

## Reading B

# The Dentist and the Crocodile

The crocodile, with a cunning smile, sat in the dentist's chair.

He said, "Right here and everywhere my teeth require repair."

The dentist's face was turning white. He quivered, quaked and shook.

He muttered, "I suppose I'm going to have to take a look."

"I want you," Crocodile declared, "to do the back ones first."

The molars at the very back are easily the worst."

He opened wide his massive jaws. It was a fearsome sight-

At least three hundred pointed teeth, all sharp and shining white.

The dentist kept himself well clear. He stood two yards away.

He chose the longest probe he had to search out the decay.

"I said to do the back ones first!," the Crocodile called out.

"You're much too far away, dear sir, to see what you're about;

To do the back ones properly you've got to put your head

Deep down inside my great big mouth," the grinning Crocky said.

The poor old dentist wrung his hands and, weeping in despair,

He cried, "No, no! I see them all extremely well from here!"

Just then, in burst a lady, in her hands a golden chain.



She cried, “Oh, Croc, you naughty boy, you’re playing tricks again!”

“Watch out!” the dentist shrieked and started climbing up the wall.

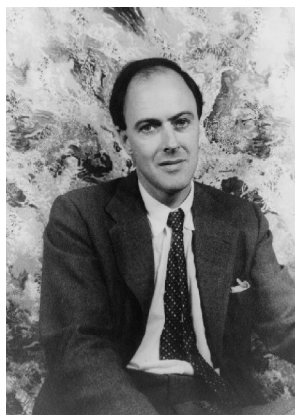
“He’s after me! He’s after you! He’s going to eat us all!”

“Don’t be a twit,” the lady said, and flashed a gorgeous smile.

“He’s harmless. He’s my little pet, my lovely crocodile.”

**Roald Dahl**

### About the author



**Roald Dahl** (1916-1990) was a British novelist, short story writer, poet, screenwriter. He has been referred to as “one of the greatest storytellers for children of the 20<sup>th</sup> century”. Dahl’s short stories are known for their unexpected endings and his children’s books for their unsentimental, often very dark humour. His works include *James and the Giant Peach*, *Charlie and the Chocolate factory*, *Matilda*, *My Uncle Oswald*, *The Witches*, *Fantastic Mr. Fox*, *The Twits*, *Tales of the Unexpected*, *George’s Marvellous Medicine*, and *The BFG*.

### Meanings in context

|                 |   |  |
|-----------------|---|--|
| quivered        | : | moved slowly                               |
| quaked          | : | shook because of fear                      |
| muttered        | : | spoke quietly complaining about something  |
| massive jaws    | : | very big jaws                              |
| twit            | : | a silly person                             |
| wrung his hands | : | twisted his hands                          |
| shrieked        | : | made a sudden loud noise because of fright |
| gorgeous smile  | : | very beautiful and pleasant smile          |

## Comprehension

**Answer the following questions.**

1. Pick out the words that express the dentist's fear of the crocodile.
2. How is the dentist's fear of the crocodile expressed?
3. What steps does the dentist take to examine the crocodile's teeth?
4. Why did the crocodile tell the dentist to do the back ones properly?
5. Why was the crocodile grinning?
6. Pick out the phrases that describe Crocky's physical appearance?
7. Which line shows that the crocodile was playing a trick?
8. What is the most comic sight in the poem?
9. Pick out the lines which describe the dentist in the most pitiable condition.

## Vocabulary

The dentist 'quivered, quaked and shook.' These three verbs describe how scared the dentist was. Look up a dictionary and see how each one of these words describe a different state.

Here are some more words :

scare, dread, horror, terror, unease, nightmare, cold feet

**Look them up in a dictionary and see how each one of them is used. Use them in your own sentences.**