

Project- Fantasy Literature

Selected Reading

(Charlie and the Chocolate Factory by Road Dahl -- 1964)

Objectives:

- ✓ students should provide arguments against / for watching TV
- ✓ students should find relevant words and phrases in the text to support their arguments
- ✓ teacher should raise the students' awareness of the negative impact the TV can have upon their development
- ✓ students should use the new words properly in different sentences

Short Summary

The prize for five children who found the Golden Tickets hidden under the wrapper of candy bars was a day- long tour of Willy Wonka' s mysterious chocolate factory and a lifetime supply of chocolate.

During the tour throughout the factory the naughty children fell victims of their vices and were severely punished for their misbehavior.

Thus, the gluttonous Augustus Gloop fell into a chocolate river and was sucked up a pipe to the fudge room. The spoiled Veruca Salt was thrown down a rubbish chute after she was mistaken for a bad nut by a nut- cracking squirrel. The gum- addicted Violet Beauregard blew up into a blueberry after consuming experimental chewing- gum and had to be taken to the Juicing Room to get the juice out of her. The television- addicted Mike Teavee was shrunk down to an inch after meddling with dangerous television equipment and taken to Taffy Puller to be stretched back to normal. Charlie was the only child who did not misbehave throughout the day- long factory tour and thus he became Willy Wonka' s heir.

The follwing poem placed at the end of Tom Teavee' s experience in the Television Room exposes Road Dahl' s harsh criticism on children' s habit of spending their time in front of the TV.

The most important thing we've learned,
So far as children are concerned,
Is never, NEVER, NEVER let
Them near your television set --
Or better still, just don't install
The idiotic thing at all.
In almost every house we've been,
We've watched them gaping at the screen.
They loll and slop and lounge about,
And stare until their eyes pop out.
(Last week in someone's place we saw
A dozen eyeballs on the floor.)
They sit and stare and stare and sit

Until they're hypnotised by it,
Until they're absolutely drunk
With all that shocking ghastly junk.
Oh yes, we know it keeps them still,
They don't climb out the window sill,
They never fight or kick or punch,
They leave you free to cook the lunch
And wash the dishes in the sink --
But did you ever stop to think,
To wonder just exactly what
This does to your beloved tot?
IT ROTTS THE SENSE IN THE HEAD!
IT KILLS IMAGINATION DEAD!
IT CLOGS AND CLUTTERS UP THE MIND!
IT MAKES A CHILD SO DULL AND BLIND
HE CAN NO LONGER UNDERSTAND
A FANTASY, A FAIRYLAND!
HIS BRAIN BECOMES AS SOFT AS CHEESE!
HIS POWERS OF THINKING RUST AND FREEZE!
HE CANNOT THINK -- HE ONLY SEES!
'All right!' you'll cry. 'All right!' you'll say,
'But if we take the set away,
What shall we do to entertain
Our darling children? Please explain!
We'll answer this by asking you,
'What used the darling ones to do?
'How used they keep themselves contented
Before this monster was invented?'
Have you forgotten? Don't you know?
We'll say it very loud and slow:
THEY ... USED ... TO ... READ! They'd READ and READ,
AND READ and READ, and then proceed
To READ some more. Great Scott! Gadzooks!
One half their lives was reading books!
The nursery shelves held books galore!
Books cluttered up the nursery floor!
And in the bedroom, by the bed,
More books were waiting to be read!
Such wondrous, fine, fantastic tales
Of dragons, gypsies, queens, and whales
And treasure isles, and distant shores
Where smugglers rowed with muffled oars,
And pirates wearing purple pants,
And sailing ships and elephants,
And cannibals crouching 'round the pot,
Stirring away at something hot. (.....)
Oh, books, what books they used to know,
Those children living long ago!
So please, oh please, we beg, we pray,
Go throw your TV set away,

And in its place you can install
 A lovely bookshelf on the wall.
 Then fill the shelves with lots of books,
 Ignoring all the dirty looks,
 The screams and yells, the bites and kicks,
 And children hitting you with sticks-
 Fear not, because we promise you
 That, in about a week or two
 Of having nothing else to do,
 They'll now begin to feel the need
 Of having something to read.
 And once they start -- oh boy, oh boy!
 You watch the slowly growing joy
 That fills their hearts. They'll grow so keen
 They'll wonder what they'd ever seen
 In that ridiculous machine,
 That nauseating, foul, unclean,
 Repulsive television screen!
 And later, each and every kid
 Will love you more for what you did.

English- Romanian Vocabulary

to gape at = a se căsca
 to loll = a sta tolănit
 to slop about = a- și revărsa zgomotos sentimentele
 to lounge about = a trândăvi
 to stare = a se uita cu ochii mari / holbați
 window sill = pervaz
 ghastly = oribil
 junk = lucru fără valoare
 punch = a lovi cu pumnii
 tot = copil mic
 to rot = a intra în putrefacție
 to clog = a îngreua
 to clutter = a zăpăci
 dull = prost
 to rust = a (se) rugini
 to proceed = a continua
 galore = berechet
 nursery = odaia copiilor
 wondrous = minunat
 smuggler = contrabandist
 muffle = a înăbuși (sunete)
 oar = vâslă
 keen = pasionat
 nauseating = dezgustător
 foul = detestabil

Vocabulary Issues:

- 1) Find words and phrases in the text that characterize the TV set.
- 2) Find verbs in the text that denote waste of time.
- 3) What verb is used to express habit in the past ?
- 4) Which of the following verbs denote ways of looking at things: to punch, to gape at, to stare, to pop out.
- 5) Find synonyms in the text for the words :disgusting, to continue, stupid, to block something, a small child, horrible.

Comprehension Questions :

- 1) Which activities are the most popular with your friend ?
- 2) What are the latest "crazes"(fashionable activities) for you and your friends ?
- 3) What activities are time- eating monsters ?
- 4) What entertaining activity is highly criticized by R. Dahl ?
- 5) What is the impact of TV on our mind according to the poem ?
Find arguments in the text.
- 6) Who is to blame for the children who spend their free time in front of the TV according to R. Dahl ? Find arguments in the text.
Do you agree to this point of view ?
- 7) What is the author's alternative suggestion to watching TV ?
Is it a sensible alternative ? Give arguments !

Follow- up Activities :

- 1) Learn by heart a part of the poem.
- 2) Write a composition about the beneficial effects of reading and the detrimental effects of watching TV.