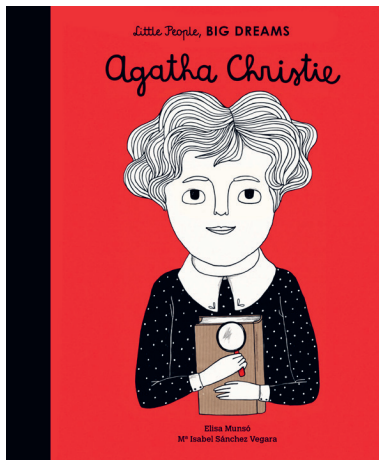


# Little People, BIG DREAMS

## TEACHERS' GUIDE



Agatha Christie

Little People, BIG DREAMS

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### LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Renowned as the bestselling novelist of all time, Agatha Christie turned an early love of reading and the determination to do what she loved into a lifelong career. Her passion will inspire today's young readers to become the storytellers of tomorrow.

### ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS IN THIS UNIT

1. Why is Agatha Christie famous?
2. What famous detective characters did Agatha invent?
3. Why did Agatha take a job as a nurse? What experience as a nurse influenced her stories?
4. Why did Agatha take a typewriter with her when she travelled?
5. What story did Agatha's trip to the Middle East inspire her to write?
6. What qualities are important to be a successful detective?



## CLASSROOM DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. Ask students why they think Agatha chose to write mystery stories. The book explains that many of Agatha's stories were made into plays for the stage. Ask the class if they are other formats where they have seen mysteries. Why do they think this type of story is so popular – what is it about mysteries that people love so much?
2. Ask the class if they agree with Agatha Christie that “any mystery can be solved if you use your imagination”? What other skills do the students think might be needed to solve a mystery?
3. After her success with Mr. Hercule Poirot, why do the students think Agatha chose to create a detective who was a woman? What does the author mean when she says, “Looks can be deceiving”? What qualities do the students think Miss Marple had that made her a good detective?
4. In the book Agatha is shown reading stories by Sherlock Holmes. Has anyone in the class heard of Sherlock Holmes? Can they name any of the books he was in? Does anyone know the author of the Sherlock Holmes mysteries? Discuss the fact that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie lived at the same time, although he was much older than Agatha. Her character, Hercule Poirot, shares some similarities with Sherlock Holmes. What does it mean for one author to be influenced by another?

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Select (or have the class help you select) a story. Read the story together, then invite the students to imagine a different ending. Have each child write their new ending and read aloud. Students can vote for their favorite “alternate” ending!
2. Discuss the concept of mystery writing. Suggest a premise for a mystery: for example, a pet, or beloved object goes missing, or a friend or relative suddenly starts acting strangely. Ask students to consider what happens next, and have them write their stories.
3. If you have or can borrow a typewriter, bring it in to the class. How many of the students have seen or used one before? Allow each child to type, then have them discuss what it might be like to write an entire novel using just a typewriter. What happens when they make a mistake? Do they think using a computer would be easier? Would it be as much fun?
4. Mystery Message Project: Pour about ½ cup lemon juice (fresh squeezed or premade) into a small container. Using paint brushes, Q-tips, or toothpicks, instruct the students to write messages on paper and allow to dry completely. Heat the papers using either an incandescent lightbulb or an iron on the dry setting (not steam) to reveal the secrets!

