

The Witches
By Roald Dahl

Do you know any other books by Roald Dahl?

What age does he tend to write for?

Write down what his style of writing is like. Children share and compare answers- can any one explain further their reason for their thoughts on Roald Dahl's style of writing?

Read the description about Roald Dahl. Write why you think 'The world's number one story teller' is in large font plus in capital letters. Ask children to read out their answer and check it is in a full sentence.

Read the introduction for Quentin Blake. 'He was *'knighted'* for his services'. What do you think 'knighted' may mean? (Where have you heard the one 'knight' before?) Discuss.

Look at the illustrations of the characters – write one word to say what you think each will be like.

A Note about Witches

Give children 5 minutes to read this section in their heads. Have a timer.

Why do you think this section has been included?

Children write on whiteboards to give three different reasons. (3 marks)

e.g. so reader will take it more seriously than a fairy tale – 'this is about real witches'

make you interested in reading the story by seeing what the witches in this story will do – 'exactly which child shall I choose...?'

make you want to read by creating humour 'look carefully at your teacher'.

My Grandmother

'I won't go into the horrors of that terrible afternoon'.

Has Roald Dahl been lazy to not want to explain everything that happened?

Why do you think he has written this?

Page 8: 'I was enthralled by everything she told me'. What do you think 'enthralled' means? Read the whole sentence to work it out. Then read the sentence before and after it.

Page 9. What image (picture) do you get of the grandmother as she sat in her chair? Ensure you draw evidence from the text.

Why do you think Roald Dahl has created this picture of grandmother in our minds?

On page 14, moving onto page 15, there is a hint that the stories grandmother may be telling are not true. What is this hint?

(‘you said all of them disappeared.’ ‘ I made a mistake)

What do you think of Grandmother? Give three opinions and quote evidence from the text.

Which tale told by her did you like the best? Why?

How to Recognise a Witch

Page 20 Why do witches have large nose-holes?

‘gives off the most ghastly stench’. What do you think ‘stench’ means? Out of 5 how sure are you? Why?

Page 21. Why does the boy think ‘ it was at moments like these that I loved my grandmother more than ever’ ?

Page 26. Boy thinks his grandmother is lying to him – why does he start to think this?

Page 27 ‘She didn’t move’. Why has the author used this short sentence? What effect does it have? (children should refer to what happened before and how the grandmother suddenly stiffened and continued to keep this up showing how deeply she was feeling.)

The Grand High Witch

What is in the description of the man to show he has come to talk about something serious?

Grandmother said at the start of the story, that she would never leave Norway. Why do you think she changed her mind to go to England? Make sure you use evidence from the text to back up your opinion.

Page 36. The woman’s voice ‘had a curious rasping quality’. It made a sort of metallic sound, as though her throat was full of drawing-pins’. What does this description make you think of?

Do you think the woman was a witch? Why?

Summer Holidays

Page 41 ‘the whole coast is dotted with tiny islands’. Show the children a map of a coast and where the islands could be. Why has the author used the word ‘dotted’?

Page 42 What do you think 'penicillin' must be?

Page 42 Why do you think grandmother needed 'oxygen cylinders'?

Page 43 Why did boy 'throw' himself into the arms of his grandmother? Why has the author chosen this word to describe his actions?

Grandmother recovered from the pneumonia – so why do you think this was in the story? (to force them to stay in England as she could not travel as something was going to happen in England...)

Page 45 What does 'as consolation' mean?

Page 48 grandmother 'went on relentlessly'. What do you think 'relentlessly' must mean?

Page 54 'a great flock of ladies'. What impression does this give the reader?

The Meeting

Page 57 'my blood turned to ice' Boy's blood did not really turn to ice so why has this phrase been used?

How does Roald Dahl build up the suspense on page 57?

Frizzled like a Fritter

What does the title of this chapter mean do you think?

Page 60. There is a detailed description built up about the woman on the platform. Why does the author build up the description in this way?

What is the most effective part of the description do you think? Why?

Have a go at writing a description of a ghastly figure, building it up like Roald Dahl has. You can steal some of his words and phrases!

Share and assess. Uplevel and write neatly for Miss Shirley to read!

Give three good words to describe the Grand Witch. Look at your words and see if you can uplevel any of the them or choose an even better word! Justify the choice of each of these words using evidence from the text.

Formula 86 Delayed Action Mouse-Maker

Page 71 'thundered the Grand High Witch'. What impression does the use of the word 'thundered' give of her voice?

How can you tell the Grand High Witch has thought deeply about her plan to get rid of the children?

The Recipe

Page 82. 'one eye glued to the crack'. Why has the author used the word 'glued'- what impression does this give you?

Why did boy feel like he had been there forever?