia talks to Matilda and another little girl about the terrible secrets of Miss Trunchbull’s closet and the way the mean headmistress treats the children. Lavender plays a trick that almost ends in punishment for Matilda—but not quite.

As the story progresses, Matilda forms a caring bond with her favorite teacher and learns about the great tragedies in her friend’s life. Matilda, with her great mental powers, decides to help. She can use her mind to move objects, and using this power, she decides to help Miss Honey, for Miss Honey is Miss Trunchbull’s niece and has suffered since childhood at this terrible person’s hands.

Matilda uses her mind to write a message to Miss Trunchbull on the chalkboard, moving the chalk without her hands. A frightened Miss Trunchbull runs away forever, and Miss Honey gets her house back and begins to live a happy life.

Matilda’s uncaring family decide to run away too because Matilda’s father is in trouble with the law. Matilda runs to Miss Honey and asks to live with her. Luckily, Matilda’s parents do not care, so Matilda and Miss Honey live happily in Miss Honey’s house and have a wonderful life!



# Quiz Time!

1. On the back of this paper, list three main events of this section. Then answer the rest of the questions on this page.

2. How does the author think parents should treat their children?

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3. When did Matilda start to read?

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4. Describe how Matilda got books to read.

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5. What is extraordinary about Matilda?

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6. Why was Mrs. Phelps important to Matilda?

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7. What kind of man is Matilda’s father?

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8. Why did Matilda decide to play tricks on her father?

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9. Describe one of Matilda’s tricks.

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10. When the Wormwood family was afraid of a ghost, what were they actually afraid of?

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