

the gremlins by roald dahl

The gremlins by roald dahl is a captivating story that has enchanted readers of all ages since its publication. Written by the legendary British author Roald Dahl, this tale offers a delightful blend of adventure, imagination, and humor, wrapped in a narrative that explores themes of curiosity, mischief, and the magical world lurking beneath the surface of everyday life. While many associate Roald Dahl with his popular novels like *Matilda*, *The BFG*, and *Charlie and the Chocolate Factory*, *The Gremlins* stands out as a unique and imaginative work that highlights his talent for creating whimsical yet thought-provoking stories.

In this article, we will delve into the origins of *The Gremlins*, explore its plot, characters, themes, and legacy, and provide insights into why it remains a significant piece of children's literature. Whether you're a longtime fan or new to Dahl's work, understanding the nuances of *The Gremlins* offers a richer appreciation of his storytelling prowess.

Origins and Background of The Gremlins

The Inspiration Behind the Story

Roald Dahl's *The Gremlins* was first published in 1943, during the height of World War II. The story was inspired by the popular folklore of "gremlins," mischievous creatures blamed for causing mechanical failures and accidents among pilots and aircraft crews. These mythical beings were thought to sabotage machinery, especially in the British Royal Air Force, as a humorous way to explain the unpredictable nature of aircraft malfunctions.

Dahl, who served as a fighter pilot during the war, was fascinated by the idea of these tiny troublemakers. His fascination with aviation and the folklore surrounding gremlins led him to craft a story that would bring these creatures to life in a vivid, imaginative universe.

The Collaboration with Walt Disney

Interestingly, *The Gremlins* was initially developed as a screenplay in collaboration with Walt Disney. Dahl was commissioned to write a story that could be adapted into an animated film. However, Disney ultimately decided not to pursue the project, and the story was published as a book instead.

Despite this, Dahl's *The Gremlins* retains a cinematic quality in its storytelling, with vivid descriptions and lively characters that evoke a visual spectacle. The book's publication was accompanied by illustrations,

which further brought the mischievous creatures to life.

Plot Summary of The Gremlins

The story is set during World War II and follows the adventures of a young pilot, who is stationed in Britain. The central plot revolves around a mysterious encounter with tiny, mischievous creatures known as gremlins, who live secretly within the aircraft and are responsible for many of the mechanical issues faced by pilots.

The Discovery of the Gremlins

One day, the young pilot notices strange noises and malfunctions in his plane. Curious and somewhat amused, he begins to investigate and eventually discovers the tiny gremlins living inside the aircraft. These creatures are depicted as small, lively, and mischievous beings with a knack for causing chaos.

The gremlins are portrayed as playful troublemakers who enjoy pulling pranks on the pilots and sabotaging the machinery. Despite their mischief, the gremlins are not malicious; their behavior is driven by curiosity and a desire for fun.

The Gremlins' World

Dahl vividly describes the secret world of the gremlins, which exists beneath the aircraft's surfaces. Their society is a bustling, chaotic place filled with tiny workshops, tools, and machines—all operated by the gremlins themselves.

The story explores how the gremlins live and work, their interactions with one another, and their reactions to the humans' efforts to understand and control them. The pilot learns to communicate with these creatures and even attempts to negotiate a peaceful coexistence.

The Moral and Message

Throughout the story, Dahl emphasizes themes of understanding and respect for different beings, no matter how small or mischievous. The narrative suggests that what may seem like mere troublemaking can have deeper explanations, and that cooperation and empathy are essential for harmony.

The story concludes with the pilot and the gremlins forming a sort of truce, working together to ensure the safety of the aircraft and its crew,

highlighting the importance of collaboration and open-mindedness.

Characters in The Gremlins

Dahl's characters are vividly drawn, each contributing to the story's humor and message.

The Young Pilot

- Curious and brave, the pilot serves as the story's narrator and protagonist.
- His open-mindedness allows him to understand and communicate with the gremlins.
- Represents the theme of curiosity and adventure.

The Gremlins

- Mischievous, playful creatures who love pranks.
- Small in size but big in personality.
- Their society is depicted as lively, chaotic, and inventive.
- They are neither wholly good nor bad, embodying the complexity of mischief and innocence.

Supporting Characters

- Fellow pilots and crew members, who are unaware of the gremlins' existence.
- These characters add humor and contrast to the story, highlighting the pilot's unique discovery.

The Themes and Messages of The Gremlins

Dahl's *The Gremlins* is rich with themes that resonate with both children and adults.

Imagination and Creativity

The story invites readers to imagine a hidden world beneath the aircraft, encouraging creative thinking and curiosity about the unseen.

Understanding and Empathy

A core message is that what appears to be mischief or trouble may have reasons behind it, and understanding different perspectives fosters harmony.

Mischief and Innocence

The gremlins' playful antics demonstrate that mischief isn't necessarily malicious; sometimes, it's a form of expression or a response to circumstances.

Cooperation and Problem-Solving

The narrative emphasizes working together despite differences, a vital lesson both in wartime and everyday life.

Humor and Whimsy

Dahl's humorous portrayal of tiny creatures causing chaos adds a light-hearted tone, making complex themes accessible and engaging for young readers.

The Legacy of The Gremlins

Impact on Children's Literature

While The Gremlins was initially intended as a screenplay, its publication as a book contributed to Dahl's reputation as a master storyteller who could blend humor, fantasy, and moral lessons seamlessly. The story's vivid descriptions and imaginative creatures have inspired countless adaptations and artistic works.

Influence on Popular Culture

The concept of mischievous tiny beings meddling in human affairs has permeated popular culture, inspiring films, animations, and stories. Dahl's portrayal of the gremlins is often cited as a foundational influence in the genre of mischievous fantasy characters.

Adaptations and Illustrations

Over the years, *The Gremlins* has been adapted into various formats, including comic strips, radio plays, and illustrated editions. Notable illustrators have brought their own flair to Dahl's vivid descriptions, further cementing its place in children's literature.

Relevance Today

The story continues to resonate with modern audiences, emphasizing themes of curiosity, understanding, and cooperation—values that remain timeless.

Conclusion: Why *The Gremlins* by Roald Dahl Continues to Enchant Readers

The Gremlins by Roald Dahl remains a beloved classic because of its inventive storytelling, charming characters, and meaningful themes. It invites readers to look beyond the surface, explore hidden worlds, and embrace curiosity and empathy. The story's blend of humor, adventure, and moral insight exemplifies Dahl's talent for crafting stories that entertain and educate simultaneously.

Whether read as a children's tale or analyzed as a work of imaginative fiction, *The Gremlins* offers enduring lessons wrapped in delightful mischief. Its place in the canon of classic children's literature is well-deserved, and its influence continues to inspire new generations to dream, explore, and understand the unseen worlds around them.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the main theme of 'The Gremlins' by Roald Dahl?

The main theme of 'The Gremlins' revolves around the idea of imagination and the power of stories, highlighting how mythical creatures can influence perceptions and behaviors.

Who is the protagonist in 'The Gremlins' and what role do they play?

The protagonist is a young British aviator who encounters the mischievous gremlins during his flight, serving as the narrator and the character who interacts with these mythical creatures.

How do the gremlins in the story affect the aircraft and the pilot?

The gremlins cause chaos and sabotage the aircraft, leading to mechanical failures and dangerous situations, which the pilot must navigate and resolve.

What inspired Roald Dahl to write 'The Gremlins'?

Roald Dahl was inspired by folklore, military stories, and his own interest in aviation, creating a fictional tale that combines myth and adventure.

Is 'The Gremlins' based on real events or mythology?

No, 'The Gremlins' is a fictional story inspired by folklore and military humor, not based on real events, but it captures the imagination about mysterious creatures affecting aircraft.

Has 'The Gremlins' been adapted into other media?

While 'The Gremlins' itself has not been directly adapted into major films or TV shows, the concept influenced the popular 'Gremlins' movies, although they are different stories.

Why is 'The Gremlins' considered a significant work by Roald Dahl?

It's considered significant because it showcases Dahl's talent for blending humor, adventure, and fantasy, and it reflects his interest in aviation and storytelling innovation.

Additional Resources

The Gremlins by Roald Dahl: An Investigative Review of Its Literary Significance and Cultural Impact

Roald Dahl's "The Gremlins," first published in 1943, remains a fascinating and somewhat controversial work within his expansive oeuvre. While often celebrated for its imaginative storytelling and inventive characters, the story also raises questions about its themes, historical context, and the author's intentions. This investigative review aims to delve deeply into "The Gremlins," examining its literary qualities, cultural significance, and the factors that have led to its enduring, yet sometimes contentious, reputation.

Introduction: Unpacking the Myth of "The

Gremlins"

Roald Dahl, primarily known for his beloved children's books like "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" and "Matilda," also wrote "The Gremlins" during his time working with the U.S. Army Air Forces. The story, which was initially developed as a wartime propaganda piece, showcases a blend of fantasy and adventure centered around mischievous creatures called gremlins that sabotage aircraft during World War II missions. Its unique narrative style and illustrative visuals have cemented its place in literary history, but its origins and subsequent interpretations merit closer scrutiny.

Historical and Cultural Context

The Origins of "The Gremlins"

Roald Dahl's "The Gremlins" was conceived in the early 1940s, a period marked by global conflict and wartime uncertainty. Dahl, serving as a fighter pilot, was inspired by the stories circulating among RAF personnel about mysterious, mischievous creatures believed to cause mechanical failures in aircraft. These stories, often humorous and fantastical, served as morale boosters and coping mechanisms amid the stresses of war.

Dahl collaborated with Disney and the U.S. Army Air Forces to produce "The Gremlins," which was intended both as entertainment and as a piece of morale-boosting propaganda. The story was initially serialized in the "Star Weekly" magazine in 1943, accompanied by illustrations by William Pène du Bois, whose whimsical art style complements Dahl's imaginative narrative.

The Propaganda and Psychological Dimensions

Although "The Gremlins" appears as a lighthearted fantasy, it also functions within the broader context of wartime propaganda. The story's message about human ingenuity, teamwork, and resilience subtly reinforces morale among troops and the general public. Moreover, the gremlins serve as a metaphor for the unpredictable mechanical failures and the chaos inherent in warfare.

However, some critics argue that the work also contains underlying themes of fear and mistrust—particularly toward technology and machinery—that reflect wartime anxieties. The mischievous gremlins symbolize the unseen forces that threaten military and technological progress, embodying fears of the unknown and uncontrollable elements in warfare.

Literary Analysis of “The Gremlins”

Narrative Structure and Style

“The Gremlins” employs a third-person narrative that combines humor with adventure. Dahl’s storytelling is characterized by vivid descriptions, playful language, and a tone that oscillates between whimsical and suspenseful. The narrative follows the exploits of a young British pilot named Gus, who encounters the gremlins and learns about their mischievous nature.

The story’s pacing is brisk, with episodic episodes highlighting the gremlins’ antics and the human characters’ efforts to understand and manage them. It features a clear moral underpinning emphasizing bravery, ingenuity, and understanding in the face of chaos.

Thematic Elements and Symbolism

Several key themes emerge from “The Gremlins”:

- Mischief and Chaos: The gremlins epitomize unpredictable mischief, embodying chaos that challenges order and discipline—particularly within the military context.
- Innocence and Curiosity: The story portrays the gremlins as curious but mischievous creatures, suggesting a nuanced view of nature and the unknown.
- Technology and Humanity: The narrative explores the relationship between humans and machinery, highlighting both the reliance on technology and the vulnerabilities it entails.
- Heroism and Morale: The protagonist’s bravery and the gremlins’ eventual understanding reflect themes of heroism and the importance of teamwork.

Symbolically, the gremlins serve as a metaphor for the unseen forces—be they mechanical, psychological, or societal—that disrupt human endeavors.

Illustrations and Visual Impact

William Pène du Bois’s illustrations play a significant role in shaping the tone of “The Gremlins.” His whimsical, cartoonish style complements Dahl’s playful prose, making the story accessible and engaging for readers. The visuals depict the gremlins as mischievous yet endearing creatures, balancing the story’s fantasy elements with a sense of humor.

These illustrations have contributed to the story’s popularity, especially among children, and have become iconic images associated with the work. They

serve to deepen the reader's understanding of the gremlins' personalities and their antics.

Critical Reception and Controversies

Initial Reception

When first published, "The Gremlins" was generally well-received, especially for its inventive storytelling and illustrations. Its role as wartime propaganda was acknowledged, but critics also appreciated its imaginative qualities and Dahl's craftsmanship.

However, some reviewers questioned whether the story was suitable for children, given its themes of mischief and chaos. The story's humorous portrayal of destructive creatures sparked debates about appropriateness and the potential influence on young readers' perceptions of authority and order.

Controversies and Cultural Sensitivities

Over time, "The Gremlins" has faced criticism related to its portrayal of certain themes and imagery. Some argue that the story reflects wartime stereotypes and a simplistic view of good versus evil. Additionally, the depiction of creatures that sabotage machinery could be interpreted as a metaphor for subversion or dissent, which has led to discussions about its appropriateness in different cultural contexts.

In recent years, some critics have questioned whether the story's humor and fantasy might obscure more complex issues surrounding war, technology, and human fallibility. Nonetheless, defenders argue that the story's primary aim is entertainment and imagination, not propaganda in a political sense.

The Legacy of "The Gremlins" in Literature and Popular Culture

Influence on Subsequent Works

"The Gremlins" has inspired a range of adaptations and references across media:

- Animated adaptations and short films

- Parodies and satirical reinterpretations
- Influence on later fantasy stories involving mischievous creatures

Its portrayal of mischievous, magical beings influencing human technology prefigures later works in fantasy and science fiction genres.

Enduring Popularity and Reappraisal

While “The Gremlins” is less prominent today than Dahl’s other works, it remains a noteworthy piece for scholars studying wartime literature, children’s fantasy, and Dahl’s development as a writer. Its combination of humor, fantasy, and wartime symbolism continues to attract interest and debate.

Some modern readers and critics view “The Gremlins” as a reflection of its time—an inventive, if imperfect, piece that captures the anxieties and hopes of wartime society. Its illustrations and storytelling continue to appeal, ensuring its place in the cultural memory.

Conclusion: The Complex Legacy of “The Gremlins”

Roald Dahl’s “The Gremlins” stands as a testament to the power of storytelling to blend fantasy, humor, and cultural commentary. Initially conceived as a wartime morale booster, the story has evolved into a multifaceted work that invites analysis from literary, historical, and cultural perspectives.

While its playful narrative and illustrations have made it beloved by many, ongoing debates about its themes and implications highlight the complexities inherent in works produced within specific historical contexts. As both a piece of children’s literature and a reflection of wartime anxieties, “The Gremlins” exemplifies how stories can serve multiple purposes—entertaining, instructing, and revealing societal fears.

Ultimately, “The Gremlins” by Roald Dahl remains a fascinating artifact—an inventive, whimsical, and occasionally controversial story that continues to provoke curiosity and discussion decades after its initial publication. Its enduring legacy underscores the importance of critically examining literary works within their historical and cultural milieus, recognizing their influence and the conversations they inspire.

[The Gremlins By Roald Dahl](#)

the gremlins by roald dahl: The Gremlins Roald Dahl, 2006 Friendly little gremlins help a Royal Air Force fighter pilot in World War II.

the gremlins by roald dahl: **Roald Dahl** Michelle M. Houle, 2006 A biography of the author who created Charlie and the Chocolate Factory and James and the Giant Peach.

the gremlins by roald dahl: **Return of the Gremlins** Mike Richardson, 2015-06-16 When a young American named Gus inherits his late grandfather's English estate, he hopes to sell the place and be on his way. But then, strange things start happening in the house. Gus's suspicions are confirmed when he learns the house isn't haunted--it's infested with Gremlins! The mischievous Gremlins are back! Based on the creation of beloved children's author Roald Dahl, these playful creatures have been in the public eye since World War II, disassembling fighter planes and causing havoc wherever they go. This beautiful hardcover collects Dark Horse's Return of the Gremlins comics, as well as an archive of classic Gremlins comics and stories from the 1940s!

the gremlins by roald dahl: **Roald Dahl's Marvellous Medicine** Tom Solomon, 2016 Roald Dahl's doctor provides a fascinating exploration of how his extraordinary interactions with medical science affected his life and his literature.

the gremlins by roald dahl: **Gremlin Trouble!** Jim Korkis, 2024-12-07 Blame It on Gremlins? In the 1940s, Walt Disney had his hands on a new film franchise involving gremlins, little creatures that caused mischief, mostly of the mechanical kind. But no gremlins film was ever made. Walt himself cancelled the project. This is the story of what went wrong. (And it wasn't gremlins.) Dashing RAF pilot Roald Dahl, best-known as the author of Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory, wrote his first book on a topic familiar to his fellow pilots: gremlins. These nasty buggers were often held responsible whenever a British plane was damaged or crashed during World War II. Dahl convinced Walt Disney that a film, equal parts live action and animation, about gremlins, who were essentially Nazi saboteurs, would be a great companion to such Disney classics as Snow White, Fantasia, and Pinocchio. Disney bought the rights-in fact, they still own the rights- to Dahl's gremlins, but then ran into a problem bigger than any mythic beast: Dahl himself. As the Disney studio struggled to make heroes out of the malicious gremlins, and labored to write a script that would appeal to an American audience, a wave of gremlin mania swept the country, but Disney had no film to take advantage of it, due in large part to Dahl's lack of cooperation and outright opposition. Americans soon tired of gremlins, and Disney soon tired of Dahl. The incomplete story, art, and animation for the proposed film was chucked deep into the Disney archives, where it remains today. Best-selling author Jim Korkis presents the fascinating tale of Walt Disney and the gremlins, from Dahl's early involvement to a mini-resurgence in recent years, with the publication of a trio of gremlins graphic novels.

the gremlins by roald dahl: **Roald Dahl** Jeremy Treglown, 2016-06-28 A New York Times Notable Book: A revealing look at the famous twentieth-century children's author who brought us The BFG and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. Few writers have had the enduring cultural influence of Roald Dahl, who inspired generations of loyal readers. Acclaimed biographer Jeremy Treglown cuts no corners in humanizing this longstanding immortal of juvenile fiction. Roald Dahl explores this master of children's literature from childhood—focusing a tight lens on the relationship between Dahl and his mother, who lovingly referred to him as Apple—through to his death. Treglown deftly navigates Dahl's time as a fighter pilot in the Royal Air Force, exploring how the experience transformed many of the beliefs that influenced the English writer's work, including The Gremlins, which was commissioned by Walt Disney. A former editor of the Times Literary Supplement, Treglown discusses many of Dahl's most famous works, such as James and the Giant Peach and Fantastic Mr. Fox, while also delving into his marriage to actress Patricia Neal, combing through letters and archives to show a man who could be both comic and vitriolic, thoughtful yet manipulative and irascible. Treglown highlights many of Dahl's literary achievements as well as his breakdowns and shortcomings, presenting a very personal and telling picture of the author and the

inner turmoil that crippled him. Separating the man from the myth, Treglown's frank, intimate portrait of Dahl illuminates the contradictions within the mind of this beloved author, a man who could be both a monster and a hero. It is required reading for book lovers and film buffs alike.

the gremlins by roald dahl: *Roald Dahl* Mark I. West, 1992 Critical examination of Roald Dahl's literary work with emphasis on children's fiction.

the gremlins by roald dahl: *A Study Guide for Roald Dahl's "Beware of the Dog"* Gale, Cengage Learning,

the gremlins by roald dahl: ROALD DAHL NARAYAN CHANGDER, 2024-06-13 If you need a free PDF practice set of this book for your studies, feel free to reach out to me at cbsenet4u@gmail.com, and I'll send you a copy! THE ROALD DAHL MCQ (MULTIPLE CHOICE QUESTIONS) SERVES AS A VALUABLE RESOURCE FOR INDIVIDUALS AIMING TO DEEPEN THEIR UNDERSTANDING OF VARIOUS COMPETITIVE EXAMS, CLASS TESTS, QUIZ COMPETITIONS, AND SIMILAR ASSESSMENTS. WITH ITS EXTENSIVE COLLECTION OF MCQS, THIS BOOK EMPOWERS YOU TO ASSESS YOUR GRASP OF THE SUBJECT MATTER AND YOUR PROFICIENCY LEVEL. BY ENGAGING WITH THESE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS, YOU CAN IMPROVE YOUR KNOWLEDGE OF THE SUBJECT, IDENTIFY AREAS FOR IMPROVEMENT, AND LAY A SOLID FOUNDATION. DIVE INTO THE ROALD DAHL MCQ TO EXPAND YOUR ROALD DAHL KNOWLEDGE AND EXCEL IN QUIZ COMPETITIONS, ACADEMIC STUDIES, OR PROFESSIONAL ENDEAVORS. THE ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONS ARE PROVIDED AT THE END OF EACH PAGE, MAKING IT EASY FOR PARTICIPANTS TO VERIFY THEIR ANSWERS AND PREPARE EFFECTIVELY.

the gremlins by roald dahl: *Charlie & The Chocolate Factory (Novel Study) Gr. 4-7* Ron Leduc, 2008-01-01 Charlie & the Chocolate Factory is about Charlie Bucket, a nice boy who loves Willy Wonka's chocolate, but usually can't afford to buy any. Willy Wonka announces a contest in which five gold tickets have been hidden in chocolate bars and sent throughout the world. The children who find the tickets will be taken on a tour of Wonka's chocolate factory, led by none other than Willy Wonka himself. Charlie miraculously finds a ticket, along with four other children. The tour of the factory holds more than a few surprises for the bunch, as one child after another shows their wickedness and is removed from the tour. This Novel Study provides a teacher and student section with a variety of activities, chapter questions, crossword, word search, and answer key to create a well-rounded lesson plan.

the gremlins by roald dahl: **Roald Dahl** Alan Warren, Dale Salwak, Daryl Furumi Mallett, 1994

the gremlins by roald dahl: **The Ashgate Encyclopedia of Literary and Cinematic Monsters** Jeffrey Andrew Weinstock, 2016-04-01 From vampires and demons to ghosts and zombies, interest in monsters in literature, film, and popular culture has never been stronger. This concise Encyclopedia provides scholars and students with a comprehensive and authoritative A-Z of monsters throughout the ages. It is the first major reference book on monsters for the scholarly market. Over 200 entries written by experts in the field are accompanied by an overview introduction by the editor. Generic entries such as 'ghost' and 'vampire' are cross-listed with important specific manifestations of that monster. In addition to monsters appearing in English-language literature and film, the Encyclopedia also includes significant monsters in Spanish, French, Italian, German, Russian, Indian, Chinese, Japanese, African and Middle Eastern traditions. Alphabetically organized, the entries each feature suggestions for further reading. The Ashgate Encyclopedia of Literary and Cinematic Monsters is an invaluable resource for all students and scholars and an essential addition to library reference shelves.

the gremlins by roald dahl: CRASH! Randy Malamud, 2024-12-12 CRASH! explores the fascinating, revealing, and surprising cultural impact of plane crashes across art, literature, music, media, and creative nonfiction. Plane crashes are covered extensively but they are not analyzed very deeply, beyond rote media reports and forensic accident investigations. This is despite the voluminous, diverse, and fascinating cultural materials - poems and novels, songs, films, art, TV

series, and on and on - that emerge in the wake of aviation disasters. Randy Malamud reanimates these tragic events and identifies how they persist and resonate through our culture-more than we might have imagined, and in intricately far-reaching ways. A unique and extraordinarily wide-ranging cultural examination, CRASH! takes the reader on a journey that includes reflections on flight phobia, themes of crash survival (with asides on Lord of the Flies, The Little Prince, and Ernest Hemingway's two-day two-crash adventure), the existentialism of pilots' last words, the day the music died, deep dives into modernist plane wreck paintings, kamikaze pilots and their Zen death poems, plane crashes before planes, 'race, crash, and gender,' and the cultural aftermath of 9/11. Ultimately, Malamud shows that crashes do not bring about complete and total destruction: we accomplish some degree of restoration by shoring fragments against the ruins. The plane is dead; long live the plane.

the gremlins by roald dahl: *Why Would Anyone Want to Swing a Cat?* Andy Simpson, 2013-04-18 Why is bureaucracy known as red, not yellow or blue tape? What is haywire and why do we go it? Why is a yawn infection? Who was Parker and why is he so Nosy? These are just some of the burning issues that have been exercising the minds of Daily Mail readers in recent years, and 1001 of the most entertaining have been reproduced in this bumper collection. Not all of the questions featured will have been nagging away at you for years - the scrap metal value of the Eiffel Tower, for example; and some of the answers throw up intriguing alternatives (does the expression peg out have its origins in the game of cribbage or in grave digging practices?); but for those who are inveterate devourers of trivia teasers and fascinating facts, The Daily Mail's Answers to Correspondents is a veritable feast.

the gremlins by roald dahl: Word Perfect Susie Dent, 2020-10-15 'Susie Dent is a one-off. She breathes life and fun into words and language' Pam Ayres 'Susie Dent is a national treasure' Richard Osman Welcome to a year of wonder with Susie Dent, lexicographer, logophile, and longtime queen of Countdown's Dictionary Corner. From the real Jack the Lad to the theatrically literal story behind stealing someone's thunder, from tartle (forgetting someone's name at the very moment you need it) to snaccident (the unintentional eating of an entire packet of biscuits), WORD PERFECT is a brilliant linguistic almanac full of unforgettable stories, fascinating facts, and surprising etymologies tied to every day of the year. You'll never be lost for words again.

the gremlins by roald dahl: **Superstitions** Max Cryer, 2016-05-01 Some people casually say 'touch wood' when they speak of something they hope will happen. Others won't allow peacock feathers into the house. And almost anyone who finds a four-leafed clover will treasure it and keep it. Why? Some superstitions are so ancient and have been practised for so long that they have come to be regarded as just harmless and widely observed 'customs', without people realising they are basically superstitions. For instance, many people wouldn't bother tossing spilled salt over their left shoulder or avoid walking under a ladder. But they happily continue to wear a wedding ring and blow out candles on a birthday cake. They don't know why — 'it's just a custom'. But both are actually superstitions. In a book full of surprises and revelations, Max Cryer explains the origins of many of the things we commonly say and observe and why we continue to include them in our lives: kissing under the mistletoe, the unlucky number thirteen, the significance of the bridal bouquet, saying 'bless you' after sneezing, the hanging of a horseshoe, 'the Scottish play', the danger in opals, the Leap Year proposal ... so many aspects of our lives are coloured by superstition. Now you can discover the reasons for them in a book that is both witty and informative. Superstitions will provide many 'Eureka' moments and settle many family disputes.

the gremlins by roald dahl: **The Celebration of Death in Contemporary Culture** Dina Khapaeva, 2017-03-06 The Celebration of Death in Contemporary Culture investigates the emergence and meaning of the cult of death. Over the last three decades, Halloween has grown to rival Christmas in its popularity. Dark tourism has emerged as a rapidly expanding industry. "Corpse chic" and "skull style" have entered mainstream fashion, while elements of gothic, horror, torture porn, and slasher movies have streamed into more conventional genres. Monsters have become pop culture heroes: vampires, zombies, and serial killers now appeal broadly to audiences of all ages.

This book breaks new ground by viewing these phenomena as aspects of a single movement and documenting its development in contemporary Western culture. This book links the mounting demand for images of violent death with dramatic changes in death-related social rituals. It offers a conceptual framework that connects observations of fictional worlds—including *The Twilight Saga*, *The Vampire Diaries*, and the *Harry Potter* series—with real-world sociocultural practices, analyzing the aesthetic, intellectual, and historical underpinnings of the cult of death. It also places the celebration of death in the context of a longstanding critique of humanism and investigates the role played by 20th-century French theory, posthumanism, transhumanism, and the animal rights movement in shaping the current antihumanist atmosphere. This timely, thought-provoking book will appeal to scholars of culture, film, literature, anthropology, and American and Russian studies, as well as general readers seeking to understand a defining phenomenon of our age.

the gremlins by roald dahl: Weirder War Two Richard Denham, Michael Jecks, Did a Warner Bros. cartoon prophesize the use of the atom bomb? Did the Allies really plan to use stink bombs on the enemy? Why did the Nazis make their own version of *Titanic* and why were polar bear photographs appearing throughout Europe? The Second World War was the bloodiest of all wars. Mass armies of men trudged, flew or rode from battlefields as far away as North Africa to central Europe, from India to Burma, from the Philippines to the borders of Japan. It saw the first aircraft carrier sea battle, and the indiscriminate use of terror against civilian populations in ways not seen since the Thirty Years War. Nuclear and incendiary bombs erased entire cities. V weapons brought new horror from the skies: the V1 with their hideous grumbling engines, the V2 with sudden, unexpected death. People were systematically starved: in Britain food had to be rationed because of the stranglehold of U-Boats, while in Holland the German blockage of food and fuel saw 30,000 die of starvation in the winter of 1944/5. It was a catastrophe for millions. At a time of such enormous crisis, scientists sought ever more inventive weapons, or devices to help halt the war. Civilians were involved as never before, with women taking up new trades, proving themselves as capable as their male predecessors whether in the factories or the fields. The stories in this book are of courage, of ingenuity, of hilarity in some cases, or of great sadness, but they are all thought-provoking - and rather weird. So whether you are interested in the last Polish cavalry charge, the Blackout Ripper, Dada, or Ghandi's attempt to stop the bloodshed, welcome to the *Weirder War Two*!

the gremlins by roald dahl: American Myths, Legends, and Tall Tales Christopher R. Fee, Jeffrey B. Webb, 2016-08-29 A fascinating survey of the entire history of tall tales, folklore, and mythology in the United States from earliest times to the present, including stories and myths from the modern era that have become an essential part of contemporary popular culture. Folklore has been a part of American culture for as long as humans have inhabited North America, and increasingly formed an intrinsic part of American culture as diverse peoples from Europe, Africa, Asia, and Oceania arrived. In modern times, folklore and tall tales experienced a rejuvenation with the emergence of urban legends and the growing popularity of science fiction and conspiracy theories, with mass media such as comic books, television, and films contributing to the retelling of old myths. This multi-volume encyclopedia will teach readers the central myths and legends that have formed American culture since its earliest years of settlement. Its entries provide a fascinating glimpse into the collective American imagination over the past 400 years through the stories that have shaped it. Organized alphabetically, the coverage includes Native American creation myths, tall tales like George Washington chopping down his father's cherry tree and the adventures of King of the Wild Frontier Davy Crockett, through to today's urban myths. Each entry explains the myth or legend and its importance and provides detailed information about the people and events involved. Each entry also includes a short bibliography that will direct students or interested general readers toward other sources for further investigation. Special attention is paid to African American folklore, Asian American folklore, and the folklore of other traditions that are often overlooked or marginalized in other studies of the topic.

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