



**BOOK REVIEW OF *THE TWITS* WRITEN BY ROALD DAHL**

**A FINAL PROJECT**

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement

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## **PRONOUNCEMENT**

The writer states truthfully that this final project is compiled by her without taking the result from other research in any university, in S- 1, S- 2, and S- 3 degree and diploma. In addition, the writer ascertains that she does not take the material from other publications or someone's work except for the references mentioned in the bibliography.

Semarang, May 2016

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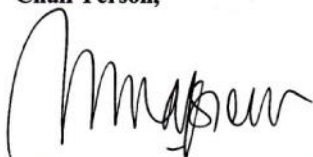
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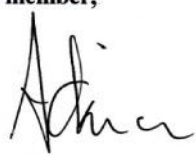
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## **MOTTO AND DEDICATION**

“If you have good thoughts they will shine out of your face like sunbeams and you will always look lovely.”

(Roald Dahl)

*The final project is dedicated to my beloved family*

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The writer realizes that this final project is far from being perfect. Therefore, she will be glad to receive any constructive criticisms and recommendations to make this final project better.

Finally, the writer expects that this final project will be useful for all readers.

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Mellysa Dian Astiti

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## **ABSTRAK**

Bentuk *final project* ini adalah *book review* novel sastra anak *The Twits* yang ditulis oleh Roald Dahl. Novel ini menceritakan tentang Tuan Twit dan Nyonya Twit yang memiliki wajah, kebiasaan dan perilaku yang buruk. Setiap hari tidak ada yang mereka lakukan selain membuat kejahilan. Mereka pun senang menjebak burung-burung dengan menggunakan lem untuk membuat pie burung dan menyiksa monyet-monyet dengan menyuruhnya berdiriterbalik.

Tujuan review final project ini adalah untuk mengidentifikasi tema, kelebihan dan kekurangan novel ini. Novel ini memiliki tema tentang moral dan persahabatan. Kelebihan dari novel ini adalah novel ini diceritakan dengan bahasa yang sangat mudah dimengerti, detail karakter yang menarik serta novel ini memiliki pesan yang baik yang dapat diambil oleh para pembaca. Kelemahan novel ini adalah *setting* tempat yang tidak disebutkan di mana cerita tersebut berlangsung.

## **CHAPTER I**

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Background of Writing

Children literature thrived at the end of the 18th century. Perhaps 50 children books have been printed each year mostly in London, and in regional centers such as Edinburgh, York and Newcastle. These books are clearly meant to please the readers, whether with entertaining stories and appealing characters, pleasant tone of the writing, or attractive illustrations and eye-catching page layouts and bindings.

*The Twits* written by Roald Dahl is one of the children literary work. It tells about a weird, smelly, and unfriendly couple, they are Mr. Twit and Mrs. Twit. They have nothing better to do than play practical jokes and prank each other. They have some monkeys that stand upside down all the time, and make bird pie with the birds that they catch by using glue on the trees. After playing a series of pranks on each other, their attention is switched to the monkeys and the birds. Luckily, the Roly-Poly bird flies there to save them. The Roly-Poly bird warns the birds about the tree trap and helps the monkeys to escape. Then, the monkeys and birds take revenge. They literally turn the Twit's house upside down while the couple has gone out. When they come back, they find a problem. They think that they do something wrong. The Twits go upside down, and get stuck to the floor because of some special glue that the monkeys and birds have used. They get stuck to the ground forever, and soon, the Twits shrank to nothing, and the monkeys and birds are free as the wind.

The writer will discuss the theme, the strengths, and the weaknesses of this novel. The writer chose *Book Review "The Twits" Written By Roald Dahl* as the object of final project because Roald Dahl is a remarkable writer who has many children literary work. *The Twits* is one of his masterpieces which has funny story and the writer gets more things to discuss.

### **1.2. The Purpose of Writing**

The purposes in writing this Final Project are:

1. To describe the theme of *The Twit's*.
2. To describe strength and weaknesses of *The Twit's*.

### **1.3. Short Biography of Roald Dahl**

Roald Dahl was born on September 13, 1916, in Llandaff, South Wales. Dahl first established himself as a children writer in 1961, his parents were Norwegian and when he was 4 years his father died. His wife is Patricia Neil, she is an actress.

His first masterpiece is *James and the Giant Peach*. Three years later, Dahl published another, *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*. Both books were eventually made into popular movies. A film adaptation of *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory* was released as *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory* in 1971, and an originally titled remaking of the film, starring Johnny Depp, was released in 2005.

Dahl wrote 19 children's books. In addition to *James and the Giant Peach* and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, Dahl's most popular kids' books include *Fantastic Fox* (1970), *The Witches* (1983) and *Matilda* (1988). He died of 74

years old on November 23, 1990 after suffering from an unspecified infection.

(<http://www.biography.com>, accessed on October, 28 2015).

## SUMMARY OF THE BOOK

Mr. Twit was one of the very hairy faced men. The whole of his face except for his forehead, his eyes and his nose was covered with thick hair. The stuff even sprouted in revolting tufts out of his nostrils and ear-holes. He got a difficult situation when he ate, because he used to wipe off with the back of his hand or on his sleeve while he was eating. The food had been leaving because Mr. Twit never went really hungry. He was a foul and smelly old man.

Mrs. Twit was not better than her husband. She was a woman with an uglier face, but she had quite nice face when she was young. The ugliness had grown upon her year by year as she got older.

Mr. Twit and Mrs. Twit were a 'strange' couple. They were useless, smelly and unfriendly married people who had nothing better to do than play practical jokes and pranks on each other. One day, Mrs. Twit played a lot of tricks with a glass eye and dropped into Mr. Twit's mug of beer. Mr. Twit was mad and he would do the same way to her. Mr. Twit decided that he would put a frog in Mrs. Twit's bed. The next day, to pay Mr. Twit get back for the frog trick, she sneaked out into the garden and dug up some worms. She cooked spaghetti and mixed the worms for lunch. Mr. Twit started eating, after finishing she told him that the worms were eaten by him.

One night, he had added one piece of wood to Mrs. Twit's walking stick. It was gradually getting longer and lon 4 Therefore, she thought that she was shrinking. Mrs. Twit was so sad for this because she could not do anything. Then,

Mr. Twit decided that to 'help' Mrs. Twit out and stopped her from shrinking that he would offer to stretch her. Therefore, he tied her feet to the ground and her hand a huge bunch of balloons. Mr. Twit cut the rope and Mrs. Twit was flying into the air and she screamed as she flew higher and higher.

Mrs. Twit figured out she could chew the balloons strings to come down fast before she floated off to space so she began to chew through the strings to start coming back to the ground. Mr. Twit got squashed by Mrs. Twit who fell from the sky.

Mr. Twit and Mrs. Twit also had a dead tree in the backyard next to the monkey cage. He put the glue on the dead tree to catch birds in order to his wife cooked them for eating. There were four children to climb up it just for fun. Suddenly, Mr. Twits wanted to check if there were any birds on pie. Unfortunately, he got the children pants, not the birds.

Mr. Twit made 4 monkeys to stand on their heads all day because he was a monkey trainer before and he wanted to make an upside monkey circus. The monkey absolutely hated them in having to do this upside down nonsense day after day and had made their life so miserable. This evening, when the birds came in to roost, the Roly - Poly bird told the birds not to perch on the tree because it was covered with glue. All the birds stopped on the cage of the monkeys to rest.

Mr. Twit decided to put sticky glue on the cage as a way of catching the birds. Mr Twit did not get bird pie because all the birds had rested on the top of the monkey's cage so they had decide <sup>5</sup> go out and bought guns, determined to get their bird pie. Their monkey's name was Muggle-Wump had a marvelous plan

to get back at the Twits. He decided that because they made the monkeys to stand upside down and the monkeys would turn the Twit's house upside down. The monkeys began to plaster glue all over the house to prepare for their plan. The monkeys put the carpet on the ceiling; it was heavy and a lot of hard work.

The monkeys put all the furniture on the roof, so that it looked like the house was upside down. The ravens dropped glue on the Twit's head when they were coming home from the shops. The twits were very confused that they were on the roof so they stood on their heads which glued them to the floor. The monkeys built a tree house for them and all the birds lived in and escaped from their horrible cage. Both Mr. and Mrs. Twit began to shrink on their headstoo long. After a week all, that was left two bundles of clothes.

### **CHAPTER III**

#### **REVIEW ( 6 ) HE BOOK**

##### **3.1. The Themes of the Novel**



The theme of a story is the main idea or message that it conveys. All the details of a story point to the theme, which is usually an insight into human experience. Sometimes a theme is directly stated within the story, either by a narrator or another character.

The themes of the novel are about Morality of *The Twits* and Friendship between The Roly-Poly Birds and The Monkey. They are explained as in following.

### **3.1.1. Morality of *The Twits***

The first theme of *The Twits* is morality. It is described in friendship between the monkeys and the birds. Even though they are the animal, they can cooperate each other but Mr. Twit and Mrs. Twit cannot do it. The monkeys and the birds can help each other for The Twit's bad behaviour, but The Twits spend most of their time playing tricks on each other and trying to get revenge with the things done to them.

According to the beginning story, The Twits are retired circus trainers, they are trying to form the first up-side-down monkey circus, leaving the monkeys to stand on their heads for hours. If they do not do what Mr. Twit says, Mrs. Twit will beat them by her cane. They should not do it like that. They are not kind to others and they are miserable, "They hated Mr and Mrs Twit for making their lives so miserable. They also hated them for what they did to the birds every Tuesday and Wednesday."(Dahl, 1980:46)

### **3.1.2. Friendship**

The second theme of *The Twits* is friendship. The novel tells about a friendship between The Roly-Poly Birds, The Birds and The Monkeys. They have good friendship. They help and join each other to take revenge with The Twits. They are angry with The Twits with what they do to them every day. They look so compact to take revenge.

Roly-Poly bird comes to the Twits home, giving the chance for the Muggle-Wumps to have their revenge as well as escape. Together, the Roly-Poly bird and the Muggle-Wumps keep the birds from becoming bird pie. Mr and Mrs Twit are extremely annoyed and decide to get a gun to shoot the birds down. While they are out, the birds and monkeys stick all the furniture in the Twits living room upside down with the same glue used to stick the birds to the tree. As the Twits are coming home, two ravens drop sticky glue on the heads of Mrs and Mr Twit. When the Twits find their living room upside down, they decide to stand on their head, so they are the right way up. Of course, since they have sticky glue on their heads, they stick to the floor forever. Eventually the blood going to their heads becomes so strong. The whole body eats itself until there is nothing of the Twits left except their clothes. "The Roly-Poly Bird flew down and come back with the key in his beak. Muggle-Wump reached a hand and through the bars of the cage and took the key. He put it in the lock and turned. The door opened. All four monkeys leapt out together."(Dahl, 1980:57-58)

### **3.2. The Strengths of the Novel**

The strengths of the novel included easy language to understand, interesting characteristic details of Mr. Twit and Mrs. Twit, and good message. They are explained as in following.

### **3.2.1. Easy Language to Understand**

*The Twits* is a masterpiece read mostly by children. The author makes this story readable and understandable for all ages, especially for children. He tells this story with an easy language, so every reader can imagine what he wants to tell. He illustrates *The Twits* nicely, so the readers without seeing the picture they can imagine what happens in this story, as quoted below:

“But a hairy face is a very different matter. Things cling to hairs, especially food. Things like gravy go right in among the hairs and stay there. You and I can wipe our smooth faces with a flannel and we quickly look more or less all right again, but the hairy man cannot do that.”  
(Dahl, 1980:3).

### **3.2.2. Interesting Characteristic Details of Mr Twit and Mrs Twit**

The writer describes the characters of this book in details how they look like and what their behavior is, so the readers can imagine it. It is also supported by a picture that describes the characters look like in this book. He describes physical details of the character completely, it can be found when he describes about Mr. Twit and Mrs. Twit look likes. He also describes the characteristics of the character from their behaviors and habits.

#### **3.2.2.1. Mr. Twit's on Physical and Habitual Characterization**

The writer describes Mr. Twit's look li 9 n details. People can also look how the characters look like by the picture. Mr. Twit has hairy face that all of his face is

covered with thick hair and matted except on his forehead, his eyes and his nose. He has a horrible, hairy, bristly, dirty, smelly beard that he never washes. He looks very ugly, as quoted below:

“Mr. Twit was one of these very hairy-faced men. The whole of his face except for his forehead, his eyes and his nose was covered with thick hair. The stuff even sprouted in revolting tufts out of his nostrils and ear-holes.” (Roald Dahl, 1980:2)

He also describes Mr. Twit’s behaviors and habits. Mr. Twit has a disgusting habit. He never opens his mouth wide when he eats, so many pieces of food sticking on his hairy face. His beard holds scraps of food dropped there while he is eating for example tinned sardines, stilton cheese, and corn flakes. Occasionally, he licks these scraps out and eats them. Instead of wiping his mouth with a cloth, Mr. Twit simply wipes it on his sleeve. Mr. Twit is a beer drinker – even drinking at breakfast. He is known to seem very quiet when he is plotting evil tricks, the victim of which is usually his equally unpleasant wife, as quoted below:

“Mr. Twit didn’t even bother to open his mouth wide when he ate. As a result (and because he never washed) there were always hundreds of bits of old breakfasts and lunches and suppers sticking to the hairs around his face. They weren’t big bits, mind you, because he used to wipe those off with the back of his hand or on his sleeve while he was eating. But if you looked closely (not that you’d ever want to) you would see tiny little specks of dried-up scrambled eggs stuck to the hairs, and spinach and tomato ketchup and fish fingers and minced chicken livers and all the other disgusting things Mr. Twit ate.” (Dahl, 1980:4)

### **3.2.2.2. Mrs. Twit’s on Physical and Habitual Characterization**

The writer also describes Mrs. Twit's characteristics in details. Mrs. Twit has an ugly face, but she is not born ugly, she has quite and nice face when she is young. She always carries a walking-stick and she has a "glass eye", as quoted below:

"Mrs. Twit was no better than her husband. She did not, of course, have a hairy face. It was a pity she didn't because that at any rate would have hidden some of her fearful ugliness."

(Dahl, 1980:6)

The writer also describes Mrs. Twit's habit, she is not a good woman and an unfriendly woman, and is portrayed as hideous and unhygienic woman. She takes advantage of her "glass eye" to play practical jokes in revenge against her husband. She participates in the torment of the couple's pet monkeys the Muggle-Wumps, and serves Mr. Twit a lunch of earthworms disguised as spaghetti. She is wicked and has a habit hit dogs, cats, and small children with her walking-stick, as quoted below:

"In her right hand she carried a walking-stick. She used to tell people that this was because she had warts growing on the sole of her left foot and walking was painful. But the real reason she carried a stick was so that she could hit things with it, things like dogs and cats and small children."

(Dahl, 1980:8)

### **3.2.3. Good Message**

The important thing of this novel is that it can give advice to the readers. The readers can take the lesson from this novel. The author gives the message that people should be kind to others, what they do is what they get. If they are kind to others, love and appreciate, others will be kind. However, if people are bad to

others, they will get bad responses. Mr and Mrs Twit, every day, do bad things to others and every day they always do some tricks to prank each others, so they get bad response, “‘It’s all your fault!’ yelled Mr Twit, thrashing his legs in the air. ‘You’re the one, you ugly old cow, who went hopping around shouting, ‘We’re upside down! We’re upside down!’” (Dahl, 1980:85)

### **3.3. The Weakness of the Novel**

In this book review, the writer also discuss about the weakness of the novel included setting of place. It is explained as in following.

#### **3.3.1. Setting of Place**

The weakness of this novel is the setting of place. Setting of place indicates a place or area the story takes place. In this novel, house of the Twits is one place the story takes place. Dahl only shows the Twits house with picture and he does not tell how the Twit’s house looks like, “‘Here is a picture of Mr and Mrs Twit’s house and garden. Some house! It looks like a prison. And not a window anywhere.’” (Dahl, 1980:36)

He only mentions the Twit’s house like a prison and does not have a window anywhere. He does not mention where it is, however, the reader can only imagine the Twits house with the picture, but they do not know where the story takes place.

**CHAPTER IV**

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**CONCLUSION**

*The Twits* written by Roald Dahl is one of the children literary works. It tells about a weird, smelly, and unfriendly couple, they are Mr. Twit and Mrs. Twit. They have nothing better to do than play practical jokes and prank each other. They have some monkeys that stand upside down all the time, and make bird pie with the birds that they catch by using glue on the trees. After playing a series of pranks on each other, their attention is switched to the monkeys and the birds.

As a literary work, the novel has themes, strengths and weaknesses. The themes of the novel are morality of The Twits and friendship between the monkeys and the birds. The morality of The Twits which is described the animal in this story the monkey and the birds can help each other, but The Twits cannot do it, they always do prank each other and do bad behavior to the animal every day. The friendship between the monkeys and the birds to take revenge of The Twits's bad behavior. The strengths of the novel are easy language to understand which is used to explain Mr. Twit and Mrs. Twit's character; and good message. Firstly, the the writer describes the characters in an easy language to understand, so the story can make the reader interested. Secondly, the good message is the important thing in giving advice to the reader. The author also gives the message that people should be kind to others, what they do is what they get.

The weakness of the novel is setting of place. In this story, Dahl only shows the Twits house with picture and he does not tell how the Twit's house looks like. It is only on the writer's <sup>14</sup>imagination. This makes the readers so curious because they cannot imagine it.



There are the strengths and the weaknesses of the novel. However, novel *The Twit* is a good book to read. The novel can be read by adults and young readers. The book can be read when people have spare time at our home. The story is very funny, easy to understand and interesting.

## **REFERENCE**

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Minderop, Albertine. 2005. *Metode Karakteristik Telaah Fiksi*. Yayasan Obor Indonesia: Jakarta.

The Twits are a couple that nobody would like to know. They are hairy, dirty, smelly and generally unpleasant. Roald Dahl & [...] The Twits is one of the shorter books in the Dahl canon, and rather unique as it focuses almost exclusively upon its two principle villains, the totally vile Mr. and Mrs. Twit. The book begins with a protracted description of both nasty pieces of work, from Mr. Twit's truly disgusting beard, to the fact that Mrs. Twit made herself ugly through thinking ugly thoughts (a rather nice object lesson). The book then continues with descriptions of the various tricks the two play on each other, all in their own ways grotesque and wonderfully weird (from wormy spaghetti to frogs in the bed) and