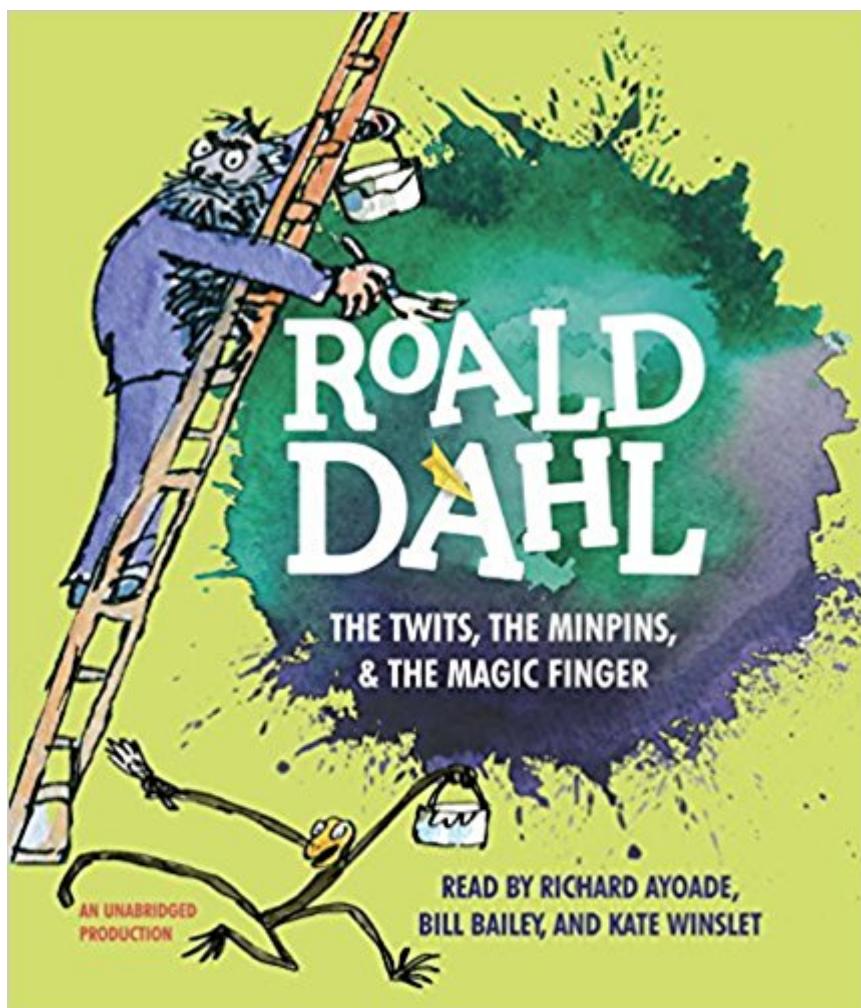


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# The Twits, The Minpins & The Magic Finger



## Synopsis

Roald Dahl sometimes shared a tonal kinship with Ogden Nash, and he could demonstrate a verbal inventiveness nearly Seussian. [His] stories work better in audio than in print. • "The New York Times THE TWITS How do you outwit a Twit? Mr. and Mrs. Twit are the smelliest, nastiest, ugliest people in the world. They hate everything "except playing mean jokes on each other, catching innocent birds to put in their Bird Pies, and making their caged monkeys, the Muggle-Wumps, stand on their heads all day. But the Muggle-Wumps have had enough. They don't just want out, they want revenge. THE MINPINS Little Billy strays into the forest, where he meets the Minpins "tiny people who live within the trees. The Minpins tell Billy about The Gruncher, who preys on them. So Billy embarks on a mission to rid the Minpins of their foe once and for all, and sets off "on the back of a swan "to confront The Gruncher. THE MAGIC FINGER What happens when the hunter becomes the hunted? To the Gregg family, hunting is just plain fun. To the girl who lives next door, it's just plain horrible. She tries to be polite. She tries to talk them out of it, but the Greggs only laugh at her. Then one day the Greggs go too far, and the little girl turns her Magic Finger on them. When she's very, very angry, the little girl's Magic Finger takes over. She really can't control it, and now it's turned the Greggs into birds! Before they know it, the Greggs are living in a nest, and that's just the beginning of their problems. ]

## Book Information

Audio CD

Publisher: Listening Library (Audio); Unabridged edition (September 26, 2013)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 1611761875

ISBN-13: 978-1611761870

Product Dimensions: 5.1 x 0.6 x 5.9 inches

Shipping Weight: 4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 stars 5 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #824,647 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #132 in Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction > Classics #188 in Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction > Fantasy #372 in Books > Books on CD > Children's Fiction > General

Age Range: 8 - 12 years

Grade Level: 3 - 7

## Customer Reviews

Roald Dahl (1916-1990) was born in Wales of Norwegian parents. He spent his childhood in England and, at age eighteen, went to work for the Shell Oil Company in Africa. When World War II broke out, he joined the Royal Air Force and became a fighter pilot. At the age of twenty-six he moved to Washington, D.C., and it was there he began to write. His first short story, which recounted his adventures in the war, was bought by The Saturday Evening Post, and so began a long and illustrious career. After establishing himself as a writer for adults, Roald Dahl began writing children's stories in 1960 while living in England with his family. His first stories were written as entertainment for his own children, to whom many of his books are dedicated. Roald Dahl is now considered one of the most beloved storytellers of our time. Although he passed away in 1990, his popularity continues to increase as his fantastic novels, including James and the Giant Peach, Matilda, The BFG, and Charlie and the Chocolate Factory, delight an ever-growing legion of fans. Learn more about Roald Dahl on the official Roald Dahl Web site: [www.roalddahl.com](http://www.roalddahl.com)

Absolutely wonderful! Nobody reads Dahl like fellow Brits. Kids love it. Adults will value it. Even if you are not a Dahl fan, you will be after listening to this version.

This is a very well written book and the narration is wonderfully done. My family never gets tired of it even into adulthood! !

Title: The Twits, The Minpins, and The Magic Finger  
Author: Roald Dahl  
Read by: Richard Ayoade, Bill Bailey, and Kate Winslet  
Publisher: Penguin Audio  
Length: Approximately 1 Hour (2 CDs)  
Source: Review Copy from Penguin Thanks!  
My ten year old son Kile, my eight year old son Daniel, and I started listening to this collection on the way to Mom and Son Scout camp. Their five year old sister Penelope started listening at the end of The Twits when we returned home and now we can't go anywhere without listening to a story by Roald Dahl. Although Kile is at regular Scout Camp this week and we were told that we cannot listen to any more of Matilda without him. The Twits are the most miserable people you have ever met. They spend their time putting glue on a tree to catch birds for their bird pie and maybe a spare boy or two. The monkeys they keep caged decide that they are tired of their and the birds' situations and are set for vengeance. The kids thought this was hilarious. The Minpins was by far the favorite story for my kids. It was a great fantasy story about a boy, Billy, who ventures out into the woods against his mother's advice and discovers that the beast she had warned him of is all too real and has

him cornered in a tree. While there, he also discovers an entire race of small people living in the trees who ride birds. Will Billy be able to find his way back home? A girl has The Magic Finger and turns a family of hunters into the hunted so that they can learn what it is like to be a family of ducks. This audio collection is superb with great jaunty music before and after each story and fantastically expressive narrators for all three stories. It is incredibly engaging for not only the children to listen to, but their mother as well. Overall, this is a fantastic collection of stories that are full of Roald Dahl's inventive storytelling and dark humor. My kids and I loved it and are now continuing on into listening to Matilda.

I am writing a review of The Twits by Roald Dahl. This book is about two Twits that hate children, have three pet monkeys and eat bird pie. They live in a big house with a big garden. They are mean because they put super glue on a branch of a tree to make birds stick to it for their bird pie. At one point in the story, The Twits capture some children. Do they escape? Read the book if you want to know because I am not going to tell you. My favourite part of the book is when the monkeys and some other animals play a trick on the twits. My favourite characters in the book are the monkeys. I like them because they are funny & clever. I would recommend this book to ages 6 to 15.

The 2013 batch of Roald Dahl audiobook readings has struck me as an uneven bunch. There are some excellent audiobooks such as the David Walliams rendition of The BFG and Kate Winslet's absolutely divine rendition of Matilda. However, there have been some dull readings that lack the extra bit of sparkle that these stories need. Some of the lacklustre readings are included in this twin-disc that contains The Magic Finger, The Twits and The Minpins. The Richard Ayoade rendition of The Twits turned out to be a grave disappointment for a listener like me. For a reading geared at children, the reader needs to empathise with the text and read in an engaging way. However, Ayoade's reading comes across as dreadfully dull and boring. After listening to this reading I can't help questioning why Puffin did not invite Rik Mayall to read this story, as he could do so in a more engaging, kid-friendly way. Anyway, Ayoade's reading is so quiet and monotonous that it almost seems designed to lull listeners to sleep rather than keep them awake with the antics of the Twits and the Muggle-Wump monkeys. Ayoade's characterisations tend to lack life, especially Mr Twit, Muggle-Wump and the Roly-Poly Bird. Mr Twit in particular comes across as dim witted and meek. This character needs to have a raucous, domineering voice and as such Ayoade's characterisation falls flat here. Only Mrs Twit is successful and Ayoade does his best to convey her scheming ways. Winslet's Magic Finger fares better. I have great respect for Winslet's voice as a narrator and

audiobook reader. I have enjoyed her absolutely divine, angelic rendition of Matilda. She tries her best in this reading of the Magic Finger and pulls it off convincingly. I can imagine her having fun with the characterisation of the bewitched ducks who occupy the Gregg farmhouse. The only thing is that I wish that the narrator's voice had sounded just a little bit more girlish and naive. In this reading it sounds a little detached and deadpan. The good thing is that Winslet is expressive and not dull. Bill Bailey's rendition of The Minpins fares best. He reads expressively and offers very good characterisations of Billy and the Minpins. He strives to conjure up the atmosphere of the story. His word pointing is very good and he can does his best to match the mood nicely. However, at times I wish he had time to savour the words and express them better. Many words sound like they're being rattled off like the barrel of a machine gun. None of these recordings can displace the audiotapes I grew up with. The 1980s Tempo recordings of Dahl were so well produced and they presented sparky recordings of Dahl. The Roger Blake reading of The Twits is better able to hold the attention of its listeners than the Richard Ayoade or Simon Callow readings. For The Minpins I am attached to a reading by Richard Pasco. It was an atmospheric rendition that did full justice to the story, complete with sound effects and the music of Shostakovich in the background. I am sorry if I have to comment on the nuances of the readings. I know that the point of these children's audiobooks is to keep children amused and entertained. However, if the readings are dull, how can children be amused? As a keen fan of Dahl I also pay attention to the nuances of the performances, and so I would be able to imagine how the stories should sound when read aloud. I would like to let buyers know about the tenor and quality of the reading when they are considering their purchasing decisions. All in all, a good collection, severely let down by Ayoade's boring and dull Twits reading.

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