
The Author's Perspective on Personal Challenges in The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time, a Novel by Mark Haddon

The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time Discuss how Haddon's perspective on personal challenges is conveyed in The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time. In your response, make detailed reference to your prescribed text. Haddon's perspective that individuals are able to overcome personal challenges is expressed in the novel the Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time through an empathetic view of Christopher primarily as a young man dealing with the challenges life presents to him. By providing readers with the protagonist's unique perspective on transformative events and his relationships with significant people, Haddon allows readers to be immersed in Christopher's experiences of himself and other characters while undergoing a painful maturation process.

Haddon explores Christopher's shift between different perceptions of truth and lying to overcome the challenge of dealing with the pain truth can bring. The use of lists for Christopher's "Chain of Reasoning" as he speculates who is the prime suspect for killing the dog allows readers to be engaged with his thought process and perspective on truth, also helping to establish the detective fiction genre. While Christopher's pursuit of the truth behind who killed Wellington contributes to this, Haddon's use of lists highlights how Christopher finds security by affirming facts and what is true through logical reasoning. However, as Christopher's perspective that truth can only bring security is challenged when he finds the truth that his father killed Wellington, the genre shifts into bildungsroman. Haddon uses this to shift accentuate Christopher's particular comprehension of truth and lying.

The struggle for Christopher to grow and develop his perception is highlighted by juxtaposition of his need to adhere to the truth, and his need to escape the consequences of telling the truth in "I didn't know what to say...it was illegal to steal things, but he was a policeman so I had to tell the truth", following with his decision to lie to the policeman. The juxtaposition conveys Christopher's dilemma between choosing to follow the law, and following his own perception on the truth, thus highlighting how Christopher is forced to develop his perspective that no safety can be found by lying when confronted by its limitations. Hence, Christopher's ability to develop a matured perception of truth and lying shows how a change in perspective allows individuals to overcome personal challenges.

Haddon conveys how Christopher is able to overcome personal challenges in communicating with others by showing Christopher's perspective on communication. Haddon uses illustrations

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of emoticons to symbolise Christopher's difficulty reading facial expressions beyond "happy" and "sad" which allows readers to compare their interpretations of the emoticons in contrast to Christopher's perspective, thus highlighting Christopher's challenge in communicating with others when he doesn't understand their emotions. Christopher's method of coping with this challenge by developing his own method of communication is conveyed in the scene where he and his father touch fingers, because "I do not like hugging people... and it means he loves me." Thus, Haddon highlights that even though Christopher doesn't understand his father's desire to communicate his affection through physical contact, the action nonetheless provides a compromise for his father. Furthermore, Christopher's development in communication is revealed when Christopher chooses to speak to his father again, saying "I was really tired and I hadn't eaten any food so I couldn't think properly." The frequent use of casual connectives in Christopher's speech such as "and", or "so" shows how he perceives communication as a struggle to find links between cause and effect. However, Christopher's ability to communicate with his father by stating precisely what he thinks shows Christopher's process of overcoming difficulty in communication.

Furthermore, Haddon illustrates how individuals can overcome the challenge of caring for a child with disabilities through the character of Judy Boone, Christopher's mother. Haddon provides her perspective in the form of letters, allowing readers to understand Judy's motive to leave due to her inability to cope with Christopher's behaviour. Haddon's use of run-on sentences to create Judy's voice such as "you wouldn't let me touch you and you... screamed and banged your hands and feet" emphasises Judy's exhaustion and how overwhelmed she is by Christopher's behaviour. Thus, Haddon conveys the difficulty for individuals to confront their personal challenges instead of succumbing to them. In contrast, Haddon represents Judy's resilience in reclaiming her responsibility as Christopher's mother through repetition of "everything is going to be alright" as a response to Christopher facing problems such as being unable to take his A-level. Haddon's use of repetition to build Judy's voice highlights Judy's ability to make Christopher feel safe, despite the instability of her world due to losing a job and relationship for Christopher. Thus, Haddon subverts the reader's expectations that Judy is unable to care for Christopher. By doing so, Haddon shows that gaining the ability to cope with personal challenges is not immediate and requires perseverance.

Although the process of overcoming personal challenges may be grueling, disability doesn't prevent individuals from doing so. In the Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time, Haddon presents this perspective by immersing readers into the world of Christopher and Judy Boone. By showing how they overcome personal challenges such as dealing with truth and lying, problems with communication, and problems in familial relationships, Haddon allows readers to better understand the process of overcoming personal challenges.

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