

LEARNING ENGLISH THROUGH CLASSIC LITERATURE

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Classic literature is considered to be timeless. The works of the following famous writers as Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie who worked in the detective genre give learners opportunities to widen vocabulary, gain historical and cultural insight, improve grammatical and syntax skills, capture different idiomatic expressions and figurative language. Reading and analyzing these writer's texts, students are able to encounter expressions that are not commonly used in modern English but are definitely valuable for a profound understanding of the language. Reading classic literature allows learners develop their cultural world, know the history, respect the culture and traditions of English-speaking countries. Beyond their literary value, the works by Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie are necessary for the language learning process.

There is no doubt that Arthur Conan Doyle and Agatha Christie are two of the most outstanding writers of crime fiction in English literature. Arthur Conan Doyle is undoubtedly one of the most influential authors of the last 150 years. He was born in Edinburgh in 1859 and studied medicine at the city's university. He wrote his first novel, "A Study in Scarlet", while working as a doctor. It was an instant success, and the story with its character, the fictional detective Sherlock Holmes, inspired a new literary genre: crime fiction. Sherlock Holmes features in four of Conan Doyle's novels and 56 of his short stories. These were all huge successes, and Holmes became one of the most popular characters of all time. Conan Doyle attempted to kill off his famous creation in his story "The Final Problem." The story's gripping plot introduces Moriarty, the leader of a gang of thieves and murderers. Holmes launches his own investigation into this criminal mastermind and Moriarty attempts to kill him in revenge. They both fall to their deaths at Reichenbach Falls. However, Holmes was so popular that he simply couldn't die. Lots of people wrote letters demanding that the author bring back the detective, and twenty years after his death, Holmes reappeared. His adventures continued to delight readers throughout the 20th century, inspiring many to pen their own detective stories.

Agatha Christie was born in 1890 in Torquay, a seaside town on the south coast of England. As a child, she read detective stories and was unequivocal in her belief that Sherlock Holmes had influenced her a great deal. She published her first detective novel, "The Mystery of the Styles", in 1920. Over the next few years, she published a book a year. Her books followed a familiar plot: someone commits a crime, usually murder, and the detective launches an investigation. They search the

house, interview suspects, and find clues to solve the puzzle. The stories were gripping, and she quickly became one of the most famous authors of detective fiction. She was forthright in her dislike of fame and made it clear that she preferred peace and quiet to writing. She wrote a lot. Christie wrote 66 detective novels during her lifetime and created some of the most popular characters in crime fiction, including Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple. She also wrote romance novels, but under a different name. She was unequivocal in her belief that it was easier for her to write when she was not Agatha Christie. Christie sold over 300 million books and earned millions of pounds during her lifetime. When she died on 12 January 1976, the BBC named her the world's greatest writer. Agatha Christie is still loved today. In 2013, the Crime Writers' Association of Great Britain named her the best writer of detective stories. However, she did not create the best character in crime fiction, and the prize went to Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes.

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