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CULMINATING PROJECTS IN ENGLISH

She Can Do It: Messages of Female Empowerment in Lewis Carroll's Alice in Wonderland and Roald Dahl's Matilda

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Abstract

This research evaluates notions of empowerment, agency, and feminization found in Lewis Carroll's *Alice in Wonderland* and Roald Dahl's *Matilda*. Current conversations about these texts fail to address the three-pronged relationship between author, character, and reader. Through close readings of the source texts, applying feminist theory to the texts, and examining the complex power relationships between author and character and author and reader, the research concludes that both *Alice* and *Matilda* are empowering stories.

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What does Roald Dahl mean by this comment? Miss Honey. Matilda enters school, and it is here that we are introduced to several other

important figures in the story – Miss Trunchbull (the school's Headmistress), Miss Honey (Matilda's classroom teacher) and several of Matilda's classmates. We also learn more about Matilda's extraordinary intellect. In this chapter, Matilda and her new friend Lavender meet a girl named Hortense, who is more than happy to relay the antics of their Headmistress. Then, they actually see her in action as she inflicts her own type of "discipline" on a student wearing pigtails. What is the "Chokey"? Who Was Lewis Carroll and Why Did He Write Alice in Wonderland? The Life of Hans Christian Andersen: Interesting Author Biography. Lewis Carroll, 'Jabberwocky'. Often mistakenly called 'The Jabberwocky' (the Jabberwock is the monster, so the poem is 'Jabberwocky'), this poem first appeared in Lewis Carroll's 1871 follow-up book to Alice's Adventures in Wonderland, Through the Looking-Glass. Focusing on the slaying of a fearsome monster, the titular Jabberwock, the poem is renowned for the inventiveness of its language: it gave us almost literally dozens of new words, including some now in common use: the words 'chortle' and 'galumph'. One of Belloc's cautionary rhymes, which in many ways prefigure Roald Dahl's writing for children, 'Matilda' is a classic children's poem with a very dark subject: the titular heroine, because of the lies she tells, ends up being burned to death. Lewis Carroll changed the way the world views children's literature. In the Victorian time period it was common for a children's author to pack their literature with page, after page of devout morals. However, with the publication of Carroll's The Adventures of Alice In Wonderland in 1865, he single-handedly turned Victorian moralist upside-down. Up until that time, all children's books had tried to teach kids too much a little too soon. The books tended to speak down to children, in an attempt to moralized them, so that as they grew older they would know how to maintain, what they considered,