


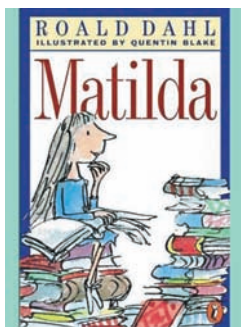
## LESSON 2. Let's read in English

**Communicative area:** inferring meaning from context, speaking about abilities / possibilities in the past

**Active vocabulary:** borrow, by heart, cover, grown-up, return, teenager

**Active grammar:** *could* for expressing ability and possibility in the past

1. Ask and answer: Do you read a lot? What are your favourite books? Do you ever read in English? Have you read any books by Roald Dahl?
2.  a) Listen to an adapted version of an extract from *Matilda* by Roald Dahl. Follow in the book.



The cover of  
Roald Dahl's book

Matilda's brother was a perfectly normal boy but his sister, as I said, was different. **By the age of one and a half she could speak perfectly well** and she knew as many words as most grown-ups. The parents called her a noisy chatter-box and used to tell her that small girls should be seen and not heard.

By the time she was three, Matilda had taught herself to read by studying newspapers and magazines that lay around the house. **At the age of four, she could read fast and well** and she naturally began looking for books. The only book in the house was something called *Easy Cooking*. When Matilda had read it from cover to cover and had learnt all the recipes by heart, she decided she wanted something more interesting.

“Daddy”, she said, “do you think you could buy me a book?”

“A book?” he said. “What d’ you want the book for?”

“To read, Daddy.”

“What’s wrong with the telly? We’ve got a lovely telly and now you come asking for a book! You’re getting naughty, my girl!”

Nearly every weekday afternoon Matilda was left alone in the house. Her brother went to school. Her father went to work and her mother went out playing bingo in a town 8 miles away. **So, Matilda could do anything she liked.** On the day when her father had refused to buy her a book, Matilda set off all by herself to the public library in the village. When she arrived, she introduced herself to the librarian, Mrs. Phelps. She asked if she could sit awhile and read a book.

“Would you like me to help you find a nice one with lots of pictures in it?”

“No, thank you,” Matilda said. **“I’m sure I can find a book myself.”**

From then on, every afternoon, as soon as her mother had left for bingo, Matilda would go down to the library. The walk took her only ten minutes **and then she could sit in a cosy corner for two hours reading one book after another.**

“I’m wondering what to read next,” she said one day. “I’ve finished all the children’s books.”

“You mean you’ve looked at the pictures?”

“Yes, but I’ve read the books as well.”

Mrs. Phelps was surprised. “Exactly how old are you, Matilda?” she asked.

“Four years and three months,” Matilda said.

“What sort of book would you like to read next?” she asked.

Matilda said, “I would like a really good one that grown-ups read. A famous one.”

“Try this,” Mrs. Phelps said at last. “It’s very famous and very good. If it’s too long for you, just let me know and I’ll find something shorter and a bit easier.”

**b) Which age group does Matilda belong to: babies (0–1); young children (1–7); older children (8–12); teenagers (13–19 ); grown-ups? What books does she read?**

**c) What book do you think the librarian gave Matilda? Check your guess on page 270. Have you ever read any books by this author? Were they amusing / exciting / touching / boring / interesting?**

**d) Guess the meaning of the underlined phrases.**


**3. a) Read the sentences in bold. Answer the questions on the disk.**

**Present:** *can – can’t*    **Past:** *could – couldn’t*

**b) Complete the sentences below. Make them true for you. Share and compare.**

1. I could speak perfectly well at the age of ... .
2. By the age of ... I could read fast and well.
3. When I was a little boy / girl I could / couldn’t go ... because ... .

**4.  a) Listen to the end of the first chapter from *Matilda*. What do we say to mean ‘to take out books from the library’ and ‘to take books back to the library’?**

 **b)** Listen again. Do you agree that with a good book you can stay at home and travel all over the world at the same time? Can you give examples of such books?

**c)** Answer the questions.

Who do you think reads more: teenagers or grown-ups? How often do you go to a public library? What books do you usually borrow? How many? Do you



always return books in time (early enough)? Do you always read books from cover to cover? Do you like learning things by heart? Would you like to read *Matilda* by Roald Dahl? There is a film made by the book. Would you like to see this film?

## LESSON 3.

## Prodigy children

**Communicative area:** speaking about abilities in the past, present and future

**Active vocabulary:** age, be able (to do something), recite (poems), use

**Active grammar:** *to be able* (to do something) and *can / could* for ability

**1.** What could you do when you were six? Use the expressions from the box to ask your classmate.