

GCSE English Literature Activities

After you have explored the play...

These activities are designed to:

- Encourage close analysis of the language used by the characters.
- Help students explore the complex structure of the play.
- Help students understand how the audience responds to the characters' journeys throughout the play.
- Explore big questions that arise from the play.

The Twist – Looking Back

Once students know the twist in the play, that Judy is alive, they should re-read the scene early in the play when Christopher is told his mother has gone to hospital.

When we first read/ hear that Judy has a heart problem we see it as Christopher does and take it literally.

How does the phrase 'a problem with her heart' take on a new meaning?

What effect does it have on our perception of Ed?

Students should think of other moments in the play which can be seen differently once they know that actually Ed killed the dog and that Judy is alive.

Debate

The debate is designed to encourage students to be evaluative, argumentative and put across their point of view about a key issue in the play.

They should use all of their notes from the 'as you read' section to help them

Split students into groups representing FOR or AGAINST

'This house feels more sympathetic towards Christopher's mother, Judy.'

Students should include in their arguments:

- Opinions on Christopher's father, Ed
- Consideration of context such as looking after a child with emotional and behavioral needs
- Opinions on Roger and his actions
- How Christopher reacts to the news that his mother is alive

Mock Trial

Similar to the debate, this task asks students to think about the events in the play and how their sympathies change.

Ask half the class to prosecute Ed for killing the dog including:

- Animal cruelty
- Impact on his son
- Lies he later told/had told before

The other half of the class should defend him considering:

- Everything he had been through in his relationships
- He has been punished enough given the impact it had on his son
- Stress/ unstable mental state

Big Questions

- ***Curious Incident* is based on a very famous detective story featuring Sherlock Holmes, do you think this is a successful murder mystery? If not, what else could it be categorised as?**
- **What effect does Christopher's matter of fact way of speaking and thinking have on the audience?**

