

Lockport Township High School District 205

Garry W. Raymond, Ph.D., Superintendent
815.588.8100

K. Brett Gould, Ph.D., Assistant Superintendent
Curriculum and Instruction
815.588.8102



Todd P. Wernet, Assistant Superintendent
Personnel
815.588.8103

Richard A. Lesniak, Director of Business Services
815.588.8110

William J. Thompson, Director of Facilities Management
815.588.8116

23 May 2011

Dear Sophomore Student:

The English Department of Lockport High School has instituted a Required Summer Reading Program for all sophomores (class of 2014). As part of the program, you will be expected to complete the reading requirement listed below:

Students enrolled in World Cultures 10R are to read the following:

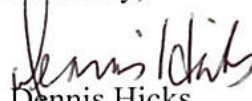
Haddon, Mark *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*

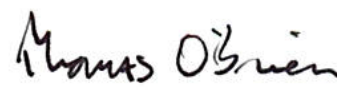
This book will be available at your local public library, or it may be purchased from the Barnes and Noble or the Borders in Joliet and Orland Park. You may also obtain the novel from various online booksellers such as Amazon.com.

Please see the attached study guide to help focus your reading and increase your understanding of the book. **As part of the assignment, you are to keep a reading journal.** See page 3 of the study guide for details. Make sure you answer the questions thoughtfully and in complete sentences. You will be expected to bring a typed copy of your answers to class, and your English teacher will have you submit your work to turnitin.com to check its originality. Be sure to save an electronic copy of your work. The assignment will be due on the first day of school, August 16, 2011, and it will count as a major grade in the class.

You will be assessed on your summer reading during the beginning of school in August. You will have to write an essay about your book and take a test on it. Consequently, your careful reading of *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time* and the completion of the reading journal will get you off to a good start in the fall. We encourage you to read the summer assignment in manageable sections and hope that you find it enjoyable. We look forward to reading your reactions in August.

Sincerely,


Dennis Hicks
East Campus Principal


Thomas O'Brien
English Dept. Chair

P.S. You can find this information on our school web page.

Freshman Center – Central Campus
1222 South Jefferson Street
Lockport, Illinois 60441-3597
815.588.8200 Fax: 815.588.8209

District Administrative Center
1323 East Seventh Street
Lockport, Illinois 60441-3899
815.588.8000 Fax: 815.588.8109

East Campus
1333 East Seventh Street
Lockport, Illinois 60441-3898
815.588.8300 Fax: 815.588.8309

Summer 2011 Required Reading for all students in English 10R

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

ABOUT THIS GUIDE*

The introduction, discussion questions, suggested reading list, and author biography that follow are designed to enhance your group's reading of Mark Haddon's ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time***. We hope they will provide useful ways of thinking and talking about this extraordinary novel, which won Britain's Whitbread Award.

ABOUT THIS BOOK

Christopher John Francis Boone knows all the countries of the world and their capitals and every prime number up to 7,057. He relates well to animals but has no understanding of human emotions. He cannot stand to be touched. Although gifted with a superbly logical brain, Christopher is autistic. Everyday interactions and admonishments have little meaning for him. Routine, order, and predictability shelter him from the messy wider world. Then, at fifteen, Christopher's carefully constructed world falls apart when he finds his neighbor's dog, Wellington, impaled on a garden fork, for which he is initially blamed.

Christopher decides that he will track down the real killer and turns to his favorite fictional character, Sherlock Holmes, for inspiration. But the investigation leads him down some unexpected paths and ultimately brings him face-to-face with the dissolution of his parents' marriage. As he tries to deal with the crisis within his own family, we are drawn into the workings of Christopher's mind.

And herein lies the brilliance of Mark Haddon's choice of narrator: The most wrenching of emotional moments are chronicled by a boy who cannot fathom emotion. ***The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*** is one of the freshest debuts in years: a comedy, a heartbreaker, a mystery story, a novel of exceptional literary merit that is great fun to read.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Mark Haddon is a writer and illustrator of numerous award-winning children's books and television screenplays. As a young man, Haddon worked with adults and children with a variety of physical disabilities and learning difficulties. He teaches creative writing for the Arvon Foundation. He lives in Oxford, England

AWARDS

WINNER - YALSA Best Books for Young Adults

WINNER 2003 - Whitbread Book of the Year

WINNER - Booklist Editor's Choice for Young Adults

WINNER - School Library Journal Adult Books for Young Adults

WINNER - ALA Best Books for Young Adults

WINNER - New York Public Library Books for the Teen Age

WINNER - New Jersey Garden State Teen Book Award

WINNER 2004 - Commonwealth Writers' Prize of Europe and South Asia

See page 3 for Reading Journal details.

Author interview

What research did you do into Autism and Behavioural problems before writing this novel, is Christopher's character based on anyone in particular?

After leaving university I spent several years working with adults and children who had a variety of physical and mental handicaps (as they were then known). Ever since that time I've been interested in the subject of disability and mental illness. As a result, hardly a week goes by without me reading a newspaper article or watching a television documentary about schizophrenia or manic depression or Tourette's... And hardly a month goes by without me meeting yet another person who is the parent or grandparent of someone who has been diagnosed as having Asperger's. I also know a number of adults (men, mostly) who would almost certainly be diagnosed with the syndrome if they had been born twenty, thirty, forty years later. And that was the extent of my 'research'. I deliberately didn't consult fat tomes on Asperger's or visit special schools when I was working on the book because I wanted Christopher to work as a human being and not as a clinical case study.

The book has been published for adults and children simultaneously; did you set out to write a book which would appeal to such a wide age range?

No. I wrote it to entertain myself (which is, I think, the motivation behind any half-decent novel) in the hope that there would be people out there who shared my interests and obsessions. So the much-vaunted 'crossover appeal' came as a very pleasant surprise.

Have you received any positive feedback from people with Aspergers Syndrome/ Autism, their families, or people who work with them?

To be scrupulously honest... the book had one very bad review from a young man with Asperger's who thought the book was bad, mainly because Christopher wasn't like him or like any other people he knew with Asperger's. But the review missed the point, I think. People with Asperger's are as diverse a group as Belgians or trumpet players or train drivers. There is no typical or representative person with Asperger's. And to try and create one would have produced a stereotype.

On the other hand I've been genuinely moved and completely taken by surprise by the number of parents and grandparents of young people with Asperger's who have written to tell me that the book rings completely true for them.

I have been even more surprised to receive several invitations to address academic conferences on Asperger's and Autism. Which misses the point in a different way, I think. If Christopher seems real it's because he's well-written not because I'm an expert in the area. We live in an age obsessed with documentaries, with biographies, with investigative journalism. We often forget that you can have all the facts but be no nearer the truth. And this is what novels are good at. A novel can put you inside another person's head and give you an understanding of their life you could only get by moving into their house for six months.

How did you come up with such an original idea for a novel?

It happened piece by piece and without any deliberate seeking after originality or quirkiness. I began with the image of the dog stabbed with the fork simply because I was searching for a vivid and gripping way of starting a novel. I then realised that if you described it in a flat, emotionless, neutral way it was also (with apologies to all dog lovers) very funny. So I had the voice. Only after using that voice for a few pages did I work out who it belonged to. Having done that the difficult thing was to work out a believable way for Christopher to construct a novel given that he is utterly unaware of the reader's emotional responses to what he is writing. Having Christopher simply copy his hero, Sherlock Holmes, by borrowing the format of the murder mystery was the solution to this problem. Finally, because I genuinely believed that very few people would want to read a novel about a teenage boy with a disability living in Swindon with his dad, I arranged the whole plot round the central turning point (where we discover who killed Wellington and what really happened to Christopher's mother) to make it as entertaining as possible, hopefully dragging the reader up to a highest point right in the middle, like a roller coaster, then speeding them down towards the conclusion.

*This Guide was developed by Random House

See page 3 for Reading Journal details.

Sophomore English – Topics in World Literature Summer Reading Novel Project Requirements

3

Directions:

1. **All parts** of the project journal **MUST** be typed. If it is not typed, it will **NOT** be graded.
2. Write in complete sentences: **12pt., Times New Roman font and DOUBLE SPACED.**
3. Label all parts of the assignments carefully.
4. This project is due on the **FIRST day of class.**
5. **This assignment will be your first major grade of the semester. It is worth 100 points** (the same value as a major test or paper).
 - a. **OPTION A:** In order to earn an “A,” you **MUST** complete **4 typed pages** of the journal log. (*earn up to 100 points*)
 - b. **OPTION B:** If you would prefer, you can successfully complete **3 typed pages** of the journal log. This will limit your grade to **no higher** than a “C.” (*earn up to 75 points*)

The Assignment:

You are going to keep a reading journal log. The completed journal log will contain the following reading and post-reading reflections.

Reading Journal Responses

The novel has been divided into 3 sections (see below). For **each** section, record the following:
(*1 full typed page for each section*)

1. A *brief* summary of what has happened in this section of the novel.
2. Write down two lines from the book that you found interesting, made you wonder, or you find important and explain why.
3. Finally, provide comments about key issues in the book. How do you react to the characters and to the plot? What themes do you see developing? What areas interest or confuse you?

Post Reading Journal Response

When you finish the novel, reflect on your understanding of the book. What meaning did you draw from the book? How might the book relate to your life or today’s world? Use examples and quotes from the book to answer these questions. (*1 full typed page in length*)

NOTE: **EACH** section of your journal should be at least **one full page in length**, for a **TOTAL OF FOUR TYPED PAGES.**

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time sections and assignments:

- Part 1: Chapters 2-103, pages 1-69: 1 typed page
- Part 2: Chapters 107-179, pages 69-140: 1 typed page
- Part 3: Chapters 181-233, pages 140-221: 1 typed page
- Part 4: Post Reading Journal Response: 1 typed page