



The Mini Page

Betty Debnam, Founding Editor and Editor at Large

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Celebrate 'Charlie and the Chocolate Factory'

Meet Roald Dahl

Roald (ROO-arl) Dahl wrote some of the world's most-loved children's books, including "Matilda," "James and the Giant Peach," "Fantastic Mr. Fox," "The Witches" and "The BFG." "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," his most famous book of all, was published 50 years ago, in October 1964.

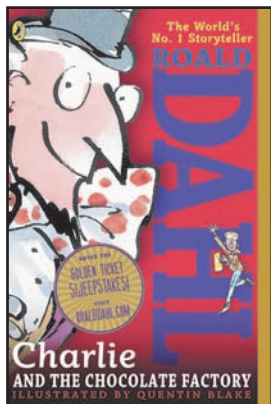
Many of his books and stories have been made into movies and TV shows. He wrote for adults as well as for kids.

He also wrote poems and pamphlets and co-wrote a cookbook that featured chocolate.

He wrote movie screenplays based on two books by his war buddy Ian Fleming: the James Bond movie "You Only Live Twice," and the family movie "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang."

To learn more about this author, The Mini Page talked with his daughter, Lucy Dahl.

In "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," a poor boy finds a golden ticket inside a candy bar and wins a tour of a fantastic chocolate factory. Charlie and the other kids on the tour discover special fates for kids who aren't nice.



jacket art © 1998 by Quentin Blake, published by Puffin Books



photo © Rosie Tollemache

Roald Dahl (1916-1990) cradles his dogs.

Early childhood

Roald was born Sept. 13, 1916, in Llandaff, Wales, the youngest of five kids. Two younger sisters were born later. His parents were from Norway.

Roald had some hard times. When he was only 3, his 7-year-old sister, Astri, died from a burst appendix. A few weeks later, their father caught pneumonia and died.

His mother then had to take care of six kids on her own. She decided to stay in Wales rather than return to her home in Norway. She had friends in Wales, and Roald's father had wanted the children to go to English schools. (Wales and England are both part of Great Britain.)

Early school

After kindergarten, Roald went to a harsh all-boys school in Wales. At that time, teachers in Great Britain were allowed to punish kids by hitting them with a cane. This was called **caning**.

Roald liked to play pranks. One time, he and his friends put a dead mouse into a jar of candy at a shop because they were mad at the crabby owner. The head of the school, or the **headmaster**, caned him hard while the candy shop owner watched.

When his mom saw the bruises covering his body, she was furious. She pulled him from the school as soon as that school term was done.



Roald is about 9 in this picture and ready to enter his first boarding school.

photo © RDNL

The Good, the Bad, and the Icky

Boarding school

When he was 9, Roald had to go to **boarding school**, where the boys lived in dormitories away from home.

Lucy Dahl said: "My father hated boarding school because he loved his mother and sisters very much and missed them terribly."

In addition, teachers there caned students for breaking small rules, such as talking during study hall.

Dealing with bullies

When he was 13, Roald went to an even rougher boarding school. The headmaster gave painful canings.

Younger boys had to do anything the older boys told them to do, or the older boys would beat them.

Roald's worst task was to warm up the toilet seat for an older boy. The bully made Roald go to the outhouse in the winter and sit on the toilet seat to warm it. Roald carried a book to read while sitting in the outhouse.



Roald loved photography. At his last boarding school, the art teacher let Roald set up his own darkroom. He learned how to print his own pictures. Students did not have film at the time. They had to print from big glass negatives. Photographers could not shoot as many shots as they can today.

The teacher put on an exhibit of student work that featured Roald's photos. Throughout his life, Roald won several prizes for his photos.

The chocolate factory

Roald's idea for "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" sprang from treats sent to his boarding school. Every so often, a nearby chocolate factory, Cadbury, sent chocolate bars for the students to test.

Each boy received a box with 12 experimental chocolate bars, each with a separate filling. Cadbury asked the boys to rate each type of bar and write comments about each.

Roald realized chocolate makers had actual inventing rooms. He day-dreamed of working in one someday. Later, he turned those dreams into "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory."

Roald never lost his love for chocolate. "When I was growing up, as a family, we never ate dessert," Lucy said. "Instead, we brought out 'the chocolate box.' We always ate chocolate after lunch and supper. As it was a usual occurrence, we always just had a bite or two of whatever we felt like that day."

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Ready Resources



The Mini Page provides ideas for websites, books or other resources that will help you learn more about this week's topics.

On the Web:

- roalddahl.com

At the library:

- Any of Roald Dahl's books for young people, including "Matilda," "The Twits," "Charlie and the Great Glass Elevator," "Danny the Champion of the World," "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory," "The Missing Golden Ticket and Other Splendiferous Secrets" and his own childhood story, "Boy"
- Any of the movie DVDs made from Roald Dahl's books
- "D Is for Dahl" by Wendy Cooling

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Try
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Find

Roald Dahl

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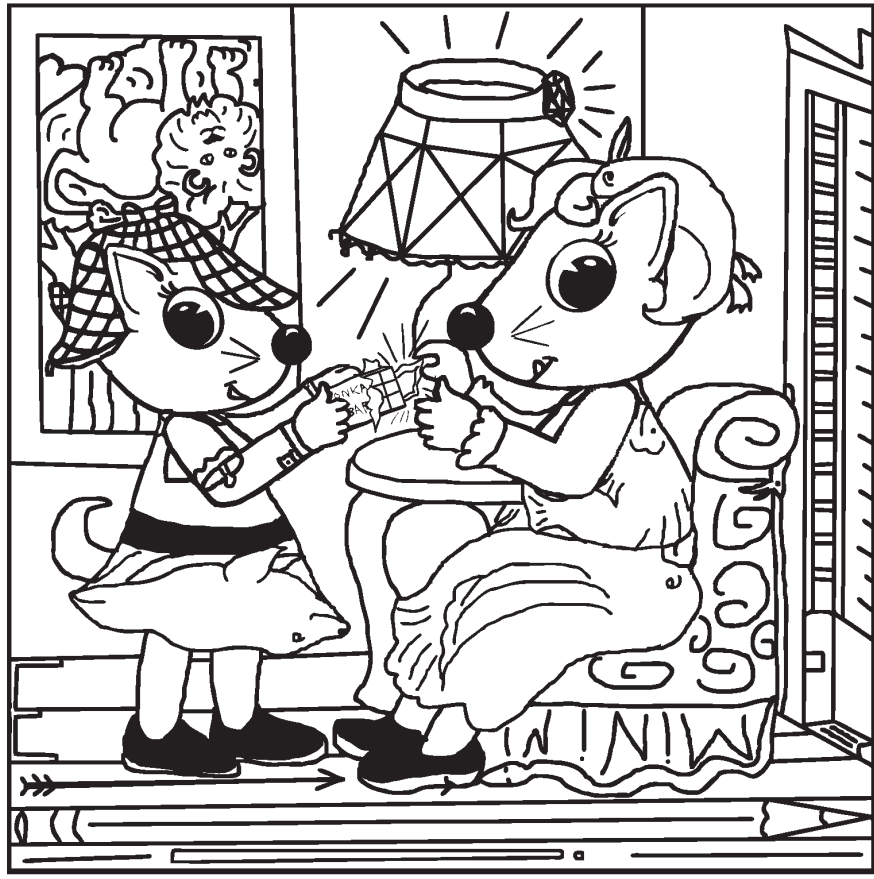
Words that remind us of Roald Dahl are hidden in the block above. Some words are hidden backward or diagonally. See if you can find: AIR, BAR, BOARDING, BOOKS, BOY, CHARLIE, CHOCOLATE, DREAMS, FACTORY, FORCE, FOX, FUN, GIANT, HUT, INVENTOR, MOVIES, PEACH, PHOTOGRAPHER, SCHOOL, SCREENPLAYS, WALES, WAR, WRITE.



Mini Spy

Mini Spy has found the Golden Ticket! See if you can find:

- | | | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ladder | <input type="checkbox"/> kite | <input type="checkbox"/> ruler | <input type="checkbox"/> fish |
| <input type="checkbox"/> snail | <input type="checkbox"/> duck | <input type="checkbox"/> bird | <input type="checkbox"/> ring |
| <input type="checkbox"/> lion | <input type="checkbox"/> oven mitt | <input type="checkbox"/> bell | <input type="checkbox"/> arrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> pencil | <input type="checkbox"/> snake | <input type="checkbox"/> number 7 | <input type="checkbox"/> book |
| <input type="checkbox"/> seal | <input type="checkbox"/> letter E | <input type="checkbox"/> word MINI | |



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Rookie Cookie's Recipe Colorful Popcorn Pops

You'll need:

- 7 cups popped popcorn
- 3 cups miniature marshmallows
- 2 tablespoons butter or margarine
- Green, blue and red food coloring (or colors of your choice)
- 12 ice pop sticks

What to do:

1. Melt marshmallows and butter in a double boiler. Stir often.
2. Pour a third of marshmallow mixture into each of three bowls and stir in different food coloring in each.
3. Add equal amounts of popcorn to each bowl. With clean buttered hands, mix popcorn and marshmallow mixture.
4. Form round popcorn balls around each ice pop stick. Let popcorn harden. Serves 12.

You will need an adult's help with this recipe.

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Meet Riff Rockit



Photo by Ben de Rlenzo

Riff Rockit, otherwise known as Evan Michael, is a singer, songwriter and guitarist. All the profits from his latest CD, "If I Could Fly," will go to the group BeTheMatch.org, which supports blood cancer research.

Riff grew up in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. When he was a teenager, he got a type of cancer called acute myeloid leukemia. For a time, he had to be isolated in the hospital because his immune system was so weak.

He said, "Music played a very practical part in my treatment." It helped him keep his spirits up so he could heal.

After he got well, he earned a college degree in songwriting. He began writing and singing and started a band of musical puppets. The profits from all of his CDs and DVDs go to charities helping children and cancer patients. He is now cancer-free.

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Gus
Goodsport's
Supersport



Height: 5-11
Birthdate:
6-2-1990
Hometown:
Gretna,
Louisiana

Eddie Lacy

Green Bay Packers running back Eddie Lacy has overcome tremendous obstacles to thrive in the spotlight. When Eddie was a teenager, his family's home was destroyed by flooding in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. After moving several times, they eventually settled in a nearby town. Eddie's football abilities later provided him with new opportunities.

He attended the University of Alabama, helping the program capture three national titles (2009, 2011 and 2012). In his final appearance with the Crimson Tide, Lacy was named the 2013 BCS National Championship Game's MVP in a victory over Notre Dame. Eddie was drafted by Green Bay that spring, and won the starting job in his first season.

The Packers lost starting quarterback Aaron Rodgers to injury for much of the 2013 season, but Eddie picked up the slack. He rushed for 1,178 yards and scored 11 touchdowns on his way to being named NFL Rookie of the Year by The Associated Press.



Mighty Funny's Mini Jokes

All the following jokes have something in common. Can you guess the common theme or category?

Casey: How are the letter F and a cow's tail alike?

Candy: They are both at the end of beef!

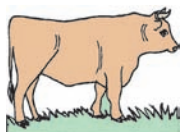


Cathy: What is a quick way to count cows?

Clementine: With a cow-cu-lator!

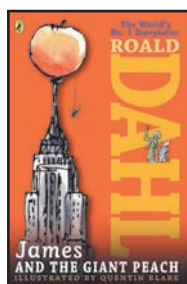
Cerise: What city was the Russian cow born in?

Cherry: Moscow!



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An Amazing Life



jacket art © 2007 by Quentin Blake, published by Puffin

In “James and the Giant Peach,” an orphan lives with two horrible aunts. Then one day, he meets unusual friends living inside a giant peach. This was Roald’s first famous book for kids.

Flying away

After school, Roald took a job with Shell Oil Company. He transferred to the Shell office in East Africa in 1938 and learned to speak Swahili.

When World War II began a year later, he joined the British Royal Air Force, or RAF. Lucy Dahl said: “My father loved the years of the war. He always told us they were the most exciting years of his life.”

Unfortunately, a year later, when he was 24, he was shot down over Libya. He suffered serious injuries.

Career changes

After his recovery, the RAF posted Roald to the British Embassy in Washington, D.C., as assistant air attache (a-tah-SHAY), or specialist. He began writing about his war experiences.

He wrote his first children’s book, “The Gremlins.”* Walt Disney once thought of making it into a movie.

*Gremlins were legendary creatures RAF pilots blamed for mechanical failures.

Look through your newspaper for stories that might make good books.

Next week, The Mini Page learns what U.S. postal inspectors do.



photo © Jan Baldwin

Roald and a friend built a writing hut outside the family house where Roald could work in quiet.

Family joys and sorrows

In 1951, Roald met his future wife, American actress Patricia Neal. They raised their kids, Olivia, Chantal (called Tessa), Theo, Ophelia and Lucy in Great Missenden, England.

When Theo was only 4 months old, a taxi hit his baby carriage and he was seriously injured. Fluid built up inside his brain.

Roald, an engineer friend and Theo’s surgeon invented a special valve to release the brain fluid. Theo recovered before the valve was built, but it later helped save thousands of children’s lives. None of the inventors took profits from the valve.

When she was only 7, Olivia died from complications from measles.

In 1965, Patricia suffered a series of strokes. Roald worked with her for months, helping her recover.

In 1983, he and Patricia divorced. He married Felicity Crosland. After his death, Felicity set up Roald Dahl’s Marvellous Children’s Charity to help seriously ill children.



jacket art © 2007 by Quentin Blake, published by Puffin

In “The BFG,” a little girl teams up with the Big Friendly Giant to battle the evil giants who want to eat little girls and boys.

Bedtime stories

Roald always made up bedtime stories for his kids, Lucy said. “Every night we would get The BFG. This was before it was a book. Our BFG lived under a tree in our apple orchard and would blow dreams into our room every night. Therefore, whatever the weather, rain or snow, we always slept with our bedroom window open a crack.

“Within 10 minutes of our story ending, and lights out, a long bamboo (pole) would stick through the window and we would hear two loud puffs of dreams being blown into our room by our BFG.” Their dad climbed a ladder to blow dreams through their upstairs window, just as the Big Friendly Giant might have done.

“I loved ‘The BFG,’ as it was my childhood bedtime story,” Lucy said. “But I also love ‘Fantastic Mr. Fox,’ as the Fox Tree was at the top of our orchard. It was fun to climb, knowing that the fox family were below.”



jacket art © 2007 by Quentin Blake, published by Puffin

In “Fantastic Mr. Fox,” three mean farmers hunt Mr. Fox and his family. But Mr. Fox is very clever. Will he be smart enough to save his family?

The Mini Page Staff

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