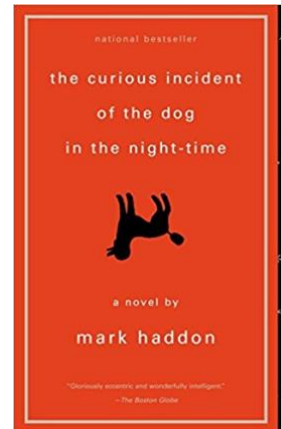


The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time



ISBN-13 978-1-4000-3271-6

ISBN-10 1-4000-3271-7

Author Mark Haddon

Publisher Doubleday

Copyright 2003

Edition 2004

Lexile 1090L

Genre Fiction

Synopsis Fifteen-year-old Christopher is a mathematically gifted, autistic boy, who likes detective stories. When he investigates the murder of a beloved neighbor's dog, he unravels secrets about his mother.

Themes Autism; family relationships

Character-Based Literacy Program Independent Study Lesson Plan, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Week 1



PREPARE

Background Gather background knowledge about a place, time, event, person, or thing.



Kindness Requires Empathy. Kindness is the desire to lift others' spirits, help the ones in need, and mend relationships. Kindness requires that I take the time to listen, understand, and take action to benefit other people and the world.

What is Autism?

Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) is diagnosed by professionals when a child had persistent deficits in social communication and social interaction across multiple contexts, and restricted, repetitive patterns of behavior, interests, or activities. These deficits stand in the way of learning and having social relationships with others. These deficits cannot be explained by intellectual disability or other types of developmental delays. At the lowest level of severity, children may seem odd, inflexible, and unsuccessful in their social interactions and will require assistance from adults. At the moderate level of severity, children have marked deficits in their ability to communicate with others and require substantial support. At the highest level of severity, children need a very substantial level of support because of extreme levels of inability to function and communicate intelligibly with others.

What are the benefits of Routines?

Christopher likes routines. Psychologists suggest that while some people like routines more than others, routines are beneficial to children and teens, because they provide predictable organizational structure thereby reducing stress, confusion, and disorientation. Practicing routines can foster values and skills such as personal responsibility and time management. Mealtimes, study time, and bedtimes are associated with better outcomes (e.g., better sleep, better school grades) when they follow schedules and routines.

Are Different Methods of Non-disclosure Equally Unethical?

Research shows that various methods of nondisclosure of the truth, including avoiding talking about issues, telling parents only when asked, omitting important details and lying can be potentially harmful. There are risks in avoiding truth-telling. One risk is misinforming others. Another risk is ignoring one's needs. Psychologists warn against avoiding speaking openly and honestly about one's needs. Sooner or later, individuals engage in other types of immoral behavior, such as stealing, or unhealthy behavior, such as smoking, in an attempt to fulfill unsatisfied needs.

How Does Autism Spectrum Disorder of a Child Affect the Parents?

Parents of children diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder need to carry many more responsibilities than parents of healthy children. Their hard work can lead to chronic feelings of stress, anxiety, and isolation. Parents who do not receive sufficient help from others and who do not cope successfully with their stress can behave in ways that hurt their children. Although they often know the strategies they should use at home to help their children grow and thrive – such as being patient and forgiving – their high levels of stress prevent them from using these strategies.

What are Effective Self-Management Strategies?

Self-management is the ability to regulate one's emotions, thoughts, and behavior. It includes coping with stress and motivating oneself to work towards one's goals. Christopher manages his thoughts by solving difficult problems, such as math problems. His teacher taught him counting and breathing strategies. Other effective strategies include understanding why we are angry or stressed. By telling ourselves that the effects of an emotion-arousing event on us are not significant, we can reduce the intensity of our emotional reaction.

Word Wall Here are 25 vocabulary words to define and add to the Word Wall.

inverted (5)	Blockage (7)	assaulting (9)	cardinal (11)	slander (14)
ordinary (23)	digression (26)	red herring (31)	amnesia (39)	burrow (40)
precedent (44)	invigilator (45)	trespassing (50)	propagating (63)	intuition (65)
vapor (69)	profane (70)	silhouette (73)	hypothetical (101)	giddy (112)
luminous (126)	negligible (127)	formulated (132)	inverse (136)	trance (148)

Review Review the timeline from the beginning every day.

Start at the beginning and review the story so far

- Mention the setting and main character
- Point to each timeline item as you quickly review it

Read Read the selection.

Read pages 1–155 in the book, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*.

RESPOND

Timeline List the 15-20 most important events on the timeline.

Over the course of the next week, you will be required to read a number of pages. It would be best if you spread the reading out over the week and not try to do everything at the last minute before your next appointment. Think about what you read today and begin your timeline. First, *get the facts*: who, what, when, where, why. Then, decide on the most important events. Write one sentence per event.

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time: Timeline

[illegible]

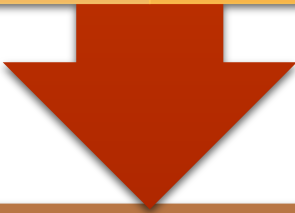
Map Add to ongoing class activities like a KWL chart or map: Mark key places in the barrio.

Social behavior maps are tools commonly used with students such as Christopher, to explicitly connect behavior norms, feelings, and consequences. Imagine that you are assigned to tutor a child with Autism. Create a Behavior Norms Map using the following steps:

- a) In the top box, write the name of the rule (e.g., How to Speak Up). In the second level of this box, write on the left side what to do (e.g., Say “It stresses me out when you touch me”). On the right side, write what not to do (e.g., “Do not kick or hit anyone”).
- b) In the middle box, write on the left side what the rule aims to achieve (e.g., “The person will understand what you want.”). Write on the right side what the rule aims to avoid (e.g., “The person will not think you are violent.”).
- c) In the bottom box, write on the left side the value supported by this rule (e.g., courage). On the right side, write the skill exhibited by this behavior (e.g., self-control).

Behavior Norms Map

Rule	
Do: _____	Don't: _____



Purpose	
Achieve: _____	Avoid: _____

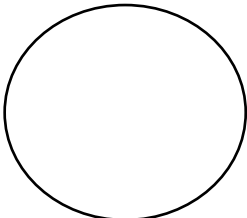
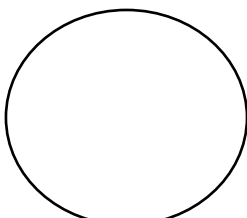
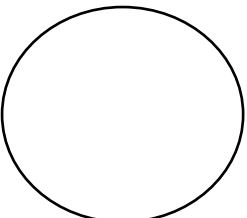
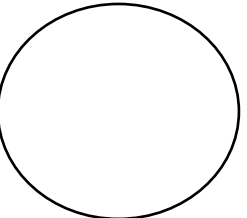
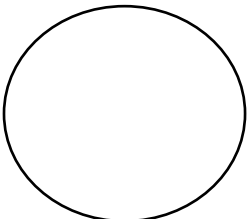
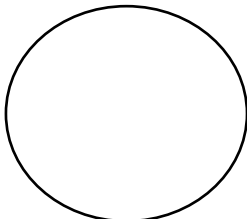
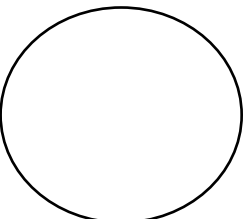
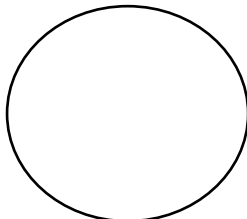
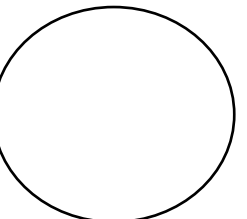
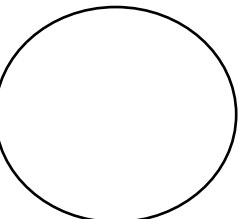
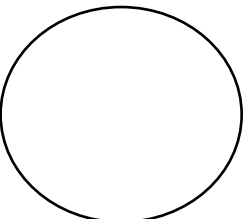
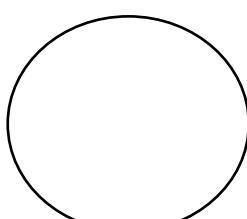
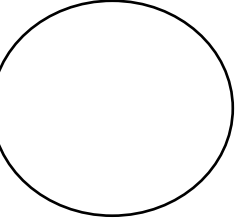
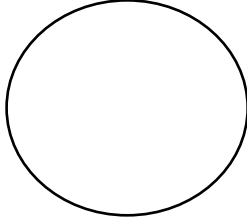
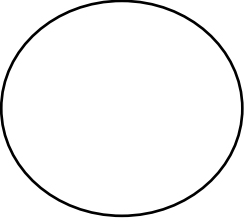
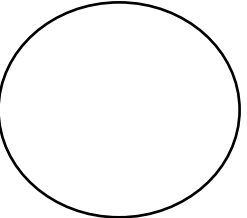


Values and Skills	
Value: _____	Skill: _____

EXPLORE

Activity Explore the reading more deeply with a visual or oral language activity.

1. Use the circles, below, to create emojis that convey the respective emotional labels.

Hopeful 	Grateful 	Regretful 	Jealous 
Worried 	Annoyed 	Disappointed 	Uninterested 
Confused 	Ashamed 	Lost 	Tired 
Fascinated 	Loving 	Relaxed 	Delighted 

2. What would you do if you investigated the murder of Wellington? What information would you need to gather? How will you analyze this information? Create a murder investigation plan.

Details about the murder (place, time, weapon).

Data collection activities (places to visit, people to talk to).

Case analysis (method for identifying motives and evidence).

- The correct answer is b. By random, there can be unequal, long streaks of the same event. People sometimes attribute such streaks to some magical quality or outstanding day. However, by chance alone, both short and long sequences of the same event can happen.

- Discussion** Ask discussion questions.

PP. 1-18

- PP. 19-43

- PP. 43-74

- PP. 74-115**

- Independent Study, Week 1

PP. 115–155

1. What aspects of the train station make it a difficult place for a person with autism?
2. What figures of speech are difficult for Christopher to understand? Provide examples including the meaning of the phrases.

Analyze the key paragraph.

p. 16

“I stepped outside. Father was standing in the corridor. He held up his right hand and spread his fingers out in a fan. I held up my left hand and spread my fingers out in a fan, and we made our fingers and thumbs touch each other. We do this because sometimes Father wants to give me a hug, but I do not like hugging people so we do this instead, and it means that he loves me.”

p. 31

“I thought that Mrs. Shears probably didn’t kill Wellington. But whoever had killed him had probably killed him with Mrs. Shears’ fork. And the shed was locked. This meant that it was someone who had the key to Mrs. Shears’ shed, or that she had left it unlocked, or that she had left her fork lying around in the garden.”

P. 73

“Sherlock Holmes had, in a very remarkable degree, the power of detaching his mind at will.

And this is like me, too, because if I get really interested in something, like practicing math, or reading a book about the Apollo missions or great white sharks, I don’t notice anything else and Father can be calling me to come and eat my supper and I won’t hear him.”

P. 100

“Lots of things are mysteries. But that doesn’t mean there isn’t an answer to them. It’s just that scientists haven’t found the answer yet.”

P. 136

“Normally I would have got more and more frightened if I was walking to school, because I had never done it before. But I was frightened in two different ways. And one way was being frightened of being far away from a place I was used to, and the other was being frightened of being near where Father lived, and they were *in inverse proportion to one another*, so that the total fear remained a constant as I got further away from home and further away from Father.”

EXTEND

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

1. There are types of situations that require special accommodations for Christopher, such as touching fingers instead of hugging. Is it essential to teach professionals (e.g., teachers, police officers) how to find out about these special

needs and how to best respond to these needs? Write 1–2 paragraphs providing your argument and supporting details.

2. Christopher wanted to know what happened to Wellington. It is a natural human tendency to want to understand how the world works and what had caused dramatic events. Write 1 – 2 paragraphs about the extent to which people value truth finding through data collection and reporting activities such as criminal investigations, scientific research, and reliable news reporting.
3. Mrs. Alexander had two options – she could tell Christopher about his mother’s affair with Mr. Shears, or she could stay silent. She chose the first option. Did she make the right decision? Write 1–2 paragraphs expressing your argument.
4. One of the central themes in the book, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, is honesty. Write 2–3 paragraphs about the virtue of honesty and its importance. Use examples from the text.
5. Children and teens with Autism Spectrum Disorder have difficulty both with deception and trust. One reason for this difficulty is the inability to process the social cues that enable them to selectively trust and mistrust the same people. Write 1–2 paragraphs about how this fact should inform the interactions of parents, teachers, and peers with children with autism.

Character-Based Literacy Program Independent Study Lesson Plan, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*, Week 2



PREPARE

Background Gather background knowledge about a place, time, event, person, or thing.



Kindness Requires Empathy. Kindness is the desire to lift others' spirits, help the ones in need, and mend relationships. Kindness requires that I take the time to listen, understand, and take action to benefit other people and the world.

What are the Sensory Problems of People with Autism?

People with autism are commonly hypersensitive to noise. Low levels of noise that people usually tune out can be distressing to people with autism. Also, they often do not distinguish between objects and their environment rather they see a scene as a collection of many details. When a scene is defined by all its components and their location, a change in the location of one object triggers a need to process the scene as a new one. This is often associated with stress or anxiety.

How do People with Autism Understand Metaphoric Language?

Figurative language includes metaphors, idioms, cliché's, proverbs, irony, and jokes. To understand metaphoric language people must process the expressions beyond the literal interpretation of individual words. Individuals like Christopher who have High Functioning Autism often have normal or above average intelligence levels and demonstrate advantages in certain cognitive areas, such as mathematics. However, they do not understand the meaning of figurative language because of its ambiguity and the required interpretation within social context. When speaking with individuals with autism one should provide a concrete context and phrases with literal meaning to successfully communicate.

Can People with Autism Have Flourishing Careers?

There are many famous people with successful careers despite being diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder. The list includes the famous writers, Hans Christian Andersen and Lewis Carroll, the animal scientist, Temple Grandin, and the Founder of Microsoft, Bill Gates. These people and many others have proved that there are many ways to be successful and to find purpose in life.

Word Wall Here are fifteen vocabulary words to define and add to the Word Wall.

representation (156)	overexcited (159)	rucksack (163)	truncheon (163)	replication (165)
intersect (178)	penalty (185)	valid (185)	wobbled (185)	scarpering (187)
underground (205)	contribution (206)	perspective (211)	approximate (212)	converse (214)

Review Review the timeline from the beginning every day.

Start at the beginning and review the story so far

- Mention the setting and main character
- Point to each timeline item as you quickly review it

Read Read the selection.

Read pages 155–221 in the book, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*.

RESPOND

Timeline List the most important events on the timeline.

Continue the timeline for Week 2. *Get the facts*: who, what, when, where, why. Decide on the most important events. Write one sentence per event.

[illegible]

Map Add to ongoing class activities like a KWL chart or map: Mark key places in the barrio.

Social behavior maps are tools commonly used with students such as Christopher, to explicitly connect behavior norms, feelings, and consequences. Imagine that you are assigned to tutor a child with Autism. Each day, you will create one Behavior Norm Map using the following steps:

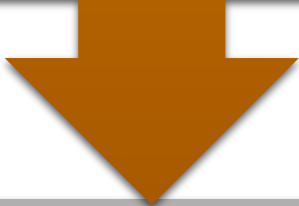
- a) In the top box, write the name of the rule (e.g., How to Speak Up). In the second level of this box, write on the left side what to do (e.g., Say “It stresses me out when you touch me”). On the right side, write what not to do (e.g., “Do not kick or hit anyone”).
- b) In the middle box, write on the left side what the rule aims to achieve (e.g., “The person will understand what you want.”). Write on the right side what the rule aims to avoid (e.g., “The person will not think you are violent.”).
- c) In the bottom box, write on the left side the value supported by this rule (e.g., courage). On the right side, write the skill exhibited by this behavior (e.g., self-control).

Behavior Norms Map

Rule	
Do: _____	Don't: _____



Purpose	
Achieve: _____	Avoid: _____



Values and Skills	
Value: _____	Skill: _____

EXPLORE

Activity Explore the reading more deeply with a visual or oral language activity.

1. Select an idiom from the book (e.g., “Keep an eye on you” or “you are a handful”). Divide a sheet of paper into two parts. On one part draw the literal meaning of the idiom. On the other part, draw the figurative meaning of the idiom.
2. A teen with autism, such as Christopher, sees many details in his environment. He notes little details such as spots and stains, patterns on people’s socks, and the geometric shapes of ordinary objects. Unlike most people who focus on the “big picture” or most salient or meaningful objects, for Christopher, all the details are equally important. Look outside your window, and imagine how Christopher would see it. Draw the scene from Christopher’s point of view.
3. A publisher has invited you to re-design the cover of the book, *The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*. Identify one of the central themes in the book and create a cover that conveys that theme.

Discussion Ask discussion questions.

Answer the key questions. Use evidence from the text.

pp. 155–177

1. How did Christopher find his way to his mother’s neighborhood?
2. How did Christopher teach himself how to navigate the train station?

PP. 177–198

1. Why didn’t Christopher thank the man with the diamond patterns on his sock for saving his life?
2. What didn’t Christopher understand when the man in the little shop handed him the little book and said “Two ninety-five?”
3. Why was Christopher frightened when he heard his Father’s voice at his mom’s apartment?

PP. 198–221

1. How did Christopher’s father regain Christopher’s trust?
2. What made Christopher feel hopeful about his future?

Analyze the key paragraph.

P. 173

“And I watched 47 people do this and I memorized what to do. Then I imagined a red line on the floor and I walked over to the wall where there was a poster which was a list of places to go and it was alphabetical and I saw Willesden Green and it said £2:20 and then I went to one of the machines and there as a little screen which said PRESS TICKET TYPE and I pressed the button that most people had pressed.”

pp. 179-180

“And normally I don’t imagine things that aren’t happening because it is a lie and it makes me feel scared, but it was better than watching the trains coming in and out of the station because that made me feel even more scared.”

P. 216

“And I didn’t like waiting to find out about my math A level. And whenever I thought about the future I couldn’t see anything clearly in my head and that made a panic start. So Siobhan said I shouldn’t think about the future. She said “Just think about today. Think about things that have happened. Especially about good things that have happened.”

EXTEND

Write a short product based on today’s prompt to connect to the unit theme.

1. With millions of people diagnosed with Autism Spectrum Disorder, there is an increasing awareness of the need for public spaces that are accessible to people with autism. Accessible public spaces take into account in their design the challenges that some people have in communications, social interaction, and sensory perception (sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and balance). Write 1–2 paragraphs about transportation authorities’ ethical responsibilities to take into account the needs of people with autism. Use examples from the book.
2. People with autism may have intense reactions to stressful situations. They will seem like they are having meltdowns. However, they are trying to protect themselves from people or actions that they believe are dangerous. Write 1–2 paragraphs about the value of responding with empathy to people with autism who are scared. What knowledge, skills, and values would enable bystanders to appropriately respond to a person with autism who is scared?
3. Your final writing assignment should be about empathy towards people with autism. In this unit, you have learned about the thoughts and feelings of Christopher – a bright teenager who encounters many challenges communicating with and understanding people. Write how learning about the point of view of people with autism can help society better integrate them and foster their well-being. Connect the paragraphs you have created throughout the unit. Add an introduction and a conclusion paragraph.