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Исследовательская работа (эссе)

**“WORLD OF ILLUSIONS: SAMUEL MARSHAK AND LEWIS  
CARROLL”**

**“МИР ИЛЛЮЗИЙ САМУИЛА МАРШАКА И ЛЬЮИСА  
КЭРРОЛЛА”**

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All of us were read fairy tales by our grandmother or mother when we were children, and we absorbed them all with milk. In fact, fairy tales have a much bigger impact than we realise. Children's literature develops our thinking, it helps us learn to distinguish between black and white. These fictional stories have a deep moral meaning.

In my essay, I want to focus on two extraordinary children's writers Lewis Carroll and Samuel Marshak and figure out some important issues such as:

1. What do Marshak and Carroll have in common?
2. How did their knowledge of mathematics and philosophy influence their writing?
3. What is the common hidden meaning in their literature?

To consider these issues I'm supposed to research the lives and literature of both writers, examine their works on the subject of mathematics and philosophy. In my research I will try to find common similarities and identify differences between these well-known persons.

The children's storyteller often appears to be as a kind-hearted old man with a long white beard, sitting at a table in an old hut... So who are these literary figures from whose golden pen created the timeless works of literature? To answer this question I am going to consider some facts from the biography of writers.

According to Kornei Chukovsky, poetry for Samuel Marshak was "a passion, even an obsession"[1]. Marshak did not only write poems for children and adults but also translated poets from various countries, participated in the creation of one of the first children's theatres in the Soviet Union and the first publishing house for children. Samuel Marshak was born in 1887 in Voronezh. The family moved several times, but they settled in Ostrogozhsk for a long time in 1900. Here Marshak entered the gymnasium and began to write his first works. "I had started composing poetry even before I learnt to write"[1], the poet recalled. Fascinated by Roman and Greek poetry, Marshak translated Horace's poem "In Whom Salvation is" in his junior year of high school. When the family moved to St. Petersburg Samuel met the famous critic, Stasov, who helped the young Jewish writer to enter the St. Petersburg grammar school, one of the few where ancient languages were taught after the education reform.

The writer has travelled abroad extensively and for some time was living and studying in England, which later introduced him to its literature. Being in an English-speaking country allowed him to deepen his knowledge in it. "Perhaps, it was the university library that befriended me most with English poetry. In the closed rooms overlooking the busy Thames River teeming with barges and steamships, I have learned for the first time what I am going to translate - Shakespeare's sonnets, William Blake, Robert Burns, John Keats, Robert Browning, and Kipling" [1], Samuel said. And he did it later.

The poet moved to Moscow in 1938. During the Second World War he collaborated with newspapers: he wrote epigrams and political pamphlets. Samuel

Marshak received the first Stalin's Award in 1942 for his poetic signatures for posters and caricatures. For his translation of the Scottish poet, Robert Burns, Samuel Marshak was made an honorary citizen of Scotland.

To compare with Samuel Marshak, Lewis Carroll (real name Charles Lutwidge Dodgson) was an English writer, mathematician, logician, philosopher, deacon, and photographer. Lewis Carroll was born in Daresbury, (Cheshire), on January 27, 1832, into a large family of English clergymen. The boy was distinguished by his intelligence since childhood. His primary education was received at home. When Lewis was twelve he was sent to a small grammar public school near Richmond. In 1850 the future writer became a student at Christ Church College, University of Oxford. His grades were far from ideal with the only exception of mathematics. The young man certainly possessed extraordinary mathematical skills. His work as a maths teacher was well paid and Charles pursued it for 25 years, though he found it a rather dull occupation.

All educational institutions of the time had a close relationship to the church, and therefore the teacher was also required to have a church ministry. Charles agreed to become a deacon, but refused to serve in the parish. The fact was that he had no intention of associating his life with religion. When he was a student, he composed a little story for the first time, then another and another, and signed them with the pseudonym Lewis Carroll. The young man came up with the name himself.

In 1865 Lewis Carroll published his first iconic work, "Alice Adventures in Wonderland". The manner of writing Carroll's books can not be confused with any other author. It was inimitable and very different from existing literary styles of those years. His creativity, his fertile imagination, and the inner world, on the one hand, and his ability in mathematics and logic, on the other, allowed him to create his own genre which was called "literature of absurd". The creative writing style,

typical for Carroll, can also be found in all his later works. However, they are not as popular as the story of the girl Alice.

According to the information above, it is obviously, that there are a lot of similarities between Marshak and Carroll. Firstly, both of them were talented writers with a perfect sense of beauty and great imagination. Secondly, they both were interested in maths and psychology. As for mathematics, Samuel Marshak wrote books in this science for children to help them in learning this subject. Lewis Carroll, possessing extraordinary maths skills, was teaching it himself. We should also note that the Marshak and Carroll were contemporaries. Both writers loved England and the English language - these things certainly bring them closer together.

As I said earlier, knowledge of mathematics was required not only in construction but also in the creation of literary and artistic works. It is not for nothing that Pushkin said: "Inspiration is necessary in geometry no less than in poetry"[3]. The competent use of mathematical facts makes a work of fiction credible and real. Knowledge of mathematics and logic helps in the creation of folding poems. Some authors add mathematical problems to their fiction. Some because they love mathematics and others so that the work has an interesting mystery that the reader would like to solve.

Luckily, children's literature is not lacking in wisdom and philosophy. Marshak was an innovator in his poems. Almost every new work by Marshak that appeared in print was either a fundamental innovation or development, perfection of what he had found before. In his literature he could easily help children to understand the world of wonderful objects that have mysterious properties: the clock ticks, its hands move, the pendulum swings, the winding car runs through the room - how? why? Marshak aroused children's keen interest and encouraged them to search for answers to childish philosophical questions.

The characters of Carroll's books and the situations in which they find themselves seem, at first glance, delusional and absurd. But in reality, everything is followed by logic. Carroll had a special form, which could very subtly highlight the philosophical issues, human life, the world structure, and the place of man in the world. His works are therefore not only fascinating to children, but they also share his wisdom with the adult reader.

Let's explore the hidden meaning of two my favourite creations of these writers. Let me start with the story "12 Months". In my opinion, each of the 12 months represents an aspect of life, where each month gives development and a new experience. And our life is like a house that we can design at will. The main thing is not to get discouraged.

Carroll concealed many meanings in his story "Alice in Wonderland". Wonderland is a world turned upside down. People and things are not the people and objects we are used to see in the real world. Absurdity reigns in the world, and reality shifts. Creation itself affects the reader's mind as a way of forcing the imagination to act.

Carroll tries to convey to readers the elementary message that one must believe in miracles. Without them, existence loses its meaning. Everything becomes monotonous and grey. There is also the idea that it is necessary to have and set a goal to strive for, in spite of all obstacles and circumstances.

Besides this, he leads the reader to the idea that everyone must do a job, which he likes and which he loves. Thanks to it, a person finds his purpose in life. Everything around such a person becomes meaningful, even the most insignificant little things.

In addition, "Alice in Wonderland" talks about the loss of time. It was they who were punished by fate for wasting the time they had been given. By this

Carroll is conveying the message that one should waste one's free time on nothing, in vain. Time should be treasured.

The final point of Carroll's story is to believe in yourself. One must constantly believe in oneself and in one's own strength. Only this faith will help to achieve the goal.

To sum it up, I would like to say that Marshak and Carroll loved England and the English language. These things made them even closer, despite the fact that they were strangers. These talented people have contributed greatly to literature, making it richer and more exciting. They were writing not for the sake of fame, but for the children. Undoubtedly, it's thanks to the love for young readers, their literature has gained immortality and remains relevant at all times. And we must be thankful to them, who devoted their lives to creating such outstanding works for children that develop a child's sense, mind, artistic taste, teach them to enjoy poetry, and find in it rich nourishment for their mental growth.

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Annex



Samuel Marshak



Lewis Carroll