

The Enormous Crocodile

SECTION

1

About the book

The Enormous Crocodile is a wonderful book for Key Stage 2 study. Exciting and funny, there are links with many National Literacy Framework genres: it is written by a significant author; it is set in another culture; and it sometimes uses poetry of silliness and the senses to tell its story. Set in rural Africa, the book conveys vividly the environment's colours, sounds and life. The talking animals are credible because they are witty, clever and astute. It is mainly through them that the reader recognises the value of friendship; considers the need to treat others well; and shares the dilemma of making choices. Yet this story was written and illustrated to be enjoyed. With its exaggerated language and outrageous main character, it is an adventure book of exhilarating fun. Children will revel in it.

A large river dweller, the Enormous Crocodile is dissatisfied with the diet of fish offered by his home, Africa's muddiest river. He hankers after human prey – in particular, little children. And he determines to have a specimen for today's lunch. His decision means travelling through the jungle to human territory. The story tracks that journey.

The Enormous Crocodile's success depends on *secret plans and clever tricks*, but he is too boastful to keep his plans completely secret. The conversations he has with animals he meets on the way through the jungle prove important when he later comes close to eating a human lunch. Only then does the Crocodile discover whether the animals will be loyal to him or will protect the human prey. And not until the last page does his journey reach a destination.

About the author

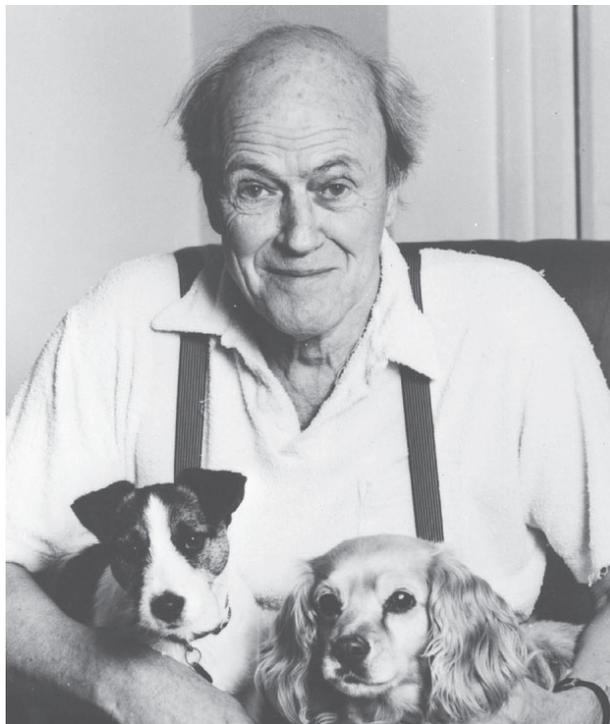
Roald Dahl was born of Norwegian parents in Llandaff, Wales, in 1916. He reluctantly attended Llandaff Cathedral School and Repton School. A variety of jobs followed: Shell Oil Company representative in East Africa; RAF fighter pilot in the Second World War; air attaché; and author.

Dahl began writing after suffering a serious plane crash. His early writing was for adults but it was later, as a writer of children's books, that Dahl achieved greatest success.

Writing in a shed at the bottom of his garden, Dahl claimed to 'know what children like' and demonstrated a vivid memory of what it was like to live in a child's world. His stories are often told from a child's point of view and usually involve adult villains who mistreat the children in some way. They also typically include one 'good' adult who helps and supports the main child character

(for example, the Big Friendly Giant in *The BFG*).

Dahl's extensive output included *James and the Giant Peach*, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *Fantastic Mr Fox* and, in 1978, *The Enormous Crocodile*. In later years, he wrote some of his best books, including *Matilda*, winner of the prestigious Children's Book Award in 1988.



Facts and figures

Roald Dahl's work has been translated into 34 languages. In 1983 his book *The Witches* won the Whitbread Award. Roald Dahl died in 1990.

PAGE
3