

Roald Dahl Facts

He has Norwegian roots

Not only were Dahl's parents both Norwegian, but he was also named after Norwegian polar explorer Roald Amundsen. His name is correctly pronounced 'Roo-arl'.

He wrote James Bond film "You Only Live Twice"

The script for the 1967 film starring Sean Connery was written by Dahl.

He co-wrote the script for classic children's film Chitty Chitty Bang Bang

In another link with the Bond author, Roald Dahl wrote the screenplay for Ian Fleming's book "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang", inventing an ultimate evil villain called 'The Child Catcher'

His favourite writing spot was in his shed

Dahl had a hut built in his garden at Great Missenden in Bucks, where he did all his writing. Nobody else was allowed in it.

He always wrote in pencil on yellow paper

When Dahl was living in America he discovered Ticonderoga pencils and yellow legal paper and never used anything else from then on.

He created more than 250 new words

They may not be in the dictionary, but Roald Dahl was very creative in coming up with new words. The collection of words, named *Gobblefunk*, includes the more familiar (for example Oompa Loompa, scrumdiddlyumptious and snozzcumber) with the completely unusual (such as Frobscottle, Bootboggler and Gunzleswiped)!

He only began writing children's stories once he had children of his own

Roald's career as a children's book author did not begin in earnest until the 1960s, after he had become a father himself.

He wrote over 70 stories and books in total

Including 21 children's picture books, novels & poetry collections as well as over 50 stories for adults.

He was very tall

Roald Dahl was six feet five and three-quarter inches, or nearly two metres. His nickname in the RAF was Lofty, while Walt Disney called him Stalky (because he was like a beanstalk!).

He was multilingual

Dahl could speak English, Norwegian and Swahili.

He loved chocolate

As many of his stories indicate, Dahl had a sweet tooth and loved chocolate, however he didn't like chocolate cake or chocolate ice cream.

His characters were based on real people

Many of his characters were inspired by people Dahl met in real life.

He enjoyed photography

Alongside writing, Roald Dahl enjoyed photography and often carried a camera with him. When he was eighteen he won two prizes: one from the Royal Photographic Society in London and another from the Photographic Society of Holland.

He had 5 children

Their names were Olivia, Chantal, Theo, Ophelia and Lucy.

His birthday is celebrated across the country

Roald Dahl's birthday, the 13th September, is celebrated as *Roald Dahl Day* by many schools and libraries every year.

His first paid piece of writing was encouraged by author C.S Forester.

Shot Down Over Libya was based on his experiences flying in the Second World War and was initially published anonymously in The Saturday Evening Post.

He hated beards

Roald Dahl described beards as "hairy smokescreens behind which to hide". He had a desire to, 'do something against beards,' due to his acute dislike of facial decoration - this led to The Twits. The first sentence of the story is, "What a lot of hairy-faced men there are around nowadays!"

He helped advances in neuroscience

In 1960 when Roald Dahl's son was hit by a taxi in New York City, he suffered severe injuries and developed hydrocephalus (water on the brain). A standard Holter Shunt was used to drain excess fluid but this proved inadequate. Dahl contacted Stanley Wade, a hydraulic engineer and model aircraft enthusiast, who, with the help of Kenneth Till developed a mechanism which was much more reliable. The mechanism is called the Wade-Dahl-Till Valve.

Roald Dahl was buried with a power saw, HB pencils, chocolate, red wine and his snooker cues

Roald Dahl died on 23 November 1990, partway through writing a third Charlie Bucket story, titled Charlie Bucket and the White House. He was buried with some of his favourite items, including a power saw, HB pencils, chocolate, red wine and his snooker cues.