

2021 2022 SEASON



STUDENT MATINEE STUDY GUIDE

UtahPresents

ROALD DAHL'S MATILDA JR THE MUSICAL

Welcome to Kingsbury Hall at the University of Utah! We hope you enjoy Roald Dahl's Matilda Jr The Musical

GUIDE FOR TEACHERS AND PARENTS



We hope you find this guide helpful in preparing students for an enjoyable and educational theatrical experience.

ABOUT ROALD DAHL'S MATILDA JR THE MUSICAL



Matilda Wormwood is an extremely intelligent young girl. From the age of five, she can read at an adult's level and speaks very well. While other parents call their children "miracles" and spoil them to no end, Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood see Matilda as a mistake and a nuisance, leading her to play tricks on them. Mr. Wormwood is a scammer attempting to trick the Russian mafia into buying old cars, while Mrs. Wormwood is a dancer, obsessed with practicing with her private instructor, Rudolpho. Because of her love of reading, Matilda becomes friends with the librarian, where she spends much of her time and tells the librarian a story that she has made up. Matilda is sent to school where her teacher, Miss Honey, sees how smart she is and suggests to the headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, that she be placed with the eleven-year-olds. Miss Trunchbull is a cruel and abusive woman who punishes children by putting them in a cupboard lined with broken glass and nails. She refuses to move Matilda up and Matilda must learn with and befriend her classmates. Miss Honey quickly befriends Matilda and as they are having tea in Miss Honey's home, she reveals that she was raised by a cruel aunt who takes almost all her money. This cruel aunt is revealed to be Miss Trunchbull and Matilda plans to scare Miss Trunchbull into repentance. She succeeds and convinces her family to let her stay with Miss Honey after her father's failed scam.

ABOUT THE COMPANY

Youth Theatre is dedicated to the ideals of Theatre for Young Audiences: a system of artistic creation whereby young members of the community gather together to create a product to be enjoyed as both a creative process and an artistic product. It is this model, in an environment of professional leadership, and with an emphasis on the educational process, which we seek to perfect. In order to achieve this, we believe that our theatre must provide high-quality opportunities for exploration of the theatrical art form on both sides of the proscenium.

University of Utah Youth Theatre helps young people learn to communicate, collaborate, create and celebrate by experiencing, hands-on, the theatre arts. In the classroom, in rehearsal, and in performance, students learn valuable principles, techniques, and skills that help them grow as people and as artists. YTU develops and produces new and existing works for multi-generational audiences. Through theatre, our students celebrate the joy and magic of live performance, and of life itself.



FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF UTAH DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE
AND UTAHPRESENTS



ROALD DAHL'S
Matilda
THE MUSICAL JR.

BOOK DENNIS KELLY MUSIC & LYRICS TIM MINCHIN

PERFORMED BY
YOUTH THEATRE AT THE U

Study Guide

Roald Dahl's Matilda The Musical JR.
is presented through special arrangement
with Music Theatre International (MTI).
All authorized performance materials
are also supplied by MTI.

www.mtishows.com

Local



INTERVIEW WITH DIRECTOR ALICIA WASHINGTON



What is your favorite color? Purple. Or sequins, but that's not a color.

Where were you born and raised? I was born in Ogden and raised in Layton.

What was your first theatre experience? My first theatre experience was in the 4th grade when I was cast as the Queen of Hearts in *Alicia in Wonderland*.

When did you know you wanted theatre as a career? In college, I was exposed to a particular form of actor training, the Suzuki Method. From there, I was hungry to study the method more intensely. Ultimately leading to a summer intensive workshop in the Suzuki Method with SITI Company in Chicago. During my time in the city, I was exposed to a variety of performing arts. I began to see myself reflected in the performances and spaces I frequented while in the city. Which locked in my passion and future career in theatre, starting my own theatre company.

Where did you go to college? Weber State University, go Wildcats!

What do you do in theatre? I am the Founder and Co-Director of Good Company Theatre located in Ogden. I am also a freelance director, costume designer and actor.

Tell us a little about Good Company? Good Company Theatre develops and promotes high-quality, eclectic theatrical productions and events, forging new relationships between audiences, performers, and spaces in the process.

Do you have a favorite thing you do? Connect with people. I am honored I get to make those connections through theatre. Outside of that, I love to garden, read new works and play with my cats.

What was your job on *Matilda, Jr.*? I am the director of *Matilda Jr.* But what does that mean? It means I get to collaborate with all the actors, designers, and crew to bring the story to life!

What is your next theatre project? The National New Play Network Rolling World Premiere of *Man and Moon* by Siena Marilyn Ledger.

INTERVIEW WITH PRODUCER PENNY CAYWOOD



What is your favorite color? Purple.

Where were you born and raised? I grew up in Southern California.

What was your first theatre experience? When I was 5, I did my first show which was *The King and I*. I played a shy little princess.

When did you know you wanted theatre as a career? I knew I wanted to teach young people when I was pretty young. Even before high school, I wanted to be a teacher. I always loved singing, dancing, and acting. I did that as a hobby. I dreamed of putting those two things together and I did!

Where did you go to college? I went to California State University at Dominguez Hills

What do you do in theatre? I'm a director, a choreographer, a teaching artist, and a producer.

Tell us a little about Youth Theatre? Youth Theatre is an after-school and summer program that teaches young people theatre at the U of U campus. Anyone can get involved. We have a spring production and summer camps coming up. You just need to check out our website at www.youththeatre.utah.edu

Do you have a favorite thing you do? I love watching scary movies and hanging out with my family. I love my two cats, Sonny and Cher.

What was your job on *Matilda, Jr.*? I am the producer. I got to pick the show and pick all the people who are working on the show. I also get to help the artistic team and the designers create their vision.

What is your next theatre project? I just had auditions for a play I'm directing for the U of U's Theatre Department. I'm working on a new show with my high school classes, and I'll be directing *Winnie-the-Pooh* with young people next.

REHEARSAL PICTURES

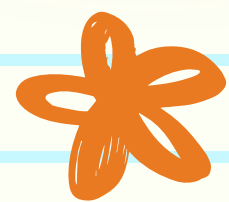
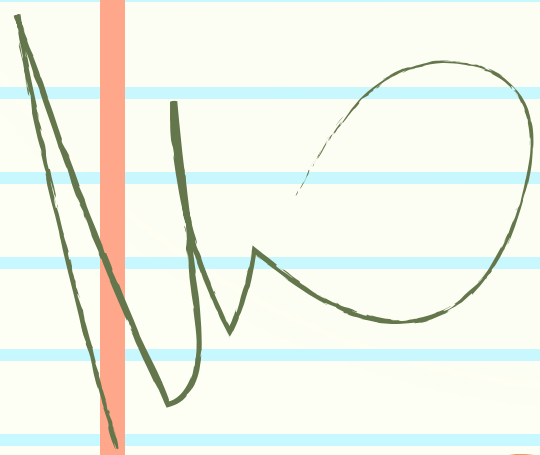
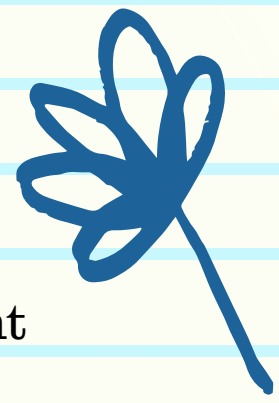
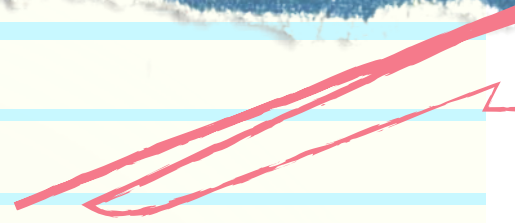


Cast of Characters

ROLE	NAUGHTY CAST	REVOLTING CAST
Matilda	Annie Mautz	Ivy Bateman
Bruce	Judson Smith	Alfie Boe
Lavendar	Vivienne Davis	Indigo Hinton-Ward
Hortensia	Morgan Schmutz	Havalah Heale
Alice	Della Chalverus	Scarlett Bardsley
Amanda	Kendra Hall	Nora Bartel
Nigel	Cameron Parke	
Tommy	Jaimie Jui	
Eric	Isaac Jowers	
Michael	Declan Cheek-O'Donnell	Micah Heale
Little Kid Ensemble	Juliette Bobick	Stella Ensor
Little Kid Ensemble	Hazel Flaim	Charlotte Oertle
Big Kid 1	Presley Caywood	Amanda Green
Big Kid 2	Claire Mautz	Hanna Hobson-Roher
Big Kid 3	Ben Barton	Chris Close
Acrobat	Laura Herscovici	
Escapologist	Tyler Van Oostendorp	
Miss Honey	Langley Hayman	
Mr. Wormwood	Grayson Kamal	
Ms. Wormwood	Zyena Tolhurst	
Mrs. Phelps	Elizabeth Petrucka	
Rudolfo	Keenan J Leuthauser	
Sergei	Tate Foshay	
Trunchbull	Sophia Campagna	
Adult Ensemble	Noelle White	
Adult Ensemble	Savanna Jensen	
Adult Ensemble	Natalie Ruthven	
Adult Ensemble	Tess Pepper	
Adult Ensemble	Nathan Ginsberg	
Adult Ensemble	Alison Hagen	

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Theatre Philosophy

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Synopsis

Matilda Wormwood is an extremely intelligent young girl. From the age of five, she can read at an adult's level and speaks very well. While other parents call their children "miracles" and spoil them to no end, Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood see Matilda as a mistake and a nuisance, leading her to play tricks on them. Mr. Wormwood is a scammer attempting to trick the Russian mafia into buying old cars, while Mrs. Wormwood is a dancer, obsessed with practicing with her private instructor, Rudolpho. Because of her love of reading, Matilda becomes friends with the librarian, where she spends much of her time and tells the librarian a story that she has made up. Matilda is sent to school where her teacher, Miss Honey, sees how smart she is and suggests to the headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, that she be placed with the eleven-year-olds. Miss Trunchbull is a cruel and abusive woman who punishes children by putting them in a cupboard lined with broken glass and nails. She refuses to move Matilda up and Matilda must learn with and befriend her classmates. Miss Honey quickly befriends Matilda and as they are having tea in Miss Honey's home, she reveals that she was raised by a cruel aunt who takes almost all her money. This cruel aunt is revealed to be Miss Trunchbull and Matilda plans to scare Miss Trunchbull into repentance. She succeeds and convinces her family to let her stay with Miss Honey after her father's failed scam.

Theatre Etiquette

To best prepare your students for today's performance, we ask that you review these guidelines for expected behavior of an audience BEFORE the show.

TEACHERS: Speaking to your students about theatre etiquette is ESSENTIAL. This performance of Roald Dahl's *Matilda the Musical* may be some students' first theatre experience. Students should be aware that this is a live performance and should keep distractions to a minimum as a courtesy to those around them.

STUDENTS:

- Stay with your group at all times and pay attention to your teachers and chaperones.
- Be sure to go to the bathroom before the performance begins. It is hard to leave without causing a disturbance to those around you once the performance starts.
- Please do not stand up, walk around or put your feet on the seat in front of you. Make yourself comfortable while keeping movement to a minimum.
- Recording devices and cameras are strictly prohibited.
- Absolutely no gum chewing, eating or drinking in the theatre.

Noise: Live theatre creates a unique and dynamic atmosphere between actors and audience members for sharing ideas and emotional expression. In the same way that actors can hear what is happening onstage, they can also hear disruptions in the audience as well. While actors appreciate laughter and applause at appropriate times, excessive noise and talking is not welcomed. Even whispering voices can be distracting to the actors and others in the audience.

Applause: Applause respectfully acknowledges the performers and shows appreciation or audience approval. Traditionally, applause occurs before intermission and at the conclusion of a performance. Dimming the lights on the stage and bringing up the house lights generally signals these intervals. A curtain call, when the cast returns to the stage, will follow every performance.

Enjoy the show!

Learning Objectives

- Explore real-world conflicts through drama
- Engage critically with the process of theatrical adaptation
- Examine storytelling through music and movement

Pre-show Discussion Questions

- Matilda the Musical is based on a novel by Roald Dahl, and was adapted into a film in 1996. Have you read the book or seen the movie? What differences do you think there will be between the musical and the original novel and film?
- Dahl uses distinctive names for his characters that also provides hints about what type of person they are. What type of person do you think is: Miss Honey? Miss Trunchbull? Mr. and Mrs. Wormwood?
- Matilda struggles against a family who mistreats her and a headmistress who bullies her and her friends. However, she believes it is possible to change her story and have a happy life. What kinds of goals do you have? What are some of the obstacles in the way of achieving those goals? How could you overcome those conflicts?
- Kingsbury Hall's production of Matilda the Musical features many young performers in the cast. Have you ever been in a play or a musical? What was the experience like?
- Creating suspense is one of the many techniques used by storytellers to captivate their audience. How can music affect mood? What types of stories do you like to hear or see? Why? What excites you about seeing a film or play?

Post-show Discussion Questions

How does it make me feel? What in the play contributed to that feeling?

- In Matilda the Musical, the schoolchildren sing about what life might be like when they are grown-up. What does it mean to be a grown-up? What kinds of things do YOU look forward to when you grown-up? What are the benefits of being a young kid?
- Ms. Trunchbull insists that you must always follow the rules, even though they are unfair to the children. Is it important to always follow the rules or when it is appropriate to break them? What historical examples can you think of when people revolted against unfair practices? Can you think of examples of rules that you find unfair? If you could change those rules what would you change them to? Why?

Developing Further: Divide the class into two groups. One group will brainstorm about adjectives describing adults and the other group describing children. Create a list of activities that either adults or children do. As a whole class, create a Venn diagram using each group's lists. How different were the adjectives? Then describe as a class five adjectives that describe both adults and children and the activities they can share.

Theatre 101

PLAYWRIGHT The playwright writes the script.

DIRECTOR The director is in charge of orchestrating the entirety of the production. They lead the actors, designers, and production crew to put the show on its feet.

COSTUME What the actors wear during the show.

SCENERY Everything on stage (except props) used to represent the place at which action is occurring.

PROPS All physical items on stage with the exception of the scenery. This includes lamps, chairs, pens, paper, books, and more!

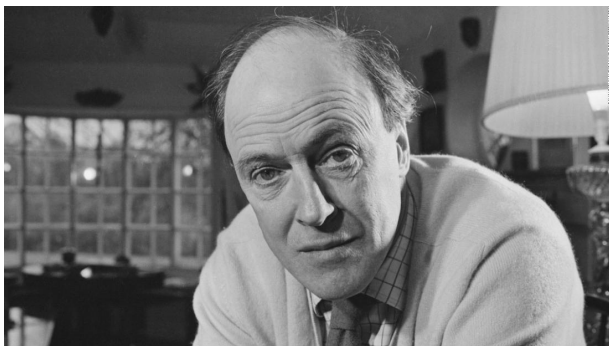
LIGHTS Stage lights illuminate the actors so that they look their best. The colors used, focus of the light, and amount of lighting can really set the mood and environment of a scene.

SOUND Everything that you hear during a performance that does not come from actors. **ACTORS** The actors are the people that perform the show onstage.

AUDIENCE The lucky people that get to watch the show. New to being an audience member? Follow these rules and you will be a natural!

The Author

Roald Dahl (1916-1990) was the author of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Matilda*, *The BFG*, and many more of the world's best-loved children's stories. His work is celebrated annually by the world's biggest author-based event, Roald Dahl Day— which is recognized across the globe on the 13th of September. His first children's story, *James and the Giant Peach*, published in 1961, was a huge hit. Every subsequent book became a best-seller. Today, his stories are available in 59 languages and, by a conservative estimate, he has sold more than 250 million books. Many of these stories have also been

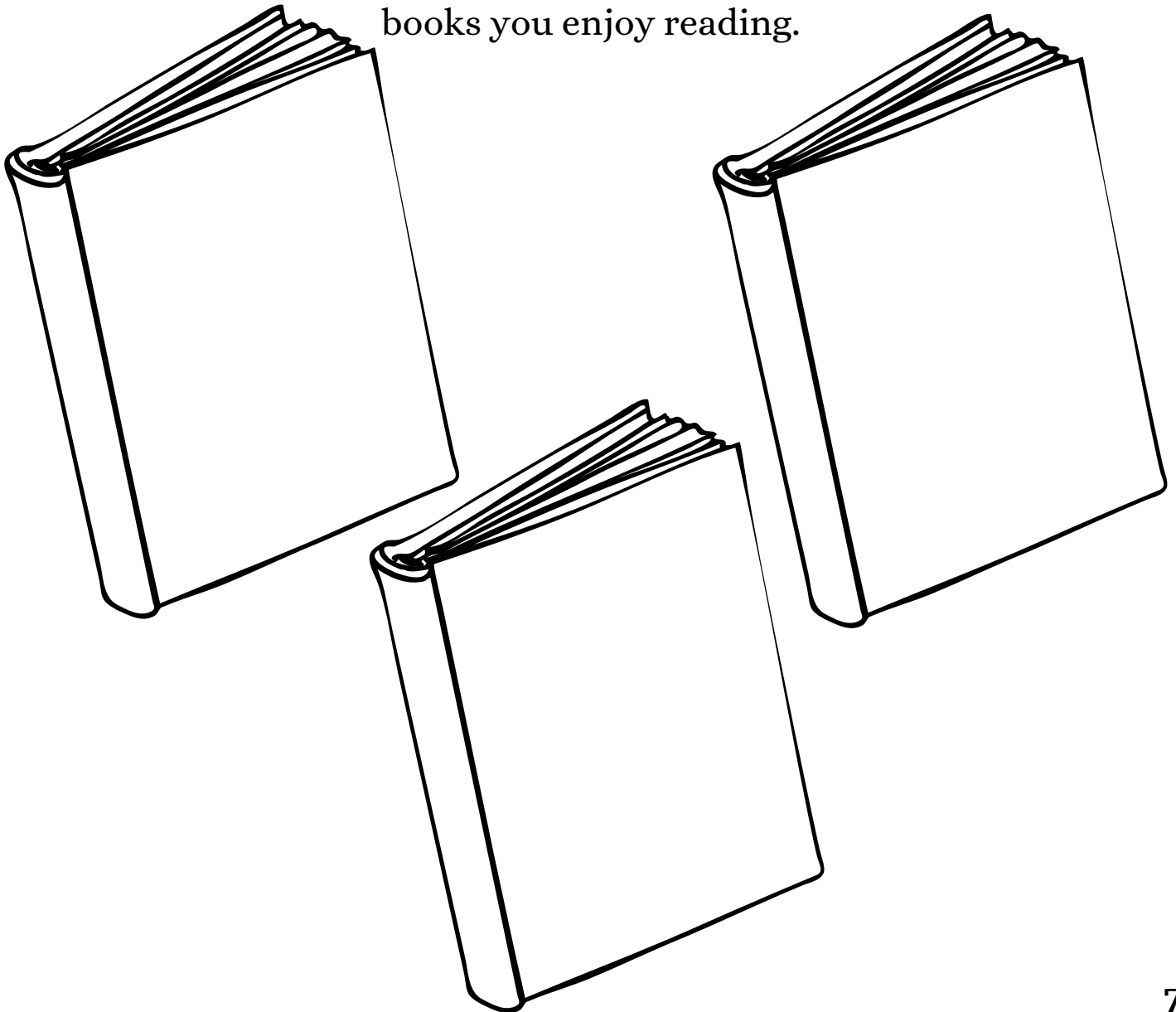


adapted for the stage and screen, including the 1971 film classic *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, Wes Anderson's acclaimed *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, and the Royal Shakespeare Company's multi-award winning production of *Matilda The Musical*.

Activity: Books You Like to Read

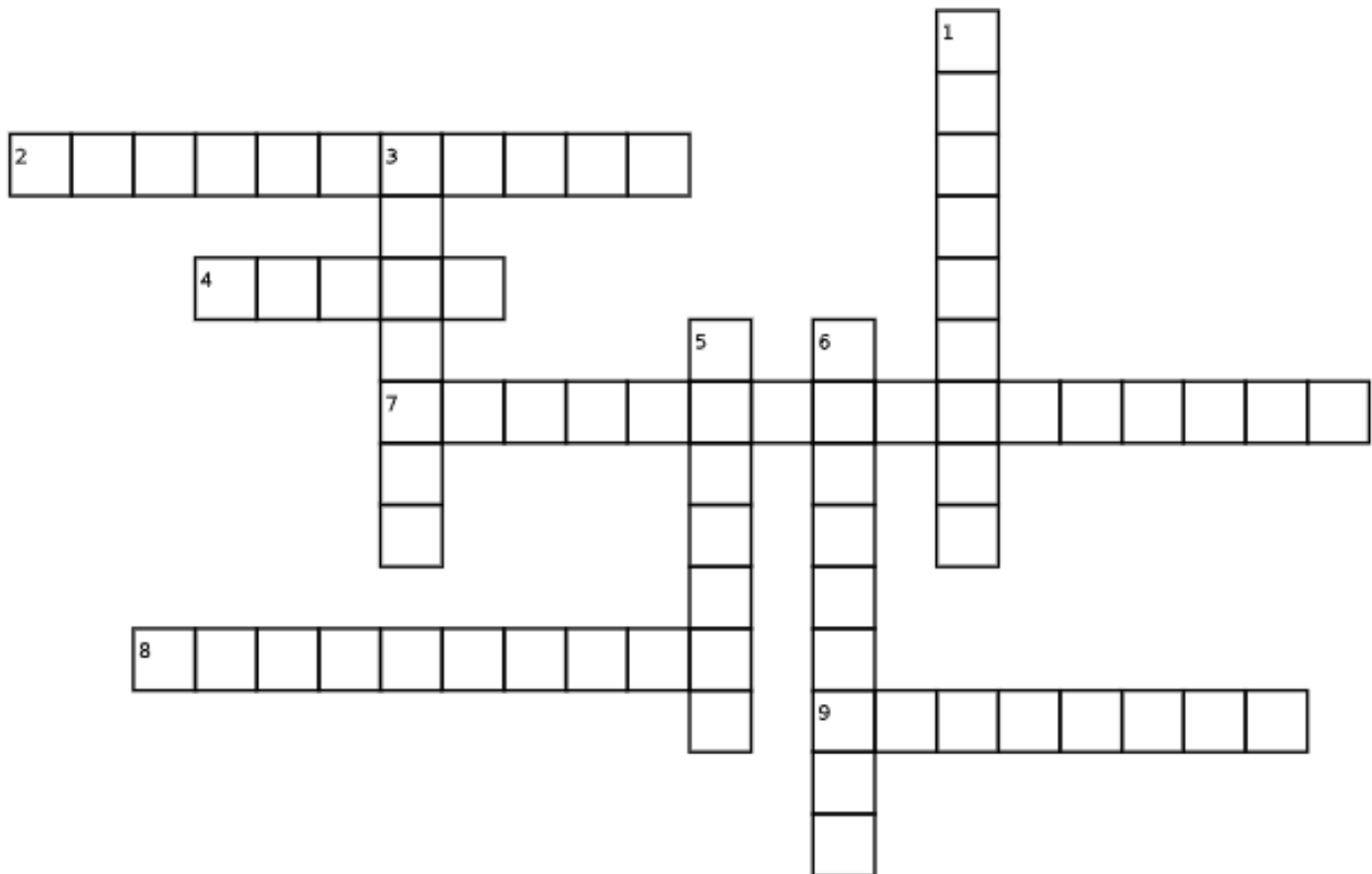
“Well, I needed to learn to read words so that I could read sentences because basically a sentence is just a big bunch of words. And if you can’t read sentences you’ve got no chance with books.” -Matilda Wormwood

Matilda loves to read and can read quite a few books in one week. She enjoyed reading the adventures of *Oliver Twist*, *The Lord of the Rings*, and *The Cat in the Hat*. In the books below, write some of the books you enjoy reading.



Activity: Character Crossword

Can you identify the characters in the show based off the hints provided below?



Down:

- 1) Who is the kind of generous teacher at Matilda's school?
- 3) What is the name of Matilda's brother?
- 5) She is the main character of the show who is creative, resilient, and quite the bookworm.
- 6) She is the kind librarian who enjoys hearing Matilda's stories.

Across:

- 2) This character is Matilda's mother and she doesn't understand why Matilda loves to read.
- 4) Which one of Matilda's classmates get caught after eating Trunchbull's cake?
- 7) What is the name of the headmistress at Matilda's school?
- 8) They are often scheming and are very mean to Matilda. They much prefer Matilda's brother.
- 9) This character is kind and very bright. They quickly decide that Matilda is their best friend.

Activity:

Standing Up For What Is Right

Matilda stands up for what is right, even though it is hard to do. The focus of this activity is to have the students connect the storyline of Matilda Jr. to their own lives.

Question: Have you ever been in a situation where you felt you had to stand up for the right thing? What are some examples of how you can stand up for what is right in your own life?

In this activity, students will brainstorm, write, rehearse, and perform a skit in a small group, or write a monolog to show how they can stand up for what is right in their home, school, or community. Examples: Standing up for a friend/sibling/younger student at school who is being bullied; telling the truth even though it may be tempting to lie.

In the boxes below, either write about a situation or draw a picture of a situation where you stood up (or wanted to stand up) for what is/was right.



Using the notes or pictures from the boxes above, fill in the following information to help write your script.

Characters: Who was involved?

Setting: Where did the situation take place? What time of day?

Describe how the situation began. What was the main problem and how was it caused?

What options did you have? What did you want to do in the situation?

What was the “right” thing to do, and why?

Describe how the main problem was resolved. What actions did you take?
What actions did the others take?

Explain the “moral” of the story. What did you learn from this situation, and what do you think other people should learn from this situation? Would you do anything differently next time?

Activity: Unscramble The Words

Unscramble these ten words that are found in the play. The capital letter in the scrambled word is the first letter of each word. The last four contain two words.

1. koBo

2. dlaaitM

3. oeHyn

4. uNghyat

5. oRntegliv

6. otabArc

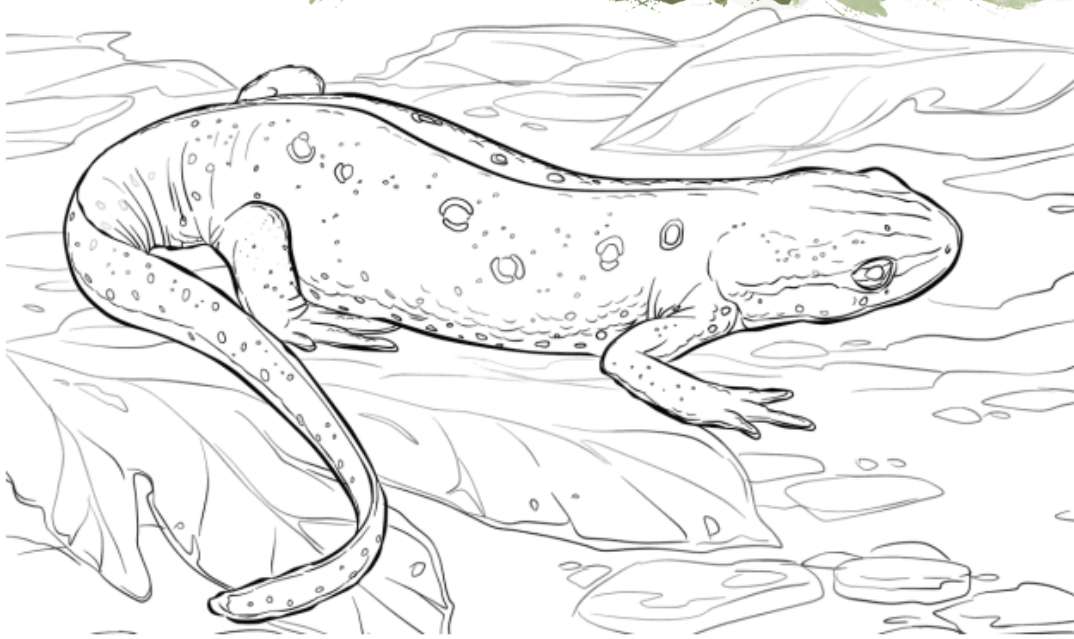
7. eenrG riHa

8. eglSnpli tsTe

9. oolSch ngSo

10. oaChlteoc keaC

Activity: The Story Of The Newt



A newt is a type of salamander found throughout Asia, Europe, and North America. This amphibian stands out because of its bright colors, especially the variations of yellow, red, and orange bellies found on different types to scare off predators. Newts enjoy wet environments such as forest and grasslands. They can breathe underwater and on land. Their skin is soft and moist, making humid and wet climates ideal.

Write a story from the newt's perspective about being placed in Ms. Trunchbull's water pitcher. Establish a back-story for "Newt": Where does "Newt" come from? Does "Newt" have friends? How does "Newt" feel about being placed in this current situation?

Activity: Group Image Work

What's a tableau?

A tableau is a frozen picture of a moment in a story without the use of movement or sound.

DIRECTIONS:

- Break students up into groups of four.
- Have each group pick a moment from the show and create a tableau that represents that moment.
- Share each group's tableau with the class and let the class guess which moment is being represented.

DISCUSSION:

- Why did you choose this moment?
- How did the group use their bodies to represent the moment from the play?
- What helped make this moment clear in your tableau?



Our Superpowers

“I know you are only a tiny little girl, but there is some kind of magic in you somewhere.” -Miss Honey

DIRECTIONS:

Matilda is able to move things with her mind. If you had a magical power, what would it be? Tell us about the magical power you would have and draw a picture of yourself using that magical power.

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