

8.4 Reading



The main character and the narrator of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* is Christopher Boone, a fifteen-year-old boy. Christopher has a unique and sometimes surprising way of reacting to events. He is extremely good at Maths and has a logical way of looking at the world around him, but he sometimes finds it difficult to deal with other people. In the book, he describes everything exactly as he sees it, in clear, direct sentences.

10 The story begins one night. Christopher finds his neighbour's dog dead in her front garden, with a garden fork sticking out of it. Most people would run away from such a scene, but Christopher does not behave like most people. He knows exactly
15 what he likes and what he doesn't like, and he likes dogs.

He goes into the neighbour's garden and takes the dead dog in his arms. When the dog's owner, Mrs Shears, sees Christopher with the dog in his arms,
20 she screams and tells him to put the dog down. Christopher hates loud noises – he puts his hands over his ears, closes his eyes, and puts his head on the grass.

When the police arrived. I like the police. They have uniforms and numbers and you know what they are meant to be doing. There was a policewoman and a policeman. ^A The policewoman had a little hole in her tights on her left ankle and a red scratch in the middle of the hole. ^B The policeman had a big orange leaf stuck to the bottom of his shoe which was poking out from one side.

^B The policewoman put her arms round Mrs Shears and led her back towards the house.

I lifted my head off the grass.

The policeman squatted down beside me and said, 'Would you like to tell me what's going on here, young man?'

I sat up and said, 'The dog is dead.'

'I'd got that far,' he said.

I said, 'I think someone killed the dog.'

'How old are you?' he asked.

I replied, 'I am fifteen years and three months and two days.'

¹ ^B

'I was holding the dog,' I replied.

'And why were you holding the dog?' he asked.

This was a difficult question. It was something I wanted to do. I like dogs. It made me sad to see that the dog was dead.

² ^C

But the policeman did not give me enough time to work out the correct answer.

'Why were you holding the dog?' he asked again.

'I like dogs,' I said.

'Did you kill the dog?' he asked.

I said, 'I did not kill the dog.'

'Is this your fork?' he asked.

I said, 'No.'

'You seem very upset about this,' he said.

³ ^E They were stacking up in my head like loaves in the factory where Uncle Terry works. The factory is a bakery and he operates the slicing machines. ^C And sometimes the slicer is not working fast enough, but the bread keeps coming and there is a blockage. I sometimes think of my mind as a machine, but not always as a bread-slicing machine. It makes it easier to explain to other people what is going on inside it.

⁴ ^F ^D I rolled back onto the lawn and pressed my forehead to the ground into the grass again and made the noise that Father calls groaning. I make this noise when there is too much information coming into my head from the outside world. ^E It is like when you are upset and you hold the radio against your ear and you tune it halfway between two stations so that all you get is white noise and then you turn the volume right up so that this is all you can hear and then you know you are safe because you cannot hear anything else.

The policeman took hold of my arm and lifted me onto my feet. ⁵ ^A And this is when I hit him.

1 Read the text about The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time and answer the questions.

1 How old is the narrator? A. five B. ten C. fifteen D. fourteen

2 What's Christopher like?

A. he hates animals B. he hates people C. he reacts surprisingly to events D he hates people with uniforms

3 What has happened to the neighbour's dog? A. it was dead B. it was lost C. it was hit by a car

4 What is Christopher's first reaction?

A. He started screaming B. He started crying C. He took the dog by his hands

5 How does Mrs Shears, the neighbour, react? A. She screams B. She hits Christopher C. She falls unconscious

6 Why does Christopher put his hands over his ears?

A. He hates cops B. he hates loud noises C. He hates barking dogs

2 Read an extract from the book and answer the questions. Use maybe if you are not sure.

1 Was Christopher afraid of the policeman and policewoman? YES NO MAYBE

2 Did the policeman understand why Christopher was holding the dog? YES NO MAYBE

3 Did the policeman suspect that Christopher had killed the dog? YES NO MAYBE

4 Was Christopher able to answer all the policeman's questions? YES NO MAYBE

5 Did Christopher feel stressed in the situation? YES NO MAYBE

6 Do you think Christopher hit the policeman because he didn't like him? YES NO MAYBE