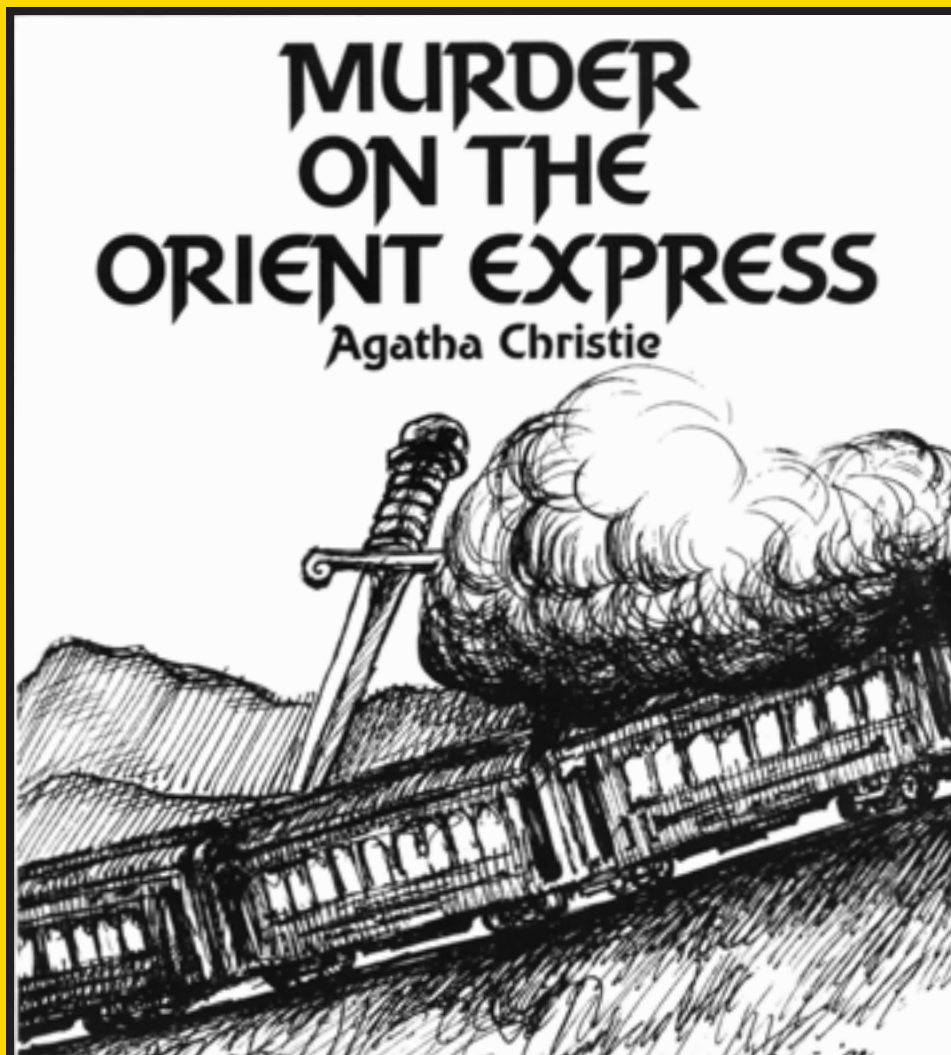


Novel•Ties



A Study Guide

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LEARNING LINKS

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For the Teacher

This reproducible study guide to use in conjunction with a specific novel consists of instructional material for guided reading. Written in chapter-by-chapter format, the guide contains a synopsis, pre-reading activities, vocabulary and comprehension exercises, as well as extension activities to be used as follow-up to the novel.

NOVEL-TIES are either for whole class instruction using a single title or for group instruction where each group uses a different novel appropriate to its reading level. Depending upon the amount of time allotted to it in the classroom, each novel, with its guide and accompanying lessons, may be completed in two to four weeks.

The first step in using NOVEL-TIES is to distribute to each student a copy of the novel and a folder containing all of the duplicated worksheets. Begin instruction by selecting several pre-reading activities in order to set the stage for the reading ahead. Vocabulary exercises for each chapter always precede the reading so that new words will be reinforced in the context of the book. Use the questions on the chapter worksheets for class discussion or as written exercises.

The benefits of using NOVEL-TIES are numerous. Students read good literature in the original, rather than in abridged or edited form. The good reading habits formed by practice in focusing on interpretive comprehension and literary techniques will be transferred to the books students read independently. Passive readers become active, avid readers.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Orient Express

In the first half of the 1800s, train travel across Europe was uncomfortable and inconvenient. Passenger cars were crude, and countries had built independent, competing railroads that did not afford direct service across borders. Seeking to change the concept of continental travel, a Belgian named Georges Nagelmackers established his own train company in the 1870s, the Compagnie Internationale des Wagons Lits. Nagelmackers arranged international contracts, produced luxurious train cars, and began superior train service throughout Europe. In 1883, Nagelmackers inaugurated the most famous of those train services, the Orient Express, which ran from Paris to the city of Constantinople (present-day Istanbul). Shortly after Nagelmackers' death in 1905, the Simplon Tunnel was completed through the Alps. The Simplon Orient Express was inaugurated in 1919 with a route that utilized the twelve-mile-long tunnel.

Travel on the Orient Express was elegant. The coaches were richly decorated, and dining cars were equipped with the finest crystal and china. Passengers included royalty, the wealthy, and the most notable people of the times. In the 1920s, the trains were made up of some of the most luxurious coaches ever built by Wagons Lits. The Depression and World War II took their toll on the Orient Express, however, and after the war, political turmoil severely limited its routes and services. Adding to those problems was the success of commercial air travel, which provided passengers with transportation that was cheaper and faster. The last of the original Orient Express runs was made in 1977, with only one sleeping car and three day coaches. The legend of the Orient Express lived on, however, and in the early 1980s, the service was revived by an American businessman as the Venice Simplon Orient Express, a first-class train between London and Venice.

About the Author

Agatha Christie was born Mary Clarissa Miller in Torquay, England on September 15, 1890. Her father was an American who died when she was eleven, and her mother was English. The author married Colonel Archibald Christie in 1914, soon after the beginning of World War I, and published her first detective novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, in 1920. It was in that book that Christie introduced one of her most famous characters, the detective Hercule Poirot.

Subsequent books brought Christie fame as a mystery writer. Then in 1926, faced with a disintegrating marriage and the death of her mother, Christie mysteriously disappeared. Her disappearance brought national attention, and when she was located eleven days later, her family attributed the episode to a spell of amnesia. After divorcing the Colonel in 1928, Christie traveled to the Near East. There she met Max Mallowan, assistant to the famous archeologist Sir Leonard Woolley. She and Mallowan were married in 1930, and they made frequent trips together to his archeological digs in Iraq and Syria.

In the course of her prolific writing career, Agatha Christie published numerous novels, short stories, plays, and poems. Her fame as a mystery writer spread throughout the world, and many of her stories were made into films and adapted for television. Christie was awarded the Mystery Writers of America Grand Master Award in 1954 and the New York Drama Critics Circle Award in 1955. She was made Commander, Order of the British Empire in 1956 and Dame Commander, Order of the British Empire in 1971. Agatha Christie died on January 12, 1976.

GLOSSARY

Use the context of the story as well as the following glossary to help you understand the French words and phrases, and sentences in *Murder on the Orient Express*.

<i>amiable</i>	kind; pleasant
<i>après vous</i>	after you
<i>bien</i>	well
<i>bon soir</i>	good evening
<i>bonne nuit</i>	good night
<i>canaille</i>	scoundrel
<i>cauchemar</i>	nightmare
<i>Ce n'est rien. Je me suis trompé.</i>	It's nothing. I was mistaken.
<i>chemin de fer</i>	railroad; also a card game that includes betting
<i>clientèle</i>	practice
<i>comme ça</i>	like that; just so
<i>comment</i>	how; what
<i>dans son caractère</i>	in his character or nature
<i>déjeuner</i>	lunch
<i>diable</i>	devil
<i>embêtant</i>	irritating or annoying
<i>en brosse</i>	crew cut
<i>en voiture</i>	all aboard
<i>encore un peu</i>	a little more
<i>enfin</i>	finally; at last
<i>entendu</i>	understood; agreed
<i>épatant</i>	grand
<i>grande dame</i>	great lady
<i>grande seigneur</i>	great lord
<i>hors de combat</i>	disabled
<i>jolie femme</i>	attractive woman
<i>l'eau minérale</i>	mineral water