READING Comprehension Practice

Read the text. Then complete the tasks.

Roald Dahl has been a pioneer in writing novels for children which even seem to interest an adult reading audience as well. One of his best-known novels is 'Matilda', which was published in 1988.

This story is about Matilda Wormwood, an extraordinary child with special abilities. Very early on, Matilda discovers her love of books, and by the age of three, she has taught herself to read. She does this by borrowing books and cassettes from the local library. By the time she is five, she has read all the children's stories they have. She would much rather read in her bedroom than waste time watching television in the living-room. Her parents are nasty and ignorant people who are unaware of her intelligence. They ignore her and give all their love to their son.

It is not until Matilda attends school that someone; her favourite teacher, Miss 'Jenny' Honey - finally appreciates Matilda's ability. However, things don't become any easier for her there. She has to learn to survive in a place ruled by the frightening and cruel headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, who calls her "a horrible little worm". Matilda has to learn to be brave and defend herself, but she succeeds in the end.

What is remarkable about this story, in my opinion, is its heart-warming portrayal of a little girl who learns to stand up for herself and for her love of knowledge. The story also highlights the joy and the value of finding a good and kind teacher, as Matilda did. Moreover, in 'Matilda', Dahl criticizes parents who oppress their children, set them a bad example, and behave in ways that have negative effects on their development. Matilda is often insulted by her father because she is a girl and cannot help him sowing the land, feeding the animals or any other farming activity. In the end, Matilda's parents are dealt with harshly! They meet a terrible fate, like so many adult characters in Roald Dahl's books!

This story is a child's vision from start to finish. Children in Dahl's stories are never wrong! He believes that badness leads to a fall and that the good win in the end as long as you are brave and fight for your beliefs. This is a serious point for the reader, but the good thing about Dahl is that he manages to convey his message in such a humorous way. His descriptions are so funny that I often laughed out loud!

Task One: For each item, write a short answer (not more than Five WORDS).

1. How old was Matilda when she learned to read?

_____

2. Where does she get books from?

_____

3. Where does she read these books?

_____

4. How many brothers has she got?

_____

5. What is her father's job?

_____

6. According to the writer what does it take in order for good to win at the end?

_____

7. How did Matilda learn to read?

_____

8. What does Dahl mainly criticizes in this story?

_____

9. Why does Matilda's father insult her?

_____

Task 2:

Mark the sentences True or False

	True	False
10. At school, Matilda receives support from her best friend.	◯	◯
11. At the end of the story, her parents changed their attitude.	◯	◯
12. Dahl's main message is that children need to show obedience	◯	◯
13. It took Matilda two years to read all the books in the library	◯	◯
10. The writer believes that evil cannot overcome good	◯	◯