



Matilda

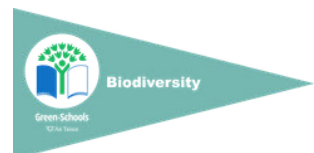
Roald Dahl



Theme:



Green-Schools
theme:



Read  *Learn*  *Inspire*

Léigh  *Foghlaim*  *Spreag*

Matilda by Roald Dahl



Theme:

Hope & Changemakers

Supporting Themes:

Fairness & Equality

Community & Belonging

Linked Global Goals:

- SDG 4: Quality Education
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions



Age Group:

Senior Primary

Recommended Classes: 3rd-6th Class

Recommended Age: 8-12 years

Curriculum Links

English	Oral Language: Developing opinions and responding to texts Reading: Responding to characters and themes Writing: Personal reflection and persuasive writing
SPHE	Myself Myself and Others Myself and the Wider World Developing self-confidence Respecting diversity and difference
Drama	Exploring and making drama Improvisation and role play Co-operating and communicating in groups
Visual Arts	Drawing Poster design Expressing ideas visually

Although *Matilda* is best explored through the theme of Hope & Changemakers, it also links meaningfully to several of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).



SDG 4: Quality Education

Matilda's love of books and learning is at the heart of the story. Reading gives her knowledge, confidence and a sense of possibility. The story shows how education can empower children, help them find their voice and open up new opportunities. Matilda's journey reminds us that every child deserves a safe, supportive learning environment where their talents can flourish.



SDG 5: Gender Equality

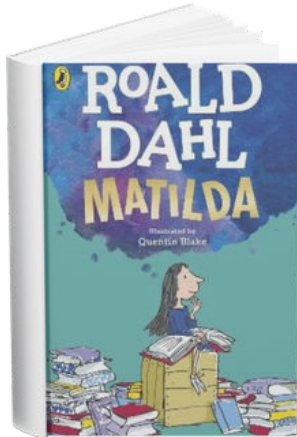
Matilda and Miss Honey are both strong examples of girls and women whose intelligence, courage and resilience challenge stereotypes. The story invites discussion about fairness, voice and opportunity, and encourages children to think about a world where everyone, regardless of gender, is respected, heard and able to achieve their potential.



SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Throughout the story, Matilda and Miss Honey experience unfairness, misuse of power and unkind treatment. These experiences open up valuable conversations about justice, fairness and the importance of adults and schools acting with care and integrity. The book encourages children to notice when something is wrong, to think critically about fairness and to consider how they can stand up for themselves and others in peaceful, respectful ways.

Matilda by Roald Dahl



About the Book

Matilda tells the story of a remarkable young girl who loves books and learning. Despite being misunderstood by her family and facing the frightening headteacher Miss Trunchbull, Matilda refuses to let unfairness stop her. Through courage, intelligence, kindness and determination, she stands up for herself and others and helps bring about positive change.

Theme Connection: Hope & Changemakers

Matilda is a wonderful example of a changemaker. She notices when things are unfair and finds ways to make them better. She believes in the power of learning and uses her talents to help others, particularly Miss Honey.

This story encourages children to think about how they can use their own strengths, voices, and actions to make a positive difference in their school, community, and world.

The story also links strongly to:

- SDG 4: Quality Education because learning empowers Matilda.
- SDG 5: Gender Equality because Matilda and Miss Honey challenge stereotypes about what girls and women can achieve.
- SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions through themes of fairness, justice and standing up to abuse of power.

Questions for Discussion

Understanding the Story

1. What makes Matilda different from the other characters in the story?
2. Why do you think Matilda loves books so much?
3. How does Miss Honey help Matilda?
4. Why is Miss Trunchbull unfair?



Fairness & Equality

1. Was Matilda treated fairly by her family? Why or why not?
2. How was Miss Honey treated unfairly?
3. What does fairness mean?
4. What should people do when they see something unfair happening?

Hope & Changemakers

1. How does Matilda create positive change?
2. What qualities make Matilda a changemaker?
3. Can children make a difference in the world?
4. What changes would you like to see in your school or community?

Matilda Lesson Plan

Age  Senior Primary (3rd - 6th class)

Theme  Hope & Changemakers

Duration 60 mins (this lesson can be done over multiple classes)

Linked SDGS:

- SDG 4: Quality Education
- SDG 5: Gender Equality
- SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

Learning Intention

We are learning about what makes a changemaker and how we can use our strengths to make a positive difference.

Success Criteria

By the end of the lesson students will be able to:

- Identify examples of fairness and unfairness in the story.
- Describe qualities that make Matilda a changemaker.
- Suggest ways they can make a positive difference in their own community.

Curriculum Links

English - Oral Language

- Engage in discussions and express opinions.
- Respond to characters, themes and events in stories.
- Justify viewpoints using examples from texts.

SPHE - Myself and the Wider World

- Develop a sense of social responsibility.
- Explore fairness and justice.
- Recognise ways to contribute positively to the school community.

Drama

- Explore situations through role play and improvisation.
- Collaborate and communicate effectively in groups.

Matilda Lesson Plan

Introduction: What is a Changemaker?

Time: 5 mins

Methodology: Whole Class discussion

Steps:

1. Display the word 'CHANGEMAKER' on the board.

2. Ask:

- What do you think a changemaker is?
- Can children make a difference?
- What words would you use to describe Matilda?

Record responses on the board.

3. Introduce the theme:

A changemaker is someone who notices a problem and takes action to make things better.

4. Observe and briefly discuss answers

Activity 1: What Makes a Changemaker?

Time: 30 mins + depending on number of pairs

Methodology: Think-Pair-Share followed by individual worksheet completion.

Steps:

1. Explain to the class:

"Matilda is more than a clever character, she is someone who notices unfairness and tries to make things better. Today, we are going to think, talk and share our ideas about what makes Matilda a changemaker."

Display one key question on the board or read it aloud - **How is Matilda a changemaker, and what can we learn from her?**

2. Tell children to; "Think quietly to yourself" about:

- What unfair things happen in the story?
- How does Matilda react?
- What qualities does she show?

Matilda Lesson Plan

Activity 1 Steps (continued):

3. Children turn to a partner and share their ideas.

Encourage them to:

- take turns
- listen carefully
- add on to each other's ideas
- disagree respectfully if they have different opinions

4. With a partner, they then discuss:

- one unfair situation in the story
- one thing Matilda does to make a difference
- one quality Matilda has that they admire

5. Bring the class back together and invite pairs to share one idea with the whole class.

Optional: Record responses under two headings: **Matilda's Changemaker Qualities** and **What We Can Learn From Her**

6. Invite children to complete the '**If I have Matilda's Powers For Good**' and '**My Changemaker Mission**' worksheets.

7. Final Reflection: "You Don't Need Magic to Make a Difference". Invite children to share their thoughts.

Matilda reminds us that you do not need magic powers to change the world. What is one real strength you already have (such as kindness, courage, creativity or fairness) and how could you use it this week to make a positive difference?

Supporting questions for reflection:

- What real-life powers do children have, even without magic?
- Which of these did we see in Matilda?
- Which of these powers do you think you already have?
- Which one would you like to grow stronger in?
- What is one thing you could do this week to be a changemaker?

Matilda Lesson Plan

- Activity 2:** What Would Matilda Do Roleplay
- Time:** 30 mins + depending on number of groups
- Methodology:** Collaborative group work and role play

Purpose of activity

In Matilda, Matilda notices when something is unfair and finds ways to make things better. In this drama activity, students work in small groups to act out everyday situations where someone needs help, kindness, courage or fairness.

The goal is for children to think like changemakers:

- What is the problem?
- Who needs help?
- What would Matilda do?
- What could we do in real life?

Steps

- 1.** Introduce the challenge (2-3 mins)
Tell children:
"Matilda used her intelligence, bravery and kindness to stand up for what was right. Today, your group will be given a problem or unfair situation. Your job is to decide what a changemaker could do and then act it out."
- 2.** Give each group a scenario sheet (1 min)
Put students in groups of 3-5 and give each group one scenario sheet
- 3.** Group planning time (8-10 mins)
Children discuss and prepare a short role play.
- 4.** Perform (5-10 mins)
Each group performs their scene for the class.
- 5.** Reflect (3-5 mins)
After each role play ask:
 - What was the problem?
 - What did the changemaker do?
 - Was it a fair solution?
 - Could this happen in real life?
 - What would you do?

Matilda Lesson Plan

Activity 3: Final Reflection

Time: 10 mins

Methodology: Circle discussion

Steps:

1. Begin by gathering the class together and saying something like:
"Today we imagined what we might do if we had Matilda's powers. But when we think about the story carefully, Matilda's most important powers were not really magical at all. Her real powers were things like courage, kindness, intelligence, determination and standing up for what is right."
2. Ask children:
"What do you think Matilda's greatest real-life power was?"
Take 3-4 quick answers and note key words on the board.
3. Optional additional questions to ask your class if you have time:
 - Which of these actions would make the biggest difference in our class?
 - Why do small actions matter?
4. Finish by inviting children to make a changemaker promise:
"This week, I will use my power of _____ to help _____."
This can be shared aloud, with a partner or collected as an exit sentence.

Examples:

- "This week, I will use my power of kindness to help someone who feels left out."
- "This week, I will use my power of courage to speak up if something is unfair."
- "This week, I will use my power of creativity to make someone smile."
- "This week, I will use my power of patience to help a friend learn."

If I had Matilda's Powers for Good

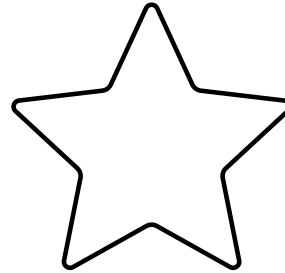


Step 1: Matilda's Real Superpowers

Write the power that you think is Matilda's biggest strength in the star.

Tick the box or circle the powers you think Matilda has.

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ Love of reading | ☐ Standing up for fairness |
| ☐ Clever thinking | ☐ Imagination |
| ☐ Kindness | ☐ Helping others |
| ☐ Courage | ☐ Determination |



I chose this because...

Step 2: My Powers for Good

If you had a special power to make the world better, what would it be?

My power would be...

- ☐ Flying to help people
- ☐ Making books appear for every child
- ☐ A voice that helps people listen
- ☐ Growing trees instantly
- ☐ A kindness power
- ☐ My own idea: _____

Draw yourself using your power for good:

A large, empty rounded rectangle with a green border, intended for a student to draw themselves using their power for good.

Remember to think about: Who are you helping? What problem are you solving? How are you making things fairer, kinder or better?

My Changemaker Mission



My mission is to help...

- ☐ Someone who feels left out
- ☐ Animals or nature
- ☐ My school/community
- ☐ Children who need books and learning
- ☐ People who are treated unfairly
- ☐ Something else: _____

Draw or write one thing you would do.

I would use my power to...

My Real-Life Superpower

One real-life superpower I already have is...

- ☐ Kindness
- ☐ Being a good friend
- ☐ Creativity
- ☐ Problem-solving
- ☐ Loving to learn
- ☐ Helping others
- ☐ Speaking up
- ☐ Teamwork
- ☐ Cheering people up
- ☐ Something else: _____

Draw or write how you could use this superpower in school or at home.

What would Matilda do? - Scenario 1



Your Task:

Work with your group to create a short scene based on a problem or unfair situation.

Step 1: Read your scenario

What is happening? Who needs help?

Step 2: Talk Together

Discuss these questions:

- What is the problem?
- How are the characters feeling?
- What would Matilda do?
- What could a changemaker do to make things better?

Step 3: Plan your scene

Your scene should have:

- a beginning (show the problem)
- a middle (someone takes action)
- an ending (the situation improves)

Step 4: Get Ready to Perform

- Everyone in the group should have a role.

Your Group Scenario 1:

The New Pupil

A new child has joined the class. They don't know anyone and they are standing alone at break time.

Think:

- How might they be feeling?
- What could someone do to help them feel welcome?
- What would Matilda do?

What would Matilda do? - Scenario 2



Your Task:

Work with your group to create a short scene based on a problem or unfair situation.

Step 1: Read your scenario

What is happening? Who needs help?

Step 2: Talk Together

Discuss these questions:

- What is the problem?
- How are the characters feeling?
- What would Matilda do?
- What could a changemaker do to make things better?

Step 3: Plan your scene

Your scene should have:

- a beginning (show the problem)
- a middle (someone takes action)
- an ending (the situation improves)

Step 4: Get Ready to Perform

- Everyone in the group should have a role.

Your Group Scenario 2:

Afraid to Answer

A child knows the answer in class but is too nervous to put up their hand because they are worried people will laugh.

Think:

- How can classmates make school feel safer?
- What could a kind friend say or do?

What would Matilda do? - Scenario 3



Your Task:

Work with your group to create a short scene based on a problem or unfair situation.

Step 1: Read your scenario

What is happening? Who needs help?

Step 2: Talk Together

Discuss these questions:

- What is the problem?
- How are the characters feeling?
- What would Matilda do?
- What could a changemaker do to make things better?

Step 3: Plan your scene

Your scene should have:

- a beginning (show the problem)
- a middle (someone takes action)
- an ending (the situation improves)

Step 4: Get Ready to Perform

- Everyone in the group should have a role.

Your Group Scenario 3:

"Girls Can't Do That"

Someone says, "Girls can't be inventors/scientists/footballers."

Think:

- Why is this unfair?
- What could someone say back respectfully?
- How can we show that everyone should have the same opportunities?

What would Matilda do? - Scenario 4



Your Task:

Work with your group to create a short scene based on a problem or unfair situation.

Step 1: Read your scenario

What is happening? Who needs help?

Step 2: Talk Together

Discuss these questions:

- What is the problem?
- How are the characters feeling?
- What would Matilda do?
- What could a changemaker do to make things better?

Step 3: Plan your scene

Your scene should have:

- a beginning (show the problem)
- a middle (someone takes action)
- an ending (the situation improves)

Step 4: Get Ready to Perform

- Everyone in the group should have a role.

Your Group Scenario 4:

The Book Lover

A child in the class loves reading and brings a big book to school. Some children laugh and say, "Books are boring!"

Think:

- Is this fair?
- How could someone stand up for them kindly?
- How could the class make everyone feel proud of their interests?

What would Matilda do? - Scenario 5



Your Task:

Work with your group to create a short scene based on a problem or unfair situation.

Step 1: Read your scenario

What is happening? Who needs help?

Step 2: Talk Together

Discuss these questions:

- What is the problem?
- How are the characters feeling?
- What would Matilda do?
- What could a changemaker do to make things better?

Step 3: Plan your scene

Your scene should have:

- a beginning (show the problem)
- a middle (someone takes action)
- an ending (the situation improves)

Step 4: Get Ready to Perform

- Everyone in the group should have a role.

Your Group Scenario 5:

Being Judged Too Quickly

A child in school is treated differently because people think they are “weird” or “different”.

Think:

- Why is it important not to judge someone before getting to know them?
- What could a changemaker do?

What would Matilda do? - Scenario 6



Your Task:

Work with your group to create a short scene based on a problem or unfair situation.

Step 1: Read your scenario

What is happening? Who needs help?

Step 2: Talk Together

Discuss these questions:

- What is the problem?
- How are the characters feeling?
- What would Matilda do?
- What could a changemaker do to make things better?

Step 3: Plan your scene

Your scene should have:

- a beginning (show the problem)
- a middle (someone takes action)
- an ending (the situation improves)

Step 4: Get Ready to Perform

- Everyone in the group should have a role.

Your Group Scenario 6:

The Messy Playground

The school yard is full of litter after lunch and nobody seems to care.

Think:

- Why is this a problem?
- What could children do to make a change?

What would Matilda do? - Scenario 7



Your Task:

Work with your group to create a short scene based on a problem or unfair situation.

Step 1: Read your scenario

What is happening? Who needs help?

Step 2: Talk Together

Discuss these questions:

- What is the problem?
- How are the characters feeling?
- What would Matilda do?
- What could a changemaker do to make things better?

Step 3: Plan your scene

Your scene should have:

- a beginning (show the problem)
- a middle (someone takes action)
- an ending (the situation improves)

Step 4: Get Ready to Perform

- Everyone in the group should have a role.

Your Group Scenario 7:

Left Out of the Game

A group of children are playing a game in the yard. One child asks to join but is ignored.

Think:

- How might that child feel?
- What could a changemaker do?
- How could the group solve the problem fairly?

What would Matilda do? - Scenario 8



Your Task:

Work with your group to create a short scene based on a problem or unfair situation.

Step 1: Read your scenario

What is happening? Who needs help?

Step 2: Talk Together

Discuss these questions:

- What is the problem?
- How are the characters feeling?
- What would Matilda do?
- What could a changemaker do to make things better?

Step 3: Plan your scene

Your scene should have:

- a beginning (show the problem)
- a middle (someone takes action)
- an ending (the situation improves)

Step 4: Get Ready to Perform

- Everyone in the group should have a role.

Your Group Scenario 8:

The Class Argument

Two children have had an argument and now the whole class is taking sides.

Think:

- How could a changemaker help solve the problem peacefully?
- How can people disagree respectfully?