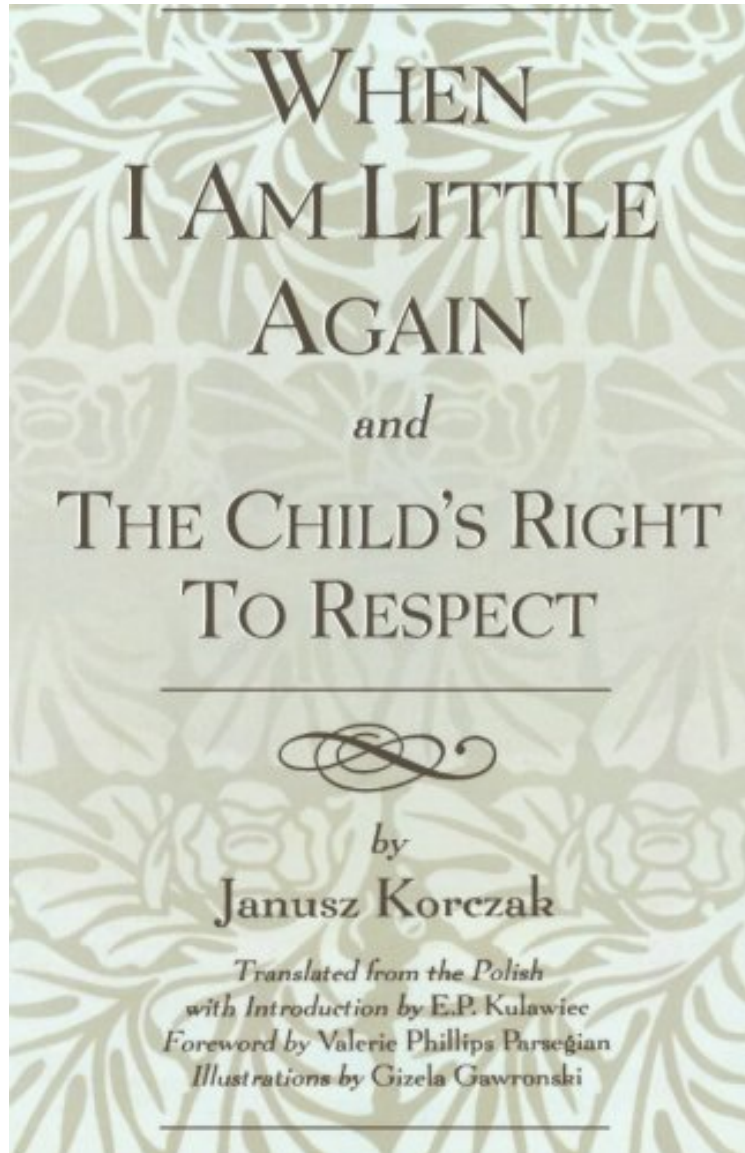


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## When I Am Little Again and The Child's Right to Respect

*Janusz Korczak*

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**Janusz Korczak : When I Am Little Again and The Child's Right to Respect** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised When I Am Little Again and The Child's Right to Respect:

2 of 2 people found the following review helpful. an amazing look into a child's mind By Dakini If you've forgotten what it is to think like a child, and especially if you think you know, this book is essential reading. Amazing insights into sibling relations, schoolyard traumas, and general life from the perspective of a child - and then a very compelling exhortation to put this understanding into practice. Should be a must-read for parents, educators, and psychologists in

particular.7 of 7 people found the following review helpful. A Great Humanitarian Speaks Out for the Child without a VoiceBy Daniel L. BerekWhile the two essays in this book are not Korczak's most famous writings (that honor would probably go to *King Matt, How to Love a Child*, and *The Ghetto Diary*), they are probably the most representative of the Polish pediatrician, educator, and writer. More than anywhere else, one gains an understanding of the extent of this man's empathy for children and his ardent fight for children's rights. Published in 1925, *When I Am Little Again*, is Korczak's description how he is able to relate to children on their terms, first imagining himself being little among the adults in his life and then himself as the adult and his peers as children, a feat of literary philosophy that has never been replicated with the skill that Korczak has shown. Korczak also devoted special attention to the relationships among the children, both their compassion and their malice (and how the two polar opposites could seemingly coexist). He has succeeded in showing both how adults view children and how children view adults. In *The Child's Rights to Respect*, Korczak shows how he is aware of the plight of children even when he, himself, was a child, and carried this memory into adulthood for the rest of his life. He went on at length to explain how adults used their power to control children, never taking into account their feelings, lacking confidence in their ability to reason, make decisions, and accomplish noble deeds. The relationship between adults and children has nearly always been characterized as resentment and distrust. Toward the end of this groundbreaking essay, Korczak stated that although many adults feel that the world would be much more convenient without children, "they are and they will be.... Children account for a large proportion of mankind, a sizeable portion of the population, of the nation, residents, citizens - constant companions. Children have been, are, and they will be. He then defined the title of the essay, what exactly is the child's right to respect. Children have a right to be understood. They have a right to learn, to have their efforts recognized and be forgiven for mistakes. A right to responsibility. They have a right to their possessions. In other words, children have the right to be themselves, to have and state their feelings and opinions - and for these to be taken seriously by adults. They have a right to a safe, loving home, caring teachers. Yet, "politicians and law makers ... deliberate and make decisions about the child, too; but who asks the child for his opinion and consent; what can he possibly have to say?" Fortunately, at least the United Nations was listening, when it enacted the final version of the Convention of the Rights of the Child, enabling the spirit of this great man to live on. 13 of 13 people found the following review helpful. *Back into paradise?*By Daniel WaisbergWell, not really. Though we sometimes wish to return to childhood and have all its privileges, we forget about the difficulties children have to confront in their day-to-day life. And they are as stressing to children as our problems are to us. Korczak is a man who understood and loved children till his death (for more information about his life, read my review on *Ghetto Diary*). In this book he alerts adults to children's lack of power when confronting the world. How to deal with day-to-day fears, novelties, anxieties, and oppressing teachers? The book reminds me of a famous quote by Pablo Picasso: "Every child is an artist. The problem is how to remain an artist once we grow up." It is our responsibility to let children grow up in a healthy creative environment, and this can be done only by respecting and understanding children's feelings. This is what this book teaches us.

These two works belong to that group of books written by one of this century's fiercest and most devoted child advocates. In the first, Korczak uses fiction to reveal the joys and sorrows of a child, a ten-year-old, juxtaposing them against the feelings of an adult as they both react to two days of adventure spent together.

...should be required reading for all educators. Its maxims should be read and put into practice. (Childhood Education)...should be required reading for all educators. Its maxims should be read and put into practice. (Childhood Education)Language NotesText: English (translation) Original Language: PolishAbout the AuthorE. P. Kulawiec is Associate Professor of Education and Curriculum at the University of Southern Maine.