

Hickory Dickory Dock

Agatha Christie

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Part 1 (Chapters 1–5)

1 Comprehension

For each character choose the word which isn't appropriate.

Mrs Hubbard	manageress married busy gentle
Hercule Poirot	moustache detective Belgian Scotland Yard
Patricia Lane	history diamond ring American glasses
Valerie Hobhouse	silk scarf beauty salon student soup
Celia Austin	pretty pharmacist thief French
Nigel Chapman	green ink English clever Psychology

2 Language

A Phrasal verbs. Look at some of the verbs + prepositions from Part 1. Match them with the correct definition.

Verb + preposition	Meaning
To make into	1 to put something in the rubbish bin
To write up	2 to resemble someone/something
To get out of (somewhere)	3 to convert an object into something different
To throw away	4 to happen
To get on (well) with someone	5 to return
To look like	6 to copy notes to write a complete text
To go on	7 to escape
To go back	8 to have a good relationship with someone

B Put the correct verbs above in the sentences from Part 1. Make sure you use the correct forms of the verbs.

- 'Well, Monsieur Poirot, she doesn't like the things that are _____ there.'
- 'Not more than usual,' said Nigel Chapman, and _____ into his room.
- The two houses of Hickory Road '...had been _____ one.'
- 'Mr McNabb is fond of his old clothes and he never _____ anything _____.'
- 'With lectures to attend and then notes to _____, there's not really time for anything else.'
- 'Miss Lemon's sister, Mrs Hubbard, _____ very _____ her.'
- Because of all the strange things in the house... 'That's why I'm _____ here.'
- 'Do you all _____ well together? Or do you have quarrels?'

3 Language

Use the wordsearch below to find the hidden adjectives which describe these residents from Hickory Road.

Elizabeth h_____, a _____
Sally p_____, c _____
Nigel u_____, c_____, m _____
Colin r _____
Celia l _____
Patricia s _____

E	V	P	M	G	N	I	K	R	O	W	D	R	A	H
B	T	U	S	O	R	H	A	X	N	S	S	D	L	F
I	A	D	U	X	Y	U	G	B	Q	E	O	A	P	W
R	K	Z	O	C	T	J	Y	E	R	O	U	I	E	L
O	B	T	I	C	N	P	D	I	T	S	J	U	M	T
X	Z	H	T	G	D	U	O	S	U	U	H	S	J	N
B	A	Y	I	I	R	U	R	N	P	V	N	M	T	A
P	R	E	B	T	S	E	U	C	L	E	V	E	R	S
W	Z	C	M	H	D	Q	Y	D	B	J	B	V	E	A
R	X	O	A	N	N	L	K	C	Z	G	L	F	Y	E
Q	P	H	U	W	E	W	N	M	I	J	U	H	E	L
F	Z	S	B	N	L	O	K	G	A	C	T	R	P	P
Q	I	T	O	E	Q	W	G	Y	I	F	U	M	D	J
M	L	L	O	Z	S	C	N	B	K	A	H	V	A	H
D	X	E	I	Y	Z	C	H	E	E	R	F	U	L	G

4 Comprehension

Some of the sentences below contain facts which are incorrect. Find the mistakes and correct them:

- Hercule Poirot's secretary, Miss Lemon, was never inaccurate.
- All of the objects stolen were of little value.
- Sally Finch is an American studying science on a scholarship.
- Mrs Nicoletis thinks Mrs Hubbard is spending too much money on the students' meals.
- Both Celia and Patricia work at the hospital.

5 Language

Who said what? Who did they say it about or to?

- 'My sister likes to be busy and she's always been good with young people.' _____ about _____
- 'She's got a little money, but she doesn't have many new clothes.' _____ about _____
- 'Our delicate flower.' _____ about _____
- 'Then it is yourself – you who are robbing me.' _____ to _____
- 'Oh... you *are* good to me.' _____ to _____

Hickory Dickory Dock

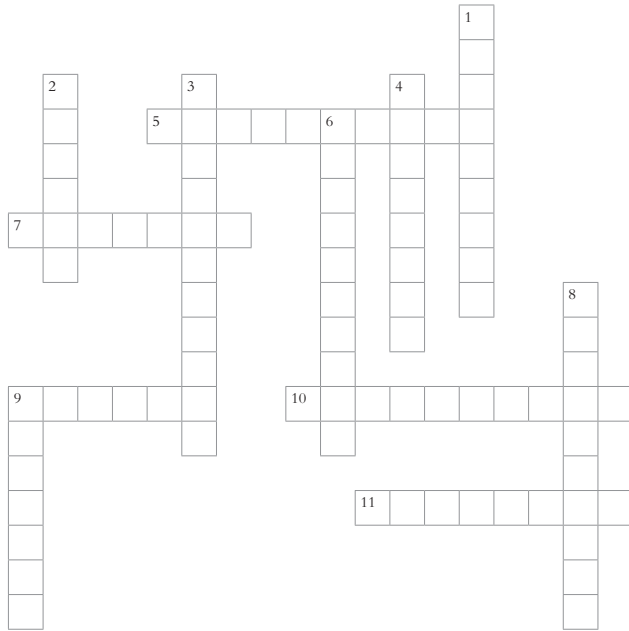
Agatha Christie

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Part 2 (Chapters 6–11)

1 Language

A Use the clues to complete the crossword. All the words can be found in Part 2.



Across

- 5** to not be happy about something, to disagree about another person's behaviour
7 before getting married, you get _____
9 a substance which can kill someone
10 the study of the human mind
11 jewellery worn on the wrist

Down

- 1** asking someone questions in a formal situation
2 not interesting
3 a mark left by the skin, helps to identify criminals
4 to be pardoned after doing something wrong or unacceptable
6 someone who distributes prescribed medicine to patients
8 scared, afraid
9 to say publicly you disagree with something

B Put some of the words from the crossword in the sentences.

- 1** Celia and Colin got _____ after Celia had confessed to the thefts.
2 A trace of Celia's _____ was found on the morphine bottle.
3 Celia worked as a _____ at the hospital.
4 Inspector Sharpe and Poirot had an _____ with the students to see if they had a motive for killing Celia.

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5 Some of the students said they found Celia _____.

2 Comprehension

Put these events in the order that they happened:

- a** ___ Colin announced he was going to marry Celia.
b ___ Nigel, Colin and Len made a bet about getting poisons.
c ___ Celia was killed.
d ___ Nigel got the poisons.
e ___ The students drank coffee in the common room.
f ___ The students congratulated Colin and Celia on their engagement.
g ___ Celia went outside to speak to someone privately.
h ___ After winning the bet, Nigel hid the poisons in his drawer.
i ___ Len and Nigel threw the pills and morphine on the fire, and poured the digitalis down the lavatory.

3 Language

Inspector Sharpe interviews the students. Different verbs are used to explain what the students said. Match the verbs on the left with a similar meaning (synonym).

Verb	Synonym/meaning
To argue	1 to propose an idea
To accuse	2 to give a different opinion, to disagree
To interrupt	3 to hesitate or stop briefly when speaking
To pause	4 to stop another person when they are speaking
To smile	5 to think about what is being said
To consider	6 to say someone is guilty
To advise	7 to show you are happy with the subject
To suggest	8 to offer help with a problem

4 Language

Simple past tense. Put the right verb in its correct form in the spaces below:

bet write steal quarrel (not) throw believe

- 1** Celia _____ green ink over Elizabeth's work.
2 Celia _____ a cheque for Mrs Hubbard to pay for the stolen objects she couldn't return.
3 At first, everyone _____ Celia had committed suicide.
4 Nigel no longer speaks to his father because they _____.
5 Celia _____ because she wanted to attract Colin's attention.
6 Len _____ Nigel five pounds he wouldn't be able to find three deadly poisons.

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STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Part 3 (Chapters 12–16)

1 Comprehension

Hercule Poirot is investigating and now has several suspects. Match the suspects to the reason they are suspected.

SUSPECTS: Patricia Nigel Len Valerie Mrs Nicoletis Colin
--

Name	Reason
.....	Has poison in his possession
.....	Has gambling debts
.....	Have a rucksack
.....	Has a handkerchief with green ink on it, hidden in her drawer
.....	Has an uncontrolled temper
.....	Travels regularly to Paris
.....	Encourages Celia to steal to attract Colin's attention
.....	Has a false passport
.....	Has a drinking problem and has changed a lot during the past year

Agatha Christie uses a lot of **red-herrings** in her stories to create suspense. These are minor suspects who are in fact not important and can cause a distraction during the investigation. Who do you think the red-herring(s) is/are in *Hickory Dickory Dock*?

2 Language

The words below are mixed up. Unjumble them and put them in the gaps from the story.

Mixed-up word	Word	Fill the gaps
ehcsar rrwtnaa	On arrival back at Hickory Road with a _____, Inspector Sharpe...
yps	You are a _____ - I always knew it.
slatengi	And after that the _____ went on?
lyuigt	I doubt he would have been as honest about his activities if he was _____.
eeemntalii	Yes, we have to _____ the things that do not matter.
qeinuts	There will be an _____ on Tuesday.
mglnsggui	_____ goes on all the time of course.
eulc	I got my _____ when I found that the rucksack was destroyed.

3 Comprehension

Choose the correct answers:

- Hercule Poirot became suspicious of the rucksack being used for smuggling...
 - because it was ripped when the police first came to the house.
 - because the students used it for hitchhiking.
 - because it was made of tough material.
- Nigel has got a false passport...
 - but no one knows about it.
 - because he wants to break the contact with his father's family.
 - so he could inherit some money.
- Patricia is worried...
 - because Mrs Nicoletis was murdered.
 - because the morphine she hid has gone missing.
 - because Nigel tore up the letter she wrote.
- The light bulbs were taken...
 - as Mrs Nicoletis thought they were too expensive and preferred candles.
 - so the house would be dark and prevent the police from identifying a suspect.
 - by Celia as she was pretending to be a kleptomaniac.

4 Grammar

The past continuous (was/were + _____ing) is used to say that someone was doing something at a certain time in the past. The action may or may not be finished.

For example *Hercule Poirot was examining the rucksacks with consideration.*

It is also used with the past simple when a long action is interrupted by a shorter action.

For example *Valerie was sitting in her room when Hercule Poirot knocked on the door.*

Complete these sentences from the story using the past continuous.

- Nigel _____ (look) urgently in his chest of drawers.
- 'What _____ you _____ (hope) to find?' Valerie asked Jean.
- 'I _____ just _____ (state) a plain fact,' Nigel told Patricia.
- At Scotland Yard four men _____ (sit) round a table.
- Mrs Hubbard went into Valerie's room. She _____ (breath) fast.
- Mrs Hubbard _____ (look) very tired.
- The ring could have been placed by the person who _____ (serve) the soup.

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STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Part 4 (Chapters 17–23)

1 Comprehension

Join up the two halves of the sentences.

When Nigel is at the police stationwas found between Patricia's fingers.
Patricia was found dead;finds six false passports.
Len Bateson's hairto go on a cruise.
Mr Akibomboconfirm his suspicions about Nigel.
Sergeant Cobb inspects Valerie's beauty salon andshe'd been hit on the back of the head with a paperweight.
Hercule Poirot visits Arthur Stanley's lawyer tohad taken boracic acid by mistake for his stomach ache.
Mrs Hubbard decideshe received a phone call supposedly from Patricia.

2 Comprehension

Answer the following questions:

- 1 What is Valerie Hobhouse charged with?
- 2 Which crimes is Nigel charged with?
- 3 What information does Hercule Poirot get about Nigel from Arthur Stanley's lawyer?
- 4 How were Mrs Nicoletis and Valerie related?
- 5 There is a happy ending for some of the story's characters.
 - Who... is having a holiday? _____
 - Who... is going to get married? _____
 - Who... is pleased as his secretary's work is perfect again? _____
 - Who... has done some good thinking? _____

3 Language

Find 15 words from Part 4 in the wordsearch.

T	W	H	R	O	G	D	M	R	A	H	C	A	R
E	H	N	Z	L	I	N	Q	U	E	S	T	H	E
O	H	G	E	U	S	E	K	A	T	S	I	M	Y
E	A	Y	I	N	V	O	L	V	E	D	Y	B	W
S	N	E	G	E	L	E	T	S	O	H	R	Z	A
O	D	F	C	V	W	Q	C	R	U	I	S	E	L
P	K	A	Z	I	L	R	J	E	D	X	B	Y	Q
R	E	S	C	K	T	Y	E	E	O	H	J	Z	D
U	R	N	A	B	I	S	G	P	M	T	G	W	K
P	C	Q	P	F	V	R	U	Q	A	R	H	A	N
S	H	L	J	X	O	O	K	J	M	P	T	Y	P
Z	I	B	C	O	L	K	C	A	S	K	C	U	R
R	E	O	M	P	M	N	Q	W	D	V	H	T	Z
I	F	U	R	E	L	G	G	U	M	S	E	S	W

4 Comprehension

Look at the following words from the story, and find the odd one out in each group.

- 1 diamond ring stethoscope shoe bracelet
- 2 Celia Patricia Mrs Nicoletis Mrs Hubbard
- 3 Valerie Jean Sally Elizabeth
- 4 vandalism faking passports murder stealing

5 Writing

You are the journalist who wrote the following article for your newspaper on the crime. Some ink (not green!) got spilt on your copy and each ink stain hides one word. Write the missing words below:

1	7
2	8
3	9
4	10
5	11
6	

DRUG SMUGGLING AND MURDER LINKED TO STUDENT HOSTEL IN HICKORY ROAD!!

Following the investigations of (1) _____ Detective Hercule Poirot and Inspector (2) _____, two residents from Hickory Road have been (3) _____.

Mr Nigel Chapman, aged 25, studying Italian was charged with (4) _____ two other students and the hostel's owner. Investigations will also be carried out concerning Mr Chapman's written (5) _____ stating he killed his own (6) _____.

Miss Valerie Hobhouse, a (7) _____ beautician, who also lived at the hostel, was charged for helping to organize a (8) _____ smuggling operation.

A police spokesman said: "We have seen an (9) _____ in heroin coming into the country over the last 18 months. Now, we know that some residents of the Hickory Road hostel, as well as other student hostels, are organizing this (10) _____. We are continuing our (11) _____ ...".

6 Language

We use **will** + **infinitive** to make a prediction about the future or when we are not sure about a future situation. Complete the sentences about these characters.

I think	Valerie	will/
	Nigel	won't
	Hercule Poirot	
	Miss Lemon	
	Mrs Hubbard	
	Sally and Len	

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ANSWER KEY (STUDENT ACTIVITIES)

Part 1 (Chapters 1–5)

1 Comprehension

Mrs Hubbard – married (her husband is dead)
 Poirot – Scotland Yard (he's a private detective)
 Patricia – American
 Valerie – student (beautician)
 Celia – French
 Nigel – Psychology (Colin is the Psychology student)

2 Language

A

- to throw away
- to look like
- to make into
- to go on
- to go back
- to write up
- to get out of (somewhere)
- to get on (well) with someone

B

- going on
- went back
- made into
- throws... away
- write up
- looks... like
- getting out of here
- get on

3 Language

Elizabeth – hard-working, ambitious
 Sally – pleasant, cheerful
 Nigel – unusual, clever, misunderstood
 Colin – rude
 Celia – lonely
 Patricia – serious

E	V	P	M	N	I	K	R	O	W	D	R	A	
B	T	U	S	O	R	H	A	X	N	S	S	P	F
I	A	D	U	X	Y	U	G	B	Q	E	O	A	P
R	K	Z	O	C	T	J	Y	F	R	O	U	I	E
O	B	T	I	C	N	P	D	I	T	S	J	U	M
X	Z	H	T	G	D	U	O	S	U	H	S	J	N
B	A	Y	I	I	B	U	R	N	P	V	N	M	T
P	R	E	B	T	S	E	U	C	L	E	V	E	S
W	Z	C	M	H	D	Q	Y	D	B	J	B	V	E
R	X	O	A	N	N	L	K	C	Z	G	L	F	Y
Q	P	H	U	W	E	W	N	M	I	J	U	H	E
F	Z	S	B	N	L	O	K	G	A	C	T	R	P
Q	I	T	O	E	Q	W	G	Y	I	F	U	M	D
M	L	O	Z	S	C	N	B	K	A	H	V	A	H
D	X	E	I	Y	Z	H	E	E	R	F	U	D	G

4 Comprehension

- True
- False. A diamond ring was stolen.
- True
- True
- False. Patricia is a student, studying History.

5 Language

- Mrs Lemon about Mrs Hubbard
- Mrs Hubbard about Patricia
- Len about Nigel
- Mrs Nicoletis to Mrs Hubbard
- Celia to Colin

Part 2 (Chapters 6–11)

1 Language

A

Across

- disapprove
- engaged
- poison
- psychology
- bracelet

Down

- interview
- boring
- fingerprint
- forgiven
- pharmacist
- frightened
- protest

B

- engaged
- fingerprint
- pharmacist
- interview
- boring

2 Comprehension

- 5
- 1
- 9
- 2
- 7
- 6
- 8
- 3
- 4

3 Language

- argue – 2
- accuse – 6
- interrupt – 4
- pause – 3
- smile – 7
- consider – 5
- advise – 8
- suggest – 2

4 Language

- didn't throw
- wrote
- believed
- quarrelled
- stole
- bet

Part 3 (Chapters 12–16)

1 Comprehension

Name	Reason
Nigel	Has poison in his possession
Valerie	Has gambling debts
Len, Colin, Nigel	Have a rucksack
Patricia	Has a handkerchief with green ink on it, hidden in her drawer
Len	Has an uncontrolled temper
Valerie	Travels regularly to Paris
Valerie	Encourages Celia to steal to attract Colin's attention
Nigel	Has a false passport
Mrs Nicoletis	Has a drinking problem and has changed a lot during the past year

Red-herring – students' own ideas

2 Language

search warrant, spy, stealing, guilty, eliminate, inquest, smuggling, clue

3 Comprehension

- a
- c
- b
- b

4 Grammar

- was looking
- are you hoping
- was just stating
- were sitting
- was breathing
- was looking
- was serving

Part 4 (Chapters 17–23)

1 Comprehension

When Nigel is at the police station he received a phone call...
 Patricia was found dead; she'd been hit...
 Len Bateson's hair was found...
 Mr Akibombo had taken boracic acid...
 Sergeant Cobb inspects Valerie's beauty salon and finds six...
 Hercule Poirot visits Arthur Stanley's lawyer to confirm his suspicions...
 Mrs Hubbard decides to go on...

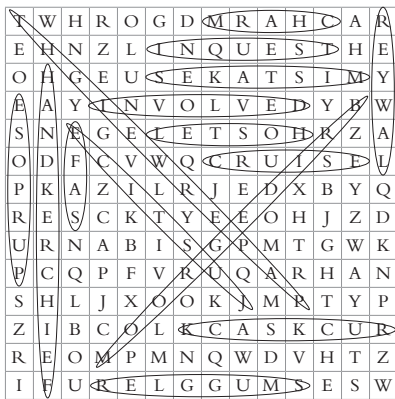
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2 Comprehension

- 1 smuggling
- 2 smuggling and murder
- 3 that he has confessed to killing his mother
- 4 Mrs Nicoletis is Valerie's mother
- 5 Mrs Hubbard is having a holiday. Sally and Len are going to get married. Hercule Poirot is pleased with his secretary's work. Mr Akibombo has done some good thinking.

3 Language



charm, inquest, mistakes, involved, hostel, cruise, rucksack, smuggler, paperweight, justice, bridegroom, purpose, handkerchief, safe, lawyer

4 Comprehension

- 1 stethoscope – Celia stole the other objects
- 2 Mrs Hubbard – she wasn't killed
- 3 Valerie – she wasn't a student
- 4 vandalism – this crime isn't in the story

5 Writing

Belgian, Sharpe, arrested, murdering, confession, mother, French, drug, increase, smuggling, investigations

6 Language

Answers will vary.