Roald Dahl’s Heroes and Villains

During his writing career, Roald Dahl created some truly memorable characters including many courageous heroes and wicked villains. Read on to find out more about some of Dahl’s most loved (and hated) characters.

Heroes of Dahl’s Creation

Charlie Bucket from ‘Charlie and the Chocolate Factory’

Charlie Bucket lives with his mother, father and four grandparents in a shabby house near to the world-famous Wonka Chocolate Factory. His family are very poor and struggling to survive.

Charlie just loves chocolate... especially Wonka chocolate! His favourite bar is the Whipple-Scrumptious Fudgemallow Delight and it is inside one of these bars that he finds the precious Golden Ticket. It is then that his magical adventures begin. Yet throughout these adventures, little Charlie stays level-headed and as Grandpa George says Charlie is ‘a fine little fellow’.

Sophie from ‘The BFG’

One night, Sophie is kidnapped from her bedroom at the orphanage by The Big Friendly Giant. Sophie may be only a tiny little girl, but she is tough and brave. She finds herself travelling to Giant Country clutched in the palm of The BFG’s hand.

Once she realises The BFG is not going to eat her, they quickly become friends and it’s not long before she is eating snozzcumbers and drinking frobscottle. It is Sophie who thinks of a smart idea to stop all the other foul Giants who would rather eat human ‘beans’ than snozzcumbers.

James Trotter from ‘James and the Giant Peach’

James Trotter is a lonely boy living with his two aunts, Spiker and Sponge. At the beginning of the story, poor James is orphaned when his parents are killed by a mad rhinoceros. His aunts are extremely cruel because they make James do all the cleaning and never let him away from the house to meet other children. James’s luck starts to change when he meets a strange old man who hands him a special gift that will change his life. He is then introduced to some of the most unusual friends a young boy could ever have.

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Mr and Mrs Twit from ‘The Twits’
Mr Twit is one half of a horrible couple called The Twits. He and his wife spend most of their time teasing each other with nasty tricks and terrifying children and animals, such as the poor Muggle-Wump Monkeys.

Mr Twit has a horrible, hairy, bristly beard that he never washes. Because of this, his beard is full of all sorts of disgusting scraps from Mr Twit’s meals including stilton cheese, cornflakes and tinned sardines.

His wife, Mrs Twit, is just as evil and twice as ugly. She was once quite beautiful, but her beauty was transformed by thinking so many horrible thoughts over the years.

Farmers Boggis, Bunce and Bean from ‘Fantastic Mr. Fox’
Boggis is one of three farmers that appear in Fantastic Mr Fox. Along with Bunce and Bean, he makes it his business to do all he can to prevent Mr Fox from taking any more of his livestock. From shooting at him to starving the Fox family out of their home, they’ll do anything to stop sly Mr Fox.

Together, they think of many different tricks and plans to defeat the cunning Mr Fox, but they continue to be infuriated by Mr Fox’s night-time raids on their farms. Unfortunately for them, Mr Fox is a clever fellow who quickly finds a solution to the problem the farmers put him in.

Miss Trunchbull from ‘Matilda’
One of Dahl’s most evil characters, Miss Agatha Trunchbull, is the ‘formidable female’ headmistress of Crunchem Hall Primary School, attended by Matilda and her friends. A former Olympic hammer-thrower with a hatred of children, Dahl describes her as ‘a fierce tyrannical monster who frightened the life out of pupils and teachers alike’. She’s certainly not the sort of woman you’d expect to find as headmistress of a school as she treats her students so badly. She throws boys out of windows and girls across the playground by their pigtails. However with a little help from Matilda, though, Miss Trunchbull faces punishment for her evil deeds.
What are the names of the three Roald Dahl ‘heroes’ featured in the text?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Describe the character of Charlie Bucket based on the text.
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Which character is described as having a hairy, bristly beard?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

How did Mrs Twit become so ugly?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

What is the name of the school where Miss Trunchbull is headmistress?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Why do you think it is so difficult for Charlie to live so near to Wonka’s Chocolate Factory?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

How are the characters of Sophie and James Trotter similar?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
What evidence in the text shows that Mr Twit does not have good hygiene?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Why do you think Miss Trunchbull makes such a poor headmistress?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

How are headings and sub-headings used within the text?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

Which word does the writer use to describe the frustration the farmers feel towards Fantastic Mr Fox?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

How does the writer make you feel about Roald Dahl’s books?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

How does Roald Dahl represent the role of adults and children in these stories? Why do you think he does this?
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Write the meaning of each of these words.

memorable

courageous

shabby

precious

level-headed

orphanage

foul

bristly

transformed

livestock

infuriated

cunning

formidable

tyrannical
Roald Dahl’s Heroes and Villains – Vocab 2

Using the clues, can you think of a synonym for the words listed from the text?

When you have completed this, try to find that word hidden in the wordsearch below. Words are either horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WORDS</th>
<th>SYNONYMS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>beautiful</td>
<td>r t t y</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>little</td>
<td>s a l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sly</td>
<td>c n n g</td>
</tr>
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<td>r v e</td>
</tr>
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<td>horrible</td>
<td>t r b e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>special</td>
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WORDS: t a m x i j o d c
SYNONYMS: e f s l e v e w u

WORDS: r h b m n c p b n
SYNONYMS: i m i s t l e r i

WORDS: r z n o a l p u n
SYNONYMS: b r a v e s l e n

WORDS: l u f a y k b a g
SYNONYMS: e q o p r e t t y

WORDS: v u n u s u a l g

Now write each word from the ‘SYNONYMS’ column in to a sentence of your own.

1. _______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
2. _______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
3. _______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
4. _______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
5. _______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
6. _______________________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
Adjectives

Adjectives are describing words. Large, friendly and red are all examples of adjectives.

Tick the adjectives (describing words) in this list:

grey ______
music ______
kind ______
tiny ______
dance ______

Using the text, find eight or more examples of adjectives from the text.

_________________________  __________
_________________________  __________
_________________________  __________
_________________________  __________

Think of three examples of adjectives to describe Charlie Bucket which are not used within the text.

1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________

Think of three examples of adjectives to describe Mr Twit which are not used within the text.

1. __________________________________________
2. __________________________________________
3. __________________________________________
Roald Dahl's Heroes and Villains – Oral Teacher Questions

What are the names of the three Roald Dahl ‘heroes’ featured in the text? Charlie Bucket, Sophie and James Trotter.

Describe the character of Charlie Bucket based on the text. He is described as being poor and struggling to survive. He is sensible and level-headed.

Which character is described as having a hairy, bristly beard? Mr Twit.

How did Mrs Twit become so ugly? Her beauty was transformed by thinking so many horrible thoughts over the years.

What is the name of the school where Miss Trunchbull is headmistress? Crunchem Hall Primary School.

Why do you think it is so difficult for Charlie to live so near to Wonka’s Chocolate Factory? It is difficult because he is extremely poor and can’t afford to buy the chocolate that he loves so much.

How are the characters of Sophie and James Trotter similar? Both children are orphaned (without their parents). Both children’s lives change when something ‘special’ happens to both of them.

What evidence in the text shows that Mr Twit does not have good hygiene? He never washes and because of this, his beard is full of all sorts of disgusting scraps from his meals including stilton cheese, cornflakes and tinned sardines.

Why do you think Miss Trunchbull makes such a poor headmistress? She hates children and treats them badly. She throws children through windows and across the playground by their pigtails.

How are headings and sub-headings used within the text? Sub-headings are used to write about each of the characters separately. The headings are used to separate the heroes and villains.

Which word does the writer use to describe the frustration the farmers feel towards Fantastic Mr Fox? The writer uses the word ‘infuriated’ to describe their frustration.

How does the writer make you feel about Roald Dahl’s books? The writer describes the characters in detail and makes them sound interesting without giving too much of the story away. The writer makes people want to read the stories that these characters are in.

How does Roald Dahl represent the role of adults and children in these stories? Why do you think he does this? In these examples, the children are portrayed as being the heroes of his stories whereas the adults tend to be portrayed as villains. He does this because his books are aimed at children and making them the heroes would appeal to children.
Write the meaning of each of these words.

memorable – something worth remembering; notable

courageous – being brave; having courage

shabby – showing signs of wear or neglect

precious – something which is dear to someone; very valuable or costly

level-headed – having common sense; sensible

orphanage – a place for the care of orphans (children without family)

foul – filthy and disgusting; something which is horrible

bristly – rough; covered with bristles

transformed – to have changed in appearance

livestock – animals kept on a farm, such as chickens, cows and sheep

infuriated – to make someone very angry or impatient

cunning – sly and crafty

formidable – causing fear or dread; intimidating, forceful and powerful

tyrranical – acting in a cruel, harsh or severe way
Roald Dahl’s Heroes and Villains – Vocab 2

Using the clues, can you think of a synonym for the words listed from the text?

When you have completed this, try to find that word hidden in the wordsearch below. Words are either horizontal, vertical or diagonal.

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</tr>
<tr>
<td>special</td>
<td>unusual</td>
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Now write each word from the ‘SYNONYMS’ column in to a sentence of your own.

1. Individual pupil responses to include the six words above.
2. 
3. 
4. 
5. 
6. 

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Adjectives

Adjectives are describing words. Large, friendly and red are all examples of adjectives.

Tick the adjectives (describing words) in this list:

grey
music
kind
tiny
dance

Using the text, find eight or more examples of adjectives from the text.

Examples could include any of the following words: shabby, poor, hairy, nasty, horrible, bristly, precious, tiny, mad, old, fierce, tyrannical, tough, terrible, special, little, brave, strange, special, unusual, disgusting, evil, ugly, beautiful, sly, cunning, clever.

Think of three examples of adjectives to describe Charlie Bucket which are not used within the text.

1. Words such as deprived, young, small, friendly, sensible, hungry could be used.
2.
3.

Think of three examples of adjectives to describe Mr Twit which are not used within the text.

1. Words such as awful, smelly, revolting, dreadful, appalling could be used.
2.
3.