

# The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time

## Mark Haddon

### Things to note with this book:

- It is written entirely in first person
- It is a multimodal text, meaning it is a fusion of writing and also pictures
- The audience can assume that Christopher has a disorder but what exactly it is, is never clarified

Quotes	Technique	Effect
“The dog was dead. There was a garden fork sticking out of the dog” - p. 1	Absolute language and short syntax	Shows the blunt manner of fact tone that the protagonist has (this style of writing will help the reader later infer that the protagonist has a disorder, hence why he sees the world a certain way).
“Wellington was a poodle. Not one of the small poodles that have hairstyles, but a big poodle. It had curly black fur, but when you got close you could see that the skin underneath the fur was a very pale, yellow, like chicken” - p. 1	Simile, descriptive language	The use of simile and descriptive language reveals the high level of detail the protagonist has taken note of.
“My name is Christopher John Francis Boone. I know all the countries of the world and their capital cities and every prime number to 7,507” - p. 2	Absolute language	The use of absolute language reveals the knowledge and confidence of the protagonist.
“The grass was wet and cold. It was nice” - p. 4	Sensory imagery	Outlines the setting and the environment.
“The policeman said, ‘I am going to ask you once again...’”	Firm tone and ellipsis	Elucidates the frustration the police officer has and the sense of tension.
“It was nice in the police cell. It was almost a perfect cube, 2 metres long by two metres wide by 2 metres high. It contained approximately 8 cubic metres of air” - p. 17	Irony	This shows that the protagonist is ‘different’ as he is not overwhelmed and stressed by the daunting nature of the police cell but rather is intrigued by its architectural structure.
“I find people confusing” p. 19	Short syntax and honest tone	The use of short syntax and honest tone, reveals the inherent struggle Christopher faces as he deals with people and his surroundings.

<p>“I do not tell lies. Mother used to say that this was because I was a good person. But it is not because I am a good person. It is because I can’t tell lies” - p. 24</p>	<p>Absolute language. Repetition</p>	<p>This reiterates Christopher’s desire to follow rules and order as a result of his personality and his disorder (which is never explicitly stated).</p>
<p>Christopher’s father speaking, “And he said, ‘It’s a bloody dog, Christopher, a bloody dog’ - p. 26</p>	<p>Repetition, harsh tone</p>	<p>This highlights how Christopher’s father is often at the end of his tether as a result of Christopher’s countless questions and highlights his frustration.</p>
<p>“And I said I wouldn’t mind things changing if I became an astronaut, for example, which is one of the biggest changes you can imagine apart from becoming a girl or dying” - p. 32</p>	<p>Humorous tone and matter of fact language</p>	<p>Adds a sense of humour to the novel and reveals the ‘matter-of-fact’ personality of Christopher.</p>
<p>“And he smokes cigarettes and you can smell them on his breath and I don’t like this”</p>	<p>Matter of fact language, sensory language</p>	<p>This elucidates how Christopher often takes in the many immense and tiny details of people and his surroundings.</p>
<p>“But mother was cremated. This means that she was put into a coffin and burnt and ground up and turned into ash and smoke”</p>	<p>Short syntax, blunt tone</p>	<p>This reveals the lack of sensitivity Christopher has when he talks about very sad situations.</p>
<p>When Mrs Alexander is talking about Wellington being killed, “I heard about it yesterday. Dreadful. Dreadful”</p>	<p>Short syntax, repetition, negative connotation</p>	<p>The repetition of ‘dreadful’ highlights how disturbing the killing of Mrs Shears’ dog was and how the street was rocked by this shocking event.</p>
<p>“I was nervous. I did not know Mrs Alexander. I knew that she was an old lady and that she liked dogs. But she was a stranger. And I never go into the park on my own because it is dangerous and people inject drugs behind the public toilets in the corner” - p. 75</p>	<p>Matter of fact tone</p>	<p>Reveals how sceptical Christopher is of Mrs Alexander even though she is a 70 year old lady who is most likely harmless. This perception of her also reiterates how he sees the world differently than most individuals.</p>
<p>“The world is full of obvious things which nobody by any chance ever observes” - p. 92</p>	<p>Symbolism</p>	<p>This quote is symbolic of how Christopher is highly engaged with the world, more so than the average person as a result of his disorder.</p>
<p>“My memory is like a film. That is why I am really good at remembering things, like conversations I have written down in this book and what people were wearing and what they smelled like because my memory has a smell track</p>	<p>Absolute language, simile</p>	<p>The use of simile for Christopher’s memory being “like a film” highlights his impressive memory and ability to remember things in their order. It also reaffirms his disorder and how he sees the world different than most</p>

which is like a soundtrack” - p. 96		
“”Grandma has pictures in her head, too, but her pictures are all confused, like someone has muddled the film up and she can’t tell what happened in what order, so she thinks that dead people are still alive” - p. 99	Euphemism	This explanation is a euphemism for the fact that Christopher’s grandmother has dementia. However, the fact that she is unaware that his grandmother also has dementia shows that he struggles to understand the world in a ‘normal’ way and he struggles to pick up social cues.
“I love you very much, Christopher. Don’t ever forget that. And I know I lose my rag occasionally. I know I get angry. I know I shout. And I know I shouldn’t. But I only do it because I worry about you, because I don’t want to see you getting into trouble, because I don’t want you to get hurt.” - p. 109	Repetition, first person	This proclamation of love by Christopher’s father is an example of how his father is not a cruel parent, but simply someone who struggles being a single parent to a neurologically diverse child. It also is a moment of empathy for Christopher’s father as the reader understands how sincere and caring his father really is, despite his sometimes abrupt personality.
“Then I stopped reading the letter because I felt sick. Mother had not had a heart attack. Mother had not died. Mother had been alive all the time” - p. 141	Short syntax, repetition	The employment of short syntax and repetition illuminates that it has suddenly dawned on Christopher that his father had been lying to him in regard to the whereabouts of his mother.
“I rolled onto the bed and curled up in a ball. My stomach hurt” - p. 141	Sensory language	The audience is able to fully understand, as a result of the sensory language, just how disturbed and rattled by the information Christopher is (regarding the fact that his mother is alive).
When his father speaks, “I’m sorry, Christopher. I’m so, so sorry” -. P. 143	Repetition	This moment in the book gives us a look into Christopher’s father and how terrible he felt that he had failed to properly explain what had happened to Christopher’s mother.
“And I didn’t scream. And I didn’t fight. And I didn’t hit him” - p. 144	Repetition, sombre tone	Seeing as Christopher is a character who is usually <i>always</i> upbeat, intrigued and curious, the repetition coupled with the sombre tone reinforces just how overwhelmed and disturbed Christopher is of this newfound fact (that his mother is in fact not dead).
“I could feel the feeling like a balloon inside of my chest again” - p. 159	Motif, simile	Highlights the distress and overwhelming feeling that Christopher is experiencing.
“I see everything” - p. 174	Hyperbole	Christopher’s employment of hyperbole reiterates how in tune he is with the world

		around him as a result of his disorder.
"I closed my eyes and I sweated and felt sick and I felt the feeling like a balloon inside my chest and it was so big I found it hard to breathe" - p. 217	Motif, simile, sensory language	This employment of motif and simile, coupled with sensory language conveys the sense of doom Christopher feels as he travels to London alone.