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**Roald Dahl**

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Roald Dahl (1916–1990) was one of the world’s most imaginative, successful and beloved storytellers. He was born in Wales of Norwegian parents and spent much of his childhood in England. After establishing himself as a writer for adults with short story collections such as *Kiss Kiss* and *Tales of the Unexpected*, Roald Dahl began writing children's stories in 1960 while living with his family in both the U.S. and in England. His first stories were written as entertainment for his own children, to whom many of his books are dedicated.

Roald Dahl’s first children’s story, *The Gremlins*, was a story about little creatures that were responsible for the various mechanical failures on airplanes. *The Gremlins* came to the attention of both First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt, who loved to read the story to her grandchildren, and Walt Disney, with whom Roald Dahl had discussions about the production of a movie.

Roald Dahl was inspired by American culture and by many of the most quintessential American landmarks to write some of his most memorable passages, such as the thrilling final scenes in *James and the Giant Peach* - when the peach lands on the Empire State Building! Upon the publication of *James and the Giant Peach*, Roald Dahl began work on the story that would later be published as *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* and today, Roald Dahl’s stories are available in 58 languages and, by a conservative estimate, have sold more than 200 million copies.

Roald Dahl also enjoyed great success for the screenplays he wrote for both the James Bond film *You Only Live Twice* in 1967 and for *Chitty Chitty Bang Bang*, released one year later, which went on to become a beloved family film. Roald Dahl’s popularity continues to increase as his fantastic novels, including *James and the Giant Peach, Fantastic Mr. Fox, Matilda, The BFG*, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, delight an ever-growing legion of fans.

Two charities have been founded in Roald Dahl’s memory: the first charity, Roald Dahl’s Marvellous Children’s Charity, created in 1991, focuses on making life better for seriously ill children through the funding of specialist nurses, innovative medical training, hospitals, and individual families across the UK.

The second charity, The Roald Dahl Museum and Story Centre – a unique cultural, literary and education hub – opened in June 2005 in Great Missenden where Roald Dahl lived and wrote many of his best-loved works. 10% of income from Roald Dahl books and adaptations are donated to the two Roald Dahl charities.

On September 13, 2006, the first national Roald Dahl Day was celebrated, on what would have been the author’s 90th birthday. The event proved such a success that Roald Dahl Day is now marked annually all over the world. September 13, 2016 is Roald Dahl 100, marking 100 years since the birth of the world’s number one storyteller. There will be celebrations for Roald Dahl 100 throughout 2016, delivering a year packed with gloriumptious treats and surprises for everyone.

**\*Excerpted from NPR’s November 14, 2013 interview with Lucy Dahl, “Roald Dahl Wanted His Magical Matilda To Keep Books Alive”**

Lucy: “I remember waking up in the night and going to the bathroom and seeing the glow of the light in the little [writing] hut while it was still dark outside.

“His hut was a sacred place. ... We were all allowed to go in there, but we only disturbed him when we absolutely needed to because he used to say that his hut was his nest. You would walk in and the smells were so familiar — that very old paper from filing cabinets. And he sat in his mother's old armchair and then put his feet up on an old leather trunk, and then on top of that he would get into an old down sleeping bag that he would put his legs into to keep him warm.

“He then had a board that he made that he would rest on the arms of the armchair as a desk table and on top of that he had cut some billiard felt that was glued on top of it, and it was slightly carved out for where his tummy was. When he sat down ... the first thing he did was get a brush and brush the felt on his lap desk so it was all clean.

“He always had six pencils with an electric sharpener that he would sharpen at the beginning of each session. His work sessions were very strict — he worked from 10 until 12 every day and then again from 3 until 5 every day. And that was it. Even if there was nothing to write he would still, as he would say, ‘put his bottom on the chair.’"

For further information on the wonderful world of Roald Dahl please visit [www.roalddahl.com](http://www.roalddahl.com)