

- 1 Look at the photos of two detectives. When do you think they first appeared in books? Read the text quickly and check your answers.

- a in the 1920s c in the 1960s
b in the 1940s d in the 1970s

STUDY SKILLS

Why is it useful to look at pictures and the title of texts before you read them?

► STUDY SKILLS page 94

Detectives with a difference

Today's article looks at two famous, but quite different, fictional detectives. Who is your favourite?

Perhaps the most famous writer of crime fiction in the world was Agatha Christie. Her little Belgian detective, **Hercule Poirot**, is quite an unforgettable character. Poirot first appeared in 1920 in the book *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, and then continued to solve crimes in 33 novels, one play and 50 short stories before he died in the book *Curtain* in 1975.

Poirot is memorable for his appearance and he was very yain. He wore smart, fashionable clothes that didn't always look good on his shape and height – he was only one metre 62 centimetres tall and quite overweight. People often compare Poirot with Sherlock Holmes, but their methods of solving crime weren't the same. Holmes was always analysing tiny pieces of evidence. Poirot preferred to look at the psychology of people to find out why people committed crimes. Although *Curtain*, Christie's final novel about Poirot, was published in 1975, Christie actually wrote the book almost 40 years earlier. She kept the



book in a bank, but didn't publish it until just before her own death in 1976. Today, Poirot is well known to millions of people worldwide because of the TV adaptations of the stories.

Another famous detective is **Inspector Morse**. However, most people know Morse because of the television programme and not the original books by Colin Dexter. Morse was a well-educated man but he failed at university. He was concerned about spelling and grammar and always corrected mistakes in the police paperwork. Morse was a very intelligent detective and often relied on instinct and memory to solve many of his cases. Unfortunately, his relationships with colleagues weren't very successful. Morse was always a little sad and didn't make friends easily. Dexter published his first book with Morse in 1975 and the detective finally died 24 years later in 1999 after 13 books. They filmed all the books for the TV series, and there were 33 different episodes on TV between 1987 and 2000.



2 Read the article again. Choose the best answers.

- What is important about *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*?
 - It was Agatha Christie's first novel.
 - The book was extremely successful at the time.
 - It is the book where we first meet Poirot.
- What was wrong with Poirot's clothes?
 - They weren't fashionable.
 - He chose the wrong clothes for his size.
 - He didn't wear the right clothes for a detective.
- When did Christie publish her final Poirot book?
 - 1945
 - 1975
 - 1976
- What did Inspector Morse never do?
 - finish university
 - remember information about his investigations
 - speak to his colleagues
- How did most people find out about Morse?
 - They read the books.
 - They watched the TV series.
 - They heard about him from friends.

- Why did Morse correct paperwork?
 - He liked to be tidy.
 - He liked words to be correct.
 - He didn't like the other detectives.

3

CRITICAL THINKING

Read the opinions about detective fiction. Which say that crime fiction isn't a good thing?

- It helps people understand criminal behaviour.
- It makes us accept crime as a normal thing.
- Some people copy things they read in books or see on television.
- It's important to read about crime and maybe we can prevent crimes happening.
- It makes you think the world is dangerous.
- Reading it makes people use their brains more.

4 Match the underlined words with the definitions.

- the first example of something
- easy to remember because of being special
- very worried about your own appearance
- a natural feeling or ability in a situation
- a particular way