

CHARAKTERANALYSE IN ROALD DAHLS "JAMES UND DER RIESENPFIRSICH"

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ANNOTATION: This article discusses character analysis in Roald Dahl's "James and the Giant Peach."

KEY WORDS: Roald Dahl, Character Analysis, mentor.

INTRODUCTION

Roald Dahl, one of the best-known and most popular British children's authors, created "James and the Giant Peach," a work that captivates both with its imaginative plot and its profound character development.

This paper will provide a detailed analysis of the main and supporting characters to demonstrate how Dahl uses psychological and symbolic elements to portray the development of the protagonist and his environment.

The work's didactic significance for a school context will also be examined. Overview of the Work "James and the Giant Peach" was first published in 1961 and tells the story of a boy who tragically loses his parents and from then on suffers under the care of his cruel aunts.

Through a magical event, a gigantic peach grows, inside which James encounters anthropomorphic insects. Together with them, he travels through the air to New York.

The journey not only serves as an external movement but also reflects the protagonist's inner development. The story is rich in metaphors, humor, and subtle social criticism.

Character Analysis Methodology

A combined model is used to analyze the characters, integrating both literary and developmental psychology approaches.

In addition to external characterization (appearance, behavior, language), special attention is paid to internal development: How does the character change over the course of the story?

What symbolic significance do individual characters carry? Archetypal character concepts such as the "mentor," the "orphan," or the "trickster" are also considered.

Analysis of the Main Characters

James Henry Trotter

James embodies the classic child-as-hero motif. He begins his journey as a frightened and oppressed boy who has no control over his life.

Through his encounter with the insects and his adventures in the giant peach, he finds self-confidence, leadership, and creativity.

James' development can be read as a metaphorical initiatory journey that transforms him from a passive to an active shaper of his destiny.

His ability to form a community with the insects demonstrates his social intelligence and empathy.

Aunt Spiker and Aunt Sponge

The two aunts are caricatures of the cruel, authoritarian adult world. They are characterized through exaggerated negative traits – they are lazy, stingy, aggressive, and heartless.

Dahl uses them as a humorous tool to illustrate the child's perspective on unjust adults.

They also serve as a narrative antagonist that sets the plot in motion: without their abuse, there would be no impulse to flee and no journey.

The Insect Friends

The Centipede

He is loud, ostentatious, and initially appears egocentric. But in stressful situations, he shows loyalty and

courage.

As a character, he often fulfills the role of comedian, but also brings with him the important message that people are multidimensional.

His arguments with other insects bring dynamism to the group scene and also reflect childlike conflicts with authority.

The Green Grasshopper

He is the intellectual of the group – polite, musical, and educated. As a father figure, he offers James emotional stability.

His calm and thoughtful nature contrasts with the Centipede and serves as a role model.

He also provides valuable information that contributes to the interpretation of the plot – for example, about nature, music, or ethics.

The Spider

She is a quiet, strong female character who demonstrates self-confidence and skill in a male-dominated group.

Her story about being mistreated by humans points to animal ethics and raises awareness of the issue of exclusion.

James shows a great deal of empathy towards her – further proof of his emotional maturity.

The Earthworm

The earthworm is the pessimist among the insects. His fear is exaggerated, which often comes across as humorous, but also reflects real fears of children.

In critical moments, he takes responsibility – for example, when he sacrifices himself as bait for seagulls – and thus shows that even fearful characters can demonstrate courage.

Development of the Characters and Their Symbolic Meaning

The development of the characters follows an archetypal trajectory: James, an orphan (according to C. G. Jung), embarks on a hero's journey, meets wise helpers, endures trials, and rises above himself.

The insects are not only companions, but also reflections of his inner qualities. Each character symbolizes an element of child development: courage, creativity, humor, rationality, or sensitivity.

Educational and Literary Relevance

Dahl's work can be used in a variety of ways in school lessons. Topics such as family, loss, fear, courage, and friendship can be addressed in an age-appropriate manner for different age groups.

Linguistically, the book also offers great potential for creative activities through neologisms and irony. Furthermore, the work can be connected in an interdisciplinary way – for example, with biology (entobacillus) or music (grasshoppers).

Conclusion

The analysis shows that in "James and the Giant Peach," Roald Dahl not only wrote an imaginative adventure story, but also a profound developmental narrative.

The characters are complex, symbolic, and educationally valuable. James' transformation reflects the hope of many children to escape from difficult circumstances through their own strength.

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