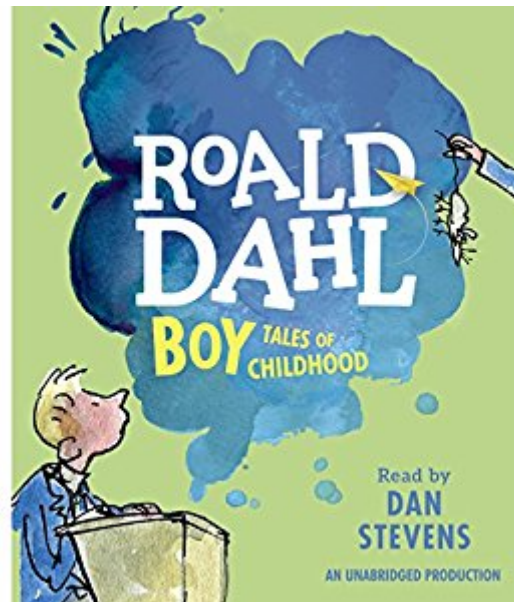


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# Boy



## Synopsis

Where did Roald Dahl get all of his wonderful ideas for stories? From his own life, of course! As full of excitement and the unexpected as his world-famous, best-selling books, Roald Dahl's tales of his own childhood are completely fascinating and fiendishly funny. Did you know that Roald Dahl nearly lost his nose in a car accident? Or that he was once a chocolate candy tester for Cadbury's? Have you heard about his involvement in the Great Mouse Plot of 1924? If not, you don't yet know all there is to know about Roald Dahl. Sure to captivate and delight you, the boyhood antics of this master storyteller are not to be missed!

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

I'm a Dahl fan, a writer for both adults and children. I think the key to his success as writer for children is that he doesn't think children are stupid or don't understand what they see. From my own experience, and now as a father, I know that children see, hear, think and make conclusions with their experiences. This book is a collection of sketches of Dahl's school years. It makes you understand many of the stories that appear in his books: he was born in a well-to-do family, and enjoyed always a high living standard even in the depression years. He attended exclusive British public schools, etc. Then he found a good job at BP. The book is full of family love, anecdotes about a child's view point (adenoidectomy, the mouse plot, etc) which will make you smile or even laugh aloud. Some of those, together with the fact that his mother saved all his letters and family photos and mementoes, which sprinkle the book, makes it a delightful read. It's true that some of the chapters are sombre, because for us it's shocking to know that children were so abused (beaten with a cane

and deprived of affection, or bullied by older thugs who made them fag), but Dahl succeeds in making us loathe that supposedly elitistic education system. He doesn't make it sound as "the good old days, they had some bad things but not all..." In that sense, it's much better than "Tom Brown Schooldays" or Kipling's "Stalky and Co". But all in all, he brings us the sense of a fantastic childhood, surrounded by family love, affection, and well being. I grew up in a partly similar context (the lack of affection in education, but not the beatings or the comfort) and it serves me to try to be a better father, more intent into giving my children nice emotional and intellectual experiences. Enjoy!

BOY was a good read because I never got bored with reading it. Scenes such as the adenoid removal, his sister's operation when the Boy smelled the sweet smell of the chloroform, the mouse in the candy jar, the goat droppings in the pipe, the canings, were all full of detail and interest. I didn't expect Dahl to have such vivid, sour memories of his childhood. He suffered beatings and pain at his boarding schools, and this must have had a huge effect on his life or he wouldn't have mentioned the canings in such detail. The headmasters were mean old farts, who seemed to enjoy beating boys; they would smile and laugh and take their time about the punishment, most of which ended in a caning. Some parents might not like their children reading this book because of some of the gruesome scenes, which might affect their children's mental state. But it's the truth, and the truth hurts sometimes. Dahl makes fun of everything, especially stupid old adults, who cause all the problems in the world.

This is a great book. The words that Roald Dahl wrote made such a lasting impression that I can't even use MY words to describe it. I got it at a yard sale for free...it was in the quarter box, but the man selling everything let me have it for free....I've read it over and over again and it never gets old. It's so wonderful that I'd recommend it to a 9 year old because of all of the adventures Dahl describes from when he was a child and I'd recommend it to a 99 year old because of the memories he dwells on from the early 1900s. It's one of the best books I've read, I just wish it wasn't so short. Please read it!

Recently, my second grader had a school project, "All about me" which is a collage of who they are. She breezed thru all the usuals, "favorite food," "favorite subjects" etc., when it came to favorite book, I thought she'd pick something more recent like "A Christmas Carol" or one of Cam Jansen or Junie B. Jones, but with endearment in her eyes, she wrote "Boy" by Roald Dahl. I was quite surprised because she read this in first grade. In fact I read two chapters ahead of her so I would be

able to explain anything that she didn't understand. I love the book, myself. I think it is told in a frank and sincere manner, without trying too hard to be nostalgic or sugary. I do think at times that Dahl can be very matter of fact about all the sad things that happened in his life, the death of his little sister, the death of his father, and also the realization that god and religion isn't what it's all cracked up to be, which ironic because he was educated in expensive religious institutions. You will find this in the later part of this book, when one day he was watching the news and saw the old, sadistic school master being crowned by the queen as the new Archbishop of Canterbury. Also, I had to explain what corporal punishment is and how it isn't used anymore and why children in olden days were being sent to live away from home in order to go to school. It also gave my six year old a chance to use her imagination on what's it like growing up in a different time in a different place. Ofcourse her favorite part is the dead mouse in the candy jar and all the really funny illustrations of Quentin Blake. If you have an older child, you could probably let her/him read this book alone, but if your child is between 5-7 years of age, it is best if you read a few chapters ahead, like I did so you can help them understand some of the more perplexing and strange parts about growing up A la Roald Dahl. Enjoy.

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