

THE WITCHES, by Roald Dahl

Lesson 1

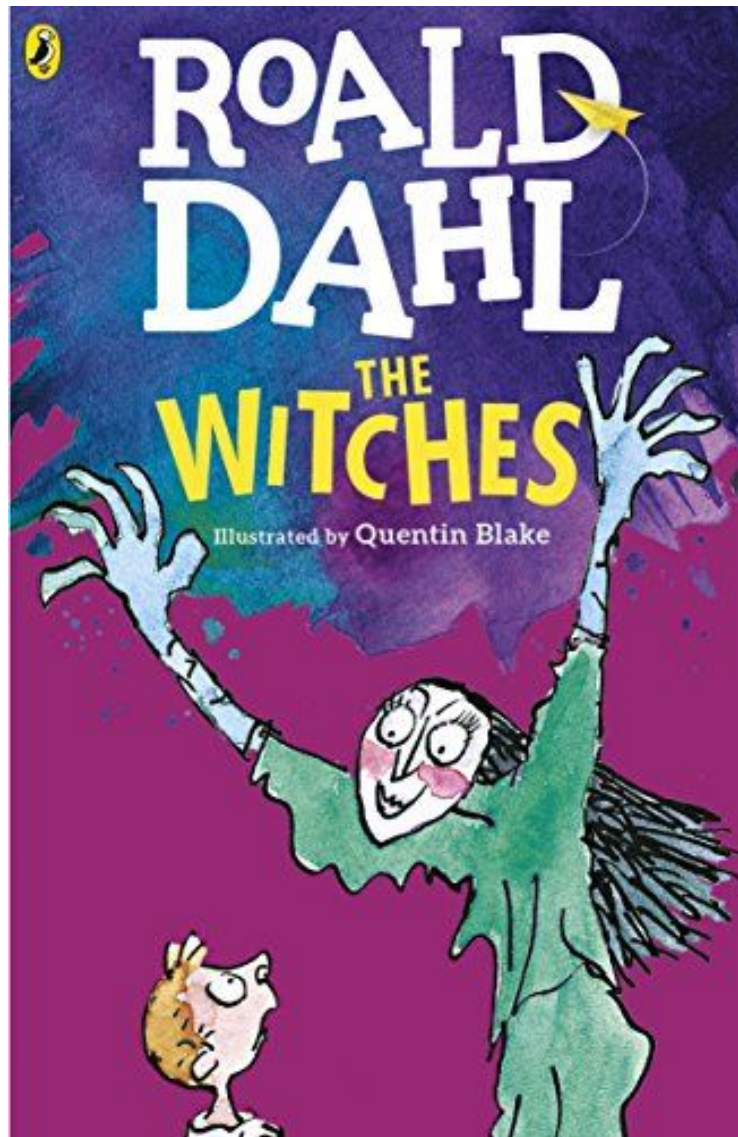
Before reading...

Look at the front cover.

- What do you think the book will be about?
- What things can you see on the front cover?
- What sort of story will it be?
- Who might enjoy it?

Now read the blurb...

- Were any of your predictions correct?



Chapter 1 and 2

V:

- Define 'territory'.
- Define 'wretched'.
- Define 'fluent'.
- What does 'pulling my leg' mean?

I:

- Why are witches hard to catch?
- Why didn't the narrator die in the car crash?
- What does 'heaven shall take my bones, but Norway shall keep my bones' mean?
- What was strange about the painting in the Christiansen's house?
- Why do you think Solveg disappeared from the picture?
- Why wasn't there much fuss when Leif became a porpoise?

P:

- Predict how you recognise a witch.

E:

- How does the author use capitalising and italicising letters for effect?

R:

- What type of story is this not?
- What do witches do to children?
- What is the motto of all witches?
- How many times did the narrator meet a witch before the age of 8?
- Where did witches originate?
- Who was the first child to disappear? Who took her?
- What happened to Harald?

S:

- Describe the witches in one word.

Chapter 3

V:

- Define 'indecent'.
- What does 'oozing' mean? Why do you think Dahl chose this word?
- What is 'a touch of relish'?
- Define 'tinge'.

I:

- Why do witches wear gloves?
- Why can't you tell a witch is wearing a wig?
- How might a strong sense of smell benefit a witch?
- Why might a witch hold their nose?
- Why can't a witch wear high heels?
- Why won't grandmother tell him about meeting a witch?

P:

- Predict if grandmother will tell him about a meeting a witch, and what happened in that encounter.

E:

- How does the picture in this chapter help the reader?

R:

- Can you always be sure if you see a witch?
- What will a real witch always be wearing?
- Why do the wigs cause problems for witches?
- How often does grandmother advise bathing?
- What colour is witch spit?

S:

- Summarise all the ways to spot a witch in a bullet pointed list.

Chapter 4

V:

- What is a will?
- What does it mean if you do something frantically?
- Define 'annual'.
- What is a witchophile?
- What does it mean to be retired?

I:

- Who was the man who visited grandmother?
- Why wouldn't you want to meet an English witch?
- Who is the only witch that can communicate with witches from other countries?
- How did the boy know she was a witch?
- Why might the witch be after this boy?

P:

- Predict when else the boy will encounter a witch.

E:

- Do you think they should definitely go back to England? Why?

R:

- Grandmother will take care of the boy – but where do they have to go?
- What do witches often turn children into?
- How do American witches get grown ups to eat their own children?
- Name three strange things that happen at hotels when witches stay there.
- Where is the old family house?
- Who is Timmy?
- What present did the woman have?

S:

- Summarise the events of this chapter in one sentence.

Chapter 5

V:

- What is 'bait'?
- What does it mean to drop a bombshell?
- Define 'consolation'.
- Define 'relentlessly'.
- What does a 'vast herd' infer?

I:

- What stopped them from going to Norway?
- Why does the nurse tell the boy to be careful with grandmother?
- Why won't they let grandmother have a cigar?
- How did grandmother get the manager to let her keep the mice?

P:

- Predict what will happen next.

E:

- Why do you think Dahl chose not to name the narrator?

R:

- Where are they going to go on a summer holiday? Why do you think they chose there?
- Who is Mrs Spring?
- Where do they go instead of Norway? Why?
- What present did grandmother get for the boy?
- What does RSPCC stand for?
- What are the names of the mice?

S:

- Summarise the events of this chapter in fewer than thirty words.

Chapter 6

V:

- What does 'milling round' mean?
- What is the nape of a neck?
- What is turpentine?

I:

- Why wasn't the boy scared?
- Why does the boy's blood turn to ice?

P:

- Predict what will be seen through the screen.

E:

- How does Dahl show but not tell you who the women are?

R:

- What were all the women doing?
- Who got nits at the boy's school?

S:

- Summarise the boy's emotions in this chapter in one word.
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HOMEWORK:

Design a witch! Write a **description** of a witch: think about **what she is called, what she looks like,** and what **spells she casts.**

OR

How does Roald Dahl **grab his readers' attention** in the **opening** of *The Witches*?