

## Audition Monologues for CMT's *Matilda*

### Characters:

Matilda Wormwood, Mr. Wormwood, Mrs. Wormwood, Michael Wormwood  
Miss Honey, Miss Trunchbull, Mrs. Phelps  
Bruce Bogtrotter, Lavender, Eric, Tommy, Amanda, Nigel, Alice, Hortensia  
The Escapologist, Cook, Sergei, Henchman 1, Henchman 2, The Acrobat, Doctor, Rudolfo

### Synopsis:

Matilda is a little girl with astonishing wit, intelligence and psychokinetic powers. She's unloved by her parent but impresses her schoolteacher, the kind and nurturing Miss Honey. Over the course of her first term at school, Matilda and Miss Honey have a profound effect on each other's lives, but it isn't all smooth sailing. The school's headmistress, Miss Trunchbull, hates children and loves thinking up new punishments for those who don't abide by her rules. For a more complete synopsis go to <http://stageagent.com/shows/musical/644/matilda>

### To Prepare:

In preparation you may wish to read *Matilda*, by Roald Dahl. The musical is an adaptation and there are, of course, similarities and differences. However, the story is still about a young girl who stands up to a bully and wins.

### Get Started!

- Choose one monologue. These are all drawn from the book, *Matilda*, by Roald Dahl.
- Memorize it if you can, but if you feel more comfortable holding the lines, please do.
- Record the monologue and submit it to CMT by February 26 along with your vocal audition. If you have problems either recording or submitting, please call (918) 336-0558 before February 19 to arrange for a recording session at CMT.
- BEGINNERS: Your directors have four questions: Can you be heard? Are your words clear? Are you energetic, with interesting facial expressions, and a variety in tone and pacing? What kind of character choices have you made?
- RETURNING ACTORS: Volume! Articulation! Animation! Unique choices!
- Remember, you are not directly auditioning for a specific role—you may choose any one of these regardless of age or gender. This is a little difficult to understand, but your directors are looking for potential. Are you ready to do this play? We'll sort the rest out in callbacks.

**BACKGROUND.** The librarian sees a curiosity about books and reading in Matilda. She wants to help and does so by providing a list of grand books. Imagine the librarian is telling about this extra ordinary little girl to a friend over afternoon tea.

Mrs. Phelps. Over the next few afternoons I could hardly take her eyes from the small girl sitting for hour after hour in the big armchair at the end of the room with the book on her lap. It was necessary to rest it on her lap because it was too heavy for her to hold up, which meant she had to sit leaning forward in order to read. Her only movement was the lifting of the hand every now and then to turn over a page.

**BACKGROUND.** Once Matilda finds the local library, it becomes her favorite place to escape. It is even better when she realizes she can bring the books home. Imagine Matilda is up in her room explaining what it is she likes about reading.

Matilda . From then on, I visited the library once a week to take out new books and return the old ones. My own small bedroom became my reading-room and there I would sit and read most afternoons, often with a mug of hot chocolate beside me. It was pleasant in my silent room in the empty house in the afternoons. The books transported me to new worlds and introduced me to amazing people who lived exciting lives. I travelled all over the world while sitting in my little room in an English village.

**BACKGROUND. Matilda's brother is not a bad lad, but he does enjoy being the favored child in the family. Imagine Michael is explaining to someone why his parents are a bit different.**

Michael. There are parents who show no interest at all in their children. Mine were two such parents. They had a son called Michael, a perfectly normal lad. He was much like them, so he was all right in their book, if they read books, which they most certainly did not. They also had a daughter, my sister who is called Matilda, and they looked upon her as nothing more than a scab. A scab is something you have to put up with until the time come when you can pick it off and flick it away. Mom and Dad looked forward enormously to the time when they could pick their little daughter off and flick her away, preferably into the next county or even further than that.

**BACKGROUND: Mr. Wormwood brags to his son about how he can sell used cars by changing the mileage, which is shady and against the law. He is quite proud of himself. Mr. Wormwood is speaking to his son, Michael.**

Mr. Wormwood. I buy a dumpy old car that's got about a hundred and fifty thousand miles on the clock. I get it cheap. But no one's going to buy it with a mileage like that, are they? So what do I do? I use my brains, laddie, that's what I do. When you've been given a fine brain like I have, you've got to use it. I get a high speed electric drill and couple that up to the end of the speedometer in such a way that when the drill turns, it turns the cable backwards. By the time I've finished, the car's got ten thousand miles and it's ready for sale. And if you don't like it, then don't eat the food in this house. It's bought with the profits.

**BACKGROUND: This is the first time the children are meeting Miss Honey. She wants to be welcoming, but knows she needs to prepare the children for the horrible Trunchbull. Still, she is Miss Honey so she would never try to frighten them.**

Miss Honey. Now, this is the very first day of school for each one of you. It is the beginning of at least eleven long years of schooling that all of you are going to have to go through. And six of those years will be spent right here at Crunchem Hall where, as you know, the Headmistress is Miss Trunchbull. Let me for your own good tell you something about Miss Trunchbull. She insists upon strict discipline throughout the school, and if you take my advice you will do your very best to behave yourselves in her presence. Never argue with her. Never answer her back. Always do as she says. If you do get on the wrong side of Miss Trunchbull she can liquidize you like a carrot in a kitchen blender.

**BACKGROUND. Miss Honey warns the children how to behave, but an older child tells what happens if you don't. She is speaking to the younger kids who have just started school.**

Older Child. I suppose you know the Trunchbull has a lock-up cupboard called The Chokey? It's a very tall but very narrow cupboard. The floor is only ten inches square so you can't sit down or squat in it. You have to stand. And three of the walls are made of cement with bits of broken glass sticking out all over so you can't lean against them. You have to stand more or less at attention all the time when you get locked up in there. It's terrible.

**BACKGROUND. This is the first time the Trunchbull is meeting Miss Honey's students. Look at how different it is from how Miss Honey greets her students for the first time. They are, indeed, opposites.**

The Trunchbull. Not a very pretty sight. It makes me vomit to think that I am going to have to put up with a load of garbage like you in my school for the next six years. I can see that I'm going to have to expel as many of you as possible as soon as possible to save myself from going round the bend. Your mother and father tell you you're wonderful. Well, I am here to tell you the opposite, and you'd better believe me. Stand up, everybody!

**BACKGROUND.** When Miss Honey visits the house to tell the Wormwoods about their extraordinary daughter, Mrs. Wormwood gets insulting. Mrs. Wormwood doesn't want to hear about her daughter's intelligence, so she tells Miss Honey what's important.

Mrs. Wormwood. A girl should think about make herself look attractive so she can get a good husband later on. Looks is more important than books, Miss Hunky. Now look at me. Then look at you. You chose books. I chose looks. And who's finished up the better off? Me, of course. I'm sitting pretty in a nice house with a successful businessman and you're left slaving away teaching a lot of nasty little children the ABC.

**BACKGROUND.** Miss Trunchbull's dessert is missing and she accuses Bruce Bogtrotter.

The Trunchbull. I'll tell you what I'm talking about, you little blister. Yesterday morning, during break, you sneaked like a serpent into the kitchen and stole a slice of my private chocolate cake from my tea-tray. That cake was made from real butter and real cream! And he, that robber-bandit, that safe-cracker, that highwayman standing over there with he socks around his ankles stole it and at it! Don't lie to me, Bogtrotter! The cook saw you! What's more she saw you eating it!

**BACKGROUND.** Bruce's punishment for having a small taste of Trunchbull's cake is to be forced to eat it all. You can read this monologue in one of two ways—either as though Bruce is experiencing the punishment as he's telling it, or as though Bruce is remembering the event as though it happened recently.

Bruce Bogtrotter. When I had eaten my way through half the enormous cake, I paused, but cut m'self another thick slice. I didn't give any signs of flagging or giving up. Even at three-quarters of the way through I was still going strong. I had a mountain to climb and I was jolly well going to reach to top or die in the attempt. I kept pushing the stuff into my mouth like a long-distance runner who had sighted the finishing line. I finished with a grin of triumph on my face.

**BACKGROUND.** Lavender has heard the tricks Matilda played on her parents and devises a similarly embarrassing trick for Trunchbull. She's going to capture a newt in the pond and put it in Trunchbull's water pitcher. You can read this monologue in one of two ways—either as though Lavender is telling what she's doing as she doing it, or as though she is recalling the recent event to a friend.

Lavender. My mind was going over the possibilities of what I could do with the Trunchbull's water jug. I longed to do something heroic. At last the germ of a brilliant idea hit me. There was a muddy pond at the bottom of my garden and this was the home of a colony of newts. Newts are quite harmless, but they look gruesome. That evening I went to the pond and spotted a whopper. Using my school hat as a net, I swooped and caught it. The next day, I carried my secret weapon to school in my satchel and waited for the right moment to slip it into the water jug.

**BACKGROUND.** Angered by being accused of doing something she did not, Matilda experiences her anger turning into the ability to move objects with her mind. This should be delivered as though Matilda is describing what is happening to her in the moment.

Matilda. And now, quite slowly, there began to creep over me a most peculiar feeling. A kind of electricity was gathering inside my eyes. A sense of power was brewing, a feeling of great strength was settling itself deep inside my eyes. But there was another feeling which was something else altogether. It was like flashes of lightning. It was an amazing sensation. I kept my eyes on the glass, and now the power was growing stronger and it felt as though millions of tiny invisible arms were shooting out of my eyes toward the glass I was staring at. "Tip it," I thought. "Tip it over!"

**BACKGROUND: Miss Honey has witnessed Matilda move a water jug without touching it. Matilda is excited by her new power. Miss Honey is cautious and warns Matilda what can happen if they act too fast.**

Miss Honey. What has happened to you is interesting all right. But we must tread very carefully from now on, Matilda. We are playing with mysterious forces, my child, that we know nothing about. I do not think they are evil. They may be good. They may even be divine. But whether they are or not, let us handle them carefully. The unknown is an unexplainable thing. The right word for it is a phenomenon. What I thought we might do is to explore this phenomenon making sure we take things very carefully.