



## ABOUT

In 1988, Roald Dahl published his beloved story about a brilliant young girl with an unexpected gift. Now, nearly 30 years after the release of the original book, *MATILDA* enchants a new generation of story-lovers on stage with a masterful adaptation full of splendor, heart, and of course, a little magic.

After its premiere in London's West End in 2011, *MATILDA* became a critical and commercial success, garnering seven Olivier Awards – the most ever won by a musical. Two years later, the show's transfer to Broadway received equal praise, earning itself five Tony Awards® including Best Book of a Musical.

"It's incredibly challenging," says the show's book writer, Dennis Kelly, in an interview with The Telegraph, "Matilda has to sing, dance, act and also carry these massive monologues. That's a big ask of one little performer but I think it's seeing her cope with all that which helps us fall in love with the character."

## CHARACTERS

**MATILDA** – Only five years old, Matilda is not only remarkably smart, but possesses a hint of magic that no one can quite explain. Despite her small size, she is a massive advocate of ethics, even in the face of constant opposition.

**AGATHA TRUNCHBULL** – Headmistress of Cruncheon Hall, Miss Trunchbull has more in common with a bull than a woman. She rules with an iron fist and is a staunch believer that the only way to deal with children is through harsh discipline and radical punishments.

**MRS. WORMWOOD** – Matilda's dance-obsessed mother with an insatiable taste for flashiness. Looks and exuberance are the spices of life and they should be utilized constantly, even at the expense of caring for one's children.

**MR. WORMWOOD** – Matilda's father who prefers to be known by his career as a used car salesman. He is a proud proponent of underhanded schemes and pompously acknowledges that all of his brilliance comes from his obsession with television.

**MISS HONEY** – Matilda's teacher whose kindness and generosity are her unappreciated strengths. She admires Matilda's cleverness and seeks to help others realize her potential.

**LAVENDER** – Matilda's gutsy best friend with a significant interest in harmless pranks.

**MRS. PHELPS** – A lively librarian who shares Matilda's passion for books.

## CONTENT

Suitable for children 6 years and older.



Original Broadway Cast of MATILDA THE MUSICAL | Photo: Joan Marcus

## SYNOPSIS ACT ONE:

Mrs. Wormwood, unknowingly nine-months pregnant, gives birth to a daughter, Matilda. However, neither parent is joyful. They are far more concerned with their own desires and the frustration of now having to factor in an ugly baby. Meanwhile, a chorus of children sing about how they are the miracles their parents always wanted. Five years later, Matilda lives a gloomy existence with her parents whom frequently mock her unprecedented intelligence. Matilda voices her disapproval of her father's plan to sell broken cars to a Russian businessman, but as usual, her cries go unheeded. In order to get back at him, Matilda adds her mother's hydrogen peroxide to her father's hair tonic which turns his hair a vibrant shade of green.

At the library, Matilda's favorite hideaway, she tells the librarian, Mrs. Phelps, a story about an acrobat and an escapologist couple who desperately want a child. When they find out they cannot have one, they decide to deal with their sorrow by performing a dangerous new act. Matilda promises to tell Mrs. Phelps the rest of the story next time she sees her – after she figures out what happens herself. The next day, Matilda starts school at the horrifying Cruncheum Hall. The older kids sing to the younger ones, informing them how school is more like a prison. Miss Honey, Matilda's teacher, immediately sees Matilda's potential and wants to move her to a more advanced class. The schoolteacher quakes in her boots while waiting outside of the treacherous headmaster's door, Miss Trunchbull. Once inside, her request to advance Matilda is viciously denied and the disciplinarian principal/ hammer-throwing champion reminds Miss Honey of the significance of following orders.

The next day at school, a classmate, Lavender, reveals to Matilda that Miss Trunchbull is notorious for her heinous punishments including the Chokey – a small closet lined with sharp protruding objects in which she locks "bad" children for hours at a time. Feeling that no crime warrants such a punishment, Matilda unites her fellow children to help their classmate, Nigel, whom Miss Trunchbull has accused of pouring treacle on her chair. They cover him with their blazers and inform Miss Trunchbull that he has narcolepsy and was asleep at the time of the incident. Angry, Miss Trunchbull grabs another girl by her pigtails and throws her across the field.

Miss Honey, determined to get Matilda to a better class, visits the Wormwood's home. She encounters Mrs. Wormwood and her dance partner, Rudolpho, and soon understands that Matilda's mother cares for her very little as she sings a song to mock her intelligence. Afterwards, Miss Honey laments Matilda's plight and her feelings of inadequacy at being able to help her. Meanwhile, Matilda visits with Mrs. Phelps again, carrying on with her acrobat story. This time, the villainess takes on an uncanny similarity to a certain hammer-throwing tyrant in her real life. At school, a boy in Matilda's class, Bruce, steals a piece of Miss Trunchbull's chocolate cake. She punishes him by forcing him to eat the entire cake before the whole class. Bruce manages to do so, only after receiving encouragement from his fellow classmates and Miss Honey. Furious that he succeeded, Miss Trunchbull sentences Bruce to the Chokey, much to Matilda's displeasure.



## SYNOPSIS ACT TWO:

Mr. Wormwood informs the audience that watching television is far more beneficial than reading books. Matilda, after being sent to her room for admonishing her father for his devious tactics, continues the story about the acrobats who by a miracle do have a daughter. In the story, the wicked aunt abuses the young girl and her father uncovers the abuse. The father goes off to confront the aunt, but he is never seen again.

Miss Trunchbull discovers a newt in her water jug and falsely accuses a boy in Matilda's class. Matilda defends him, earning her a harsh whirlwind of verbal abuse from Miss Trunchbull. Suddenly, Matilda moves the jug of water with her mind, spilling the newt onto Miss Trunchbull. Miss Trunchbull flees from the room. Intrigued by Matilda's telekinetic abilities, Miss Honey invites her over for tea. Miss Honey reveals to Matilda her own abusive childhood and her horrible aunt. Matilda slowly realizes that Miss Honey's story is identical to the one she's been telling to Mrs. Phelps. Matilda is now certain that Miss Trunchbull is Miss Honey's aunt and that she killed Miss Honey's father.

Miss Trunchbull arranges a spelling test for Matilda's class with high stakes – that is, any misspelled words will land the offender in the Chokey. The children unite in opposition for the unjust rules. Matilda uses her mind to write on the chalkboard, claiming to be the ghost of Miss Honey's father. Horrified, the superstitious Miss Trunchbull runs from the school, never to be seen again. Miss Honey takes over in her wake.

The Wormwoods, jittery with dread, explain to Miss Honey and Matilda that they must leave at once since the Russian's caught on to Mr. Wormwood's not-so-sneaky ploy. Sergei, the head of the Russian mafia, shows up and is impressed by Matilda's fluent Russian. Together, they reach an agreement which keeps the Wormwoods safe – as long as they never deal with him again – and allows Matilda to move in with Miss Honey. They are elated and all of the children join them on stage for a final, joyous number.