



## Agatha Christie (B1 - Lower Intermediate)

### A – Before you start

Answer the questions with a partner.

1. Do you enjoy murder mysteries? If so, are you good at guessing who the murderer is?
2. Do you have a favourite detective writer? If so, who? Why do you like his/her stories?
3. Have you read any Agatha Christie novels or seen the film adaptations?
4. Can you name any of the detectives she created?

### B – Listen and answer

Listen to the two parts of the article (without reading) and write T (true) or F (false).

#### Part One

1. Agatha Christie has sold more books than any other novelist in the world.
2. She started writing when she was eight years old.
3. After creating Miss Marple in 1927, Christie wrote twelve more Miss Marple stories.
4. In the 1975 novel titled *Curtain*, Hercule Poirot retires.

#### Part Two

5. Agatha Christie disappeared for some time while suffering from depression.
6. After her divorce, she never married again.
7. The sales of her books suffered after she was criticised for using racist language.
8. Her novels reveal the negative impulses of human nature.

### C – Read and answer

Read the two parts of the article and answer the questions.

1. What information does the article give you about Agatha Christie's family life?
2. How did she learn about different types of poison?
3. Why did she decide to write a detective novel?
4. Why did the final twist in *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* influence many detective writers?
5. What did Christie do to avoid paying too much tax?
6. What caused her period of depression?
7. Why was there such a widespread search for her when she disappeared?
8. What aspects of her novels led one critic to say Christie was ahead of her time?
9. How long has her play *The Mousetrap* been running?
10. Where is the play set?

### D – Learn it! Use it!

Complete these sentences with words from the glossary. (You may have to adapt the expression in some way; e.g. change the verb tense, or change from singular to plural.)

1. His excuses \_\_\_\_\_ us completely. We really thought he was telling the truth.
2. William Shakespeare, Anton Chekhov and Oscar Wilde were all famous \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Why did you fall asleep during the lesson? Was it tiredness or \_\_\_\_\_?
4. The little boy stole an apple from the market stall because his friend \_\_\_\_\_ him to.

5. The hotels in the centre are too expensive but there are some very good \_\_\_\_\_.
6. Don't read that novel. The \_\_\_\_\_ is far too complicated and the characters are unrealistic.
7. Parents should \_\_\_\_\_ their children about the dangers of interacting with strangers online.
8. I'm sure I saw that actor in a \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_ a few years ago.

**E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam? (Paper 1, Reading: Part 6)**

*Write one word only in each space.*

Agatha Christie's novel *And then there were none* is the world's <sup>1</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ selling mystery story. Over 100 million copies of it <sup>2</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ been sold. The story is set in a large house on a small deserted island. Eight people are there as the guests of a couple who have not <sup>3</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ arrived. The eight guests die <sup>4</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ by one although there is <sup>5</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ else on the island. How is this possible? If you want to find out, you <sup>6</sup>\_\_\_\_\_ have to read the book!

**F – Write about it**

*Write about a detective story or thriller that you saw or read recently. Mention:*

- where it's set;
  - who the main characters are;
  - the main details of the plot;
  - why you enjoyed/didn't enjoy it.
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## Answers: Agatha Christie (B1)

### B – Listen and answer

1. T 2. F – She started writing when she was a teenager. 3. F – She wrote eleven more. The 1927 novel was the first of 12. 4. F – In *Curtain*, Hercule Poirot dies. 5. T 6. F – She married Max Mallowan in 1930. 7. F – The criticism never affected sales of her books. 8. T

### C – Read and answer

1. She came from an upper-middle-class family. She had a sister. Her father died when she was eleven. She was married twice and had a daughter from her first marriage. 2. She worked as a nurse and studied to become an apothecary. 3. Because her sister dared her to write one. 4. Because it broke all the rules of the mystery genre. 5. She only published one novel a year. 6. Her mother died and then her husband asked her for a divorce. 7. Because she was already a major celebrity. 8. Her depiction of homosexual and disabled characters and her criticism of the hypocrisy of upper-class society. 9. It has been running since 1952/for over 70 years. 10. It's set in a remote countryside guesthouse.

### D – Learn it! Use it!

1. fooled 2. playwrights 3. boredom 4. dared 5. guesthouses 6. plot 7. warn  
8. stage play.

### E – Ready for the B1 PRELIMINARY English Exam?

1. best/highest 2. have 3. yet 4. one 5. no-one/nobody 6. will