

## matilda by roald dahl

This wonderfully quirky story by Roald Dahl is a perfect class reader, ideal for capturing the imagination of developing readers. Featuring a girl who is keen to learn and a whole host of grotesque and complex characters, there are many different classroom activities that can be used to explore this modern classic with a Key Stage 2 class.

### **Letter writing**

Ask your pupils to write a persuasive letter to the Prime Minister to ask for the dismissal of Miss Trunchbull from their school. They should consider the following points:

- Why are you writing the letter? What do you want to achieve?
- Is Miss Trunchbull a good teacher?
- What has she done wrong?
- What will happen if she stays as the head teacher of the school?
- Can you think of anyone who could take her place?
- Would this person make a good head teacher?

### **drama activity**

With such brilliant characters and crazy situations throughout the book Matilda really lends itself to drama activities. This is a hot-seating activity with a twist!

First of all ask pupils to volunteer to play the following parts: Matilda, Mrs Wormwood, Mr Wormwood, Michael Wormwood, Mrs Phelps and Miss Honey. You will be playing a talk show host and discussing the problems within the family. This allows you to mediate and control the discussion. Slowly add different characters to the stage and ask the rest of the class to think of questions to ask them. The pupils will then answer and interact with each other in character. This is a fun activity exploring the relationships and characters in the text in an alternative way.

### **BOOK REVIEWS**

When you have finished the book have a class discussion about what people thought of the book as a whole. Who was their favourite character? Did it end like they expected? Were they happy with the outcome? How did it make them feel and what was their favourite part? Make sure that the children back up their answers and encourage them to develop their answers further. Now ask them to write a book review taking into account the discussion that has just taken place.



## **Research project – The Titanic**

The sinking of the Titanic has been explored in newspapers and books and even on film and television, so there are lots of resources that children can draw on when researching the subject. Discuss all the different methods of finding out information with your class. Talk about which sources are often the best, and how some of the information that they find might be inaccurate. Together they should come up with information and pictures about the Titanic. You may want to split the pupils into groups and delegate smaller topics to each, so you know that each area is covered. Once everyone has gathered research, ask the children to type it up neatly and add it to a wall display dedicated to Kaspar: Prince of Cats and the Titanic.

## **Holiday leaflet**

The ‘unsinkable’ Titanic was supposed to have been one of the most beautiful ships ever built, so people would have been very excited to see it for the first time as it went on its maiden voyage to New York. Discuss the interior of the ship and the entertainment that the passengers would have found on board with your class. Now ask them to write a leaflet persuading people to travel on the ship as it left port for the very first time.

## **The stimulus for a story**

Michael Morpurgo came up with the idea for Kaspar: Prince of Cats when he was staying at the Savoy as the Writer-in-Residence. While he was there he was dining in the American Bar when he spotted a model of a cat called Kaspar sitting in a glass case. It was this statue that gave Michael the idea for his own book.

Ask the children to think about their hometown or somewhere they’ve been on holiday. Is there a statue that really sticks in their mind? Ask them to think about why it might be there. They don’t have to use the real reason, instead they should use their imaginations as Michael did, and compose a story of how this statue came to their town.

