

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

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

- 1 Christopher seems the quintessential unreliable narrator. How much do you trust his view of the action of the novel? What is the purpose and effect of using him as the narrator of the novel? How would the story be different if told from another point of view?
- 2 How does Christopher's coming-of-age story compare with others you may have read? How does Christopher change over the course of the novel and during his journey to London?
- 3 Is Christopher a sympathetic character? How much empathy do you come to feel for him? How much understanding does he have of his own emotions? Do you think he ever experiences empathy for another character in the novel?
- 4 Christopher's description of his "behavioral problems" makes clear the stress that autism can bring to family life. Do you think he understands how difficult it is for his parents? Which of his parents is better suited to take care of him?
- 5 Why are truth and lies so central to Christopher's narrative?
- 6 Christopher experiences the world logically but has difficulty understanding intuition (p. 65). How is this a problem for him, and how does it help him?
- 7 This novel contains a great deal of humor—much, or most of it unintentional. What makes these incidents funny?
- 8 Christopher spends some time discussing death (p. 32). How is he affected by the supposed death of his mother and by the death of Wellington?
- 9 Christopher's story is told with digressions (prime numbers), puzzles (Monty Hall Problem), math problems, maps and diagrams. How do these contribute to the story that Mark Haddon is telling?
- 10 Christopher says, "This is a murder mystery novel" (p.4). Do you agree? In what ways can the book be considered a mystery?