

**BOOK REVIEW *THE TWITS* WRITEN BY ROALD DAHL****Mellysa Dian Astiti**

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**ABSTRACT**

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 kejahatan. Mereka pun senang menjebak burung-burung dengan menggunakan lem untuk membuat pie burung dan menyiksa monyet-monyet dengan menyuruhnya berdiri terbalik.

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 dimana cerita tersebut berlangsung.

Keyword: book review, sastra anak, children literature, The Twits, Roald Dahl, novel sastra anak.

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## 1. Introduction

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.<sup>1</sup> 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 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. 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*.

## 2. 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 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

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Cited from: <http://www.bl.uk/romantics-and-victorians/articles/the-origins-of-childrens-literature>

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 longer. Therefore, she thought that she was shrinking. 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.

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. 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. 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 heads too long. After a week all, that was left two bundles of clothes.

### 3. Review of The 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.

##### 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.

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 live 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.

### 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.

#### 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.

#### 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.

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

The writer describes Mr. Twit's look likes in 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.

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.

#### 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".

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.

#### 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.

### 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.

#### 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.

## 4. Conclusion

*The Twits* written by Roald Dahl is one of the children literary works. 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 strengths of the novel are easy language to understand which is used to explain Mr. Twit and Mrs. Twit's character; and good message.

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 imagination. This makes the readers so curious because they cannot imagine it.

*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.

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