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Trabajo Fin de Máster

**DETECTIVE FICTION IN THE
ENGLISH CLASSROOM:
AGATHA CHRISTIE'S *DEATH
IN THE CLOUDS*, A DIDACTIC
APPROACH**

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this Master's Thesis is to integrate detective fiction into English language teaching. To achieve this, the literary adaptation of Agatha Christie's *Death in the Clouds* will be employed. This is why the first part of this dissertation offers a review of detective fiction through the nineteenth and twentieth century, highlighting some of the most important authors of the period and emphasising above all the literary of Agatha Christie. In addition, the first part also lists the benefits of applying detective literature for young readers and learners of English as a foreign language, as well as referring to the multiple advantages of using literature in English teaching. The second part is devoted to the proposal of didactic unit based on Agatha Christie's novel and characterised by an eclectic methodology.

Key Words: Detective fiction, *Death in the Clouds*, Agatha Christie, EFL, graded reader, benefits, didactic unit, 1- Bachillerato, eclectic methodology

RESUMEN

Este trabajo final de Máster tiene como principal objetivo integrar la literatura detectivesca en la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa. Para obtener este resultado, se va a usar la adaptación literaria de *Death in the Clouds* de Agatha Christie. La primera parte de este trabajo ofrece una revisión de la literatura detectivesca a través de los siglos XIX y XX, remarcando algunos de los autores más importantes de la época y destacando sobre todo la figura literaria de Agatha Christie. Además, la primera parte también enumera los beneficios de hacer uso de la literatura detectivesca para jóvenes lectores, estudiantes de inglés como lengua extranjera. Hace asimismo, referencia a las múltiples ventajas de usar literatura en la enseñanza de la lengua inglesa. La segunda parte está destinada a la propuesta de unidad didáctica basada en la novela de Agatha Christie y caracterizada por una metodología ecléctica.

Palabras clave: Literatura detectivesca, *Death in the Clouds*, Agatha Christie, enseñanza del inglés como lengua extranjera, adaptación literaria, unidad didáctica, 1º de Bahillerato, metodología ecléctica

0. Introduction

The teaching of languages, and particularly the teaching of English, is fundamental in the society in which we are immersed nowadays. In the professional area, there are more jobs require a good level of the language, along with the fact that the development of new applications and forms of communication based on the English language is becoming more frequent. This is the reason that teaching English effectively in the classroom is a great challenge for teachers today. Hence, many teachers are looking to innovate in their classes to make them much more dynamic and funnier in order to promote meaningful learning at all times.

This Master's dissertation offers an alternative to normal textbook-driven English classes by proposing a didactic unit developed through the use of an adaptation of Agatha Christie's *Death in the Clouds*. She has been chosen for this didactic unit because of her enigmatic plots that never cease to surprise the reader until the end. Her novel, *Death in the Clouds*, offers just that: a simple and well- structured story with charismatic yet mysterious characters where anyone can be the murderer. This ensures that the student is motivated and receptive to learning the English language through literature. Furthermore, through this dissertation, it is also intended to show that literature is not tedious or boring and can contribute to teaching as another useful tool in the EFL classroom.

The structure that this Master's thesis will be as follows. It is divided into two different parts. The first part corresponds to the theoretical framework where I will speak about detective fiction as a concept alongside a quick overview of this genre both in the nineteenth century and in the twentieth century. Then, Edgar Allan Poe and Arthur Conan Doyle will be highlighted as important figures of the detective fiction genre in the 19th century and Agatha Christie in the 20th century. The first part will end with a discussion of the advantages of using detective fiction for young readers and the main benefits of using literature in the EFL classroom. The second part is devoted to the exposition of the proposed didactic unit. Finally, a conclusion of all the different aspects that have been discussed throughout this dissertation will be offered.

1. PART I: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1. Detective fiction

Adventure, science fiction, gothic, dystopian or fantasy novels are often ascribed to the field of literature. All these literary genres have certain characteristics that define them faithfully and thus, categorise them within a particular genre and are therefore easily identifiable. They are well-defined genres and they do not present great difficulties when it comes to itemise what each of them encompasses. However, the detective fiction genre, at first glance, seems to be an extremely limited term, but it presents rather complex problems of designation and requires the use of certain terms and concepts for its correct explanation (Rzepka, 2005).

What is more, Routledge (2019) corroborates that since its first recognition as literary genre in the mid 19th century, it has presented numerous problems with its exact definition. He points out that its main problem is that the large category of crime fiction harbours everything that is connected to fiction and crime and, therefore, everything that has to do with detective fiction is included in it. This fact has led to a large number of detective fiction novels being included within the boundaries of crime novel. From this arises a question about this genre: what should a detective novel include? How can it be faithfully defined? or, finally, what does it consist of? Many authors have offered different answers to these questions over the years.

Howard Haycraft (1941), known as a pioneer and leading critic of detective fiction, makes his position on this genre clear in one of his most outstanding books: *Murder for Pleasure: The Life and Times of the Detective Story*: "the crime in a detective story is only the means to an end, which is-detection (p. 186). In other words, for this author, the detective fiction genre is characterised by the presence of an inspector or detective solving the case through the detection of the culprit. This is the key moment that makes a novel fall into or belong to the category of detective fiction. Therefore, following Haycraft, it can be held the idea that the feature of "detective work" (Routledge, 2019) must appear in any novel of this genre.

Previously, a century earlier, Edgar Allan Poe, particularly known for his poems, short stories and mystery tales as well as being a renowned literary critic, gave insights about what the detective genre meant to him. Moreover, it is indispensable to mention that Allan Poe is considered the father of this genre. Thanks to him, and specifically to his three published short stories, "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), "The Mystery of Marie Roget" (1842) and "The Purloined Letter" (1844), Poe managed to establish some of the features of detective fiction. Wenru (2013, p. 59-60) summarises them as follows:

- Fictional scenarios where a real and organized society is presented which is disrupted by the crime committed, resulting in the disorganisation of that society.
- Reasoning technique, which is used by the main character (detective) to deduce the resolution of the case. Normally, the detective starts to discard all the elements he considers impossible or false until he is left with only that is true. As a result, the criminal is detected and the crime is successfully solved without leaving a single loose end.
- Appearance of the hero, in this case both private and amateur detective. Through hard work of investigation and observation and by using logical reasoning he is able to solve the crime completely. Besides, he is able to put back in order the society that was disturbed in the first place.
- The main plot is the solving of the criminal case where there exist two distinct confrontations: the detective who symbolizes the good and justice and the criminal standing for the evil side.
- The crime is related to desire of love, money, fame, inheritance or property.

In addition to it, as a crucial feature in detective fiction is the fact that the reader is facing a test where his or her intelligence is continually challenged. The writer wants the reader to be very active and "alive" and to enter the plot in some way. This is why the author usually bases and includes scientific, geographical, physical or historical facts, among others, in the crime (Wenru, 2013). Furthermore, the aim of the author of detective fiction is to make the reader a protagonist and make him or her believe that he or she has first-hand information, when, in fact, it is only and exclusively the author who has all the information and details. If the reader is able to use the reasoning technique mentioned above, it will "improve [his/er] mode of thinking and elevate [his/er] minds" (Wenru, 2013, p. 60) and therefore, he or she will be able to solve the case or, at least, have an idea free of erroneous facts or uncertainty.

It is for all of the above reasons that the following lines will attempt to offer a clear and concise definition of detective fiction. One aspect is clear, detective fiction is a subgenre inside the crime fiction. In reality, both genres can lead to overlap or can lead to confusion for the reader. While the crime fiction is

is a narrative that features a crime, a criminal, a victim and a detective. But this is not necessarily always the case. There are stories about crime that feature no detective; there

are detective stories that feature no crime as such; there are even tales that focus on the elucidation of a mystery where there is no crime, no detective and no victim, or where the position of the characters as criminal, detective or victim changes according to the play of the narrative and the demands of the plot. (Worthington, 2011, p. 13)

The detective fiction is a narrative composed of a detective (private or amateur), a mystery, normally a crime but not always; and an investigation process by which the mystery is subsequently resolved (Rzepka, 2005). Moreover, this genre also has that "puzzle" aspect which clearly engages, attracts and captures the reader's attention from the very first moment, as the mystery or crime is usually committed at the beginning of the story. The reader unconsciously applies this reasoning technique and is immersed one way or another in finding a solution to the problem presented. However, as it can be sensed, the line that separates one genre from the other is very thin and blurred and on many cases no distinction is made between both genres and many detective novels have been included in the crime fiction category. This has been spoken of in the past due to the idea that this occurred more frequently at the beginning of the 19th century, when detective fiction was recognised as a literary genre although it was not perceived as a serious or legitimate genre in comparison to others such as, in this case, crime fiction.

Finally, the figure of the detective is essential in the detective fiction genre. Everyone knows the famous fictional detective Sherlock Holmes, invented by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle; the star of Agatha Christie's books, Hercule Poirot, a character who appears in more than 50 stories, or Miss Marple, in more than fifteen novels, among many other famous detectives. All these appointed detectives and those who are left out share a series of characteristics that are repeated in the different detective stories. Connelly (2019), after an arduous and meticulous investigation, answers the question: what makes a detective?

Firstly, eccentricity. There is no doubt about it, it is impossible to forget Poirot's moustache, or Holmes' long eyebrows and aquiline nose. These are the traits that linger in the reader's mind and ensure that the image remains in his/her memory after the novel is over. Moreover, and related to the above, uniqueness. They are memorable characters and have the ability of capturing the attention and interest of the reader from the very first moment. And, secondly, the detectives are defined through their dialogue. Thanks to their words and conversations, the detective slowly shows how he or she deals with the problem or challenges and, consequently, the reader discovers his or her inner self, that is to say, the reader discovers the detective's inner self: what s/he is feeling, thinking, supposing or suspecting at any moment during the story.

1.2. Detective fiction in the late 19th century

This section will try to offer a brief overview of when the detective fiction genre appeared and some of the most prominent authors of the time.

First of all, and referring to the previous lines, a fact that must be pointed out is the distinction between when the genre appeared in America and when in Britain, as they show especially differences. Besides, it is the American authors themselves who will later influence British and French authors in the last years of the 19th century and the early 20th century.

The genre "appeared" for the first time when it was granted literary character and was recognised as such. Many literary critics point out that classic detective fiction was already spoken about long ago and even Humpherys (2017) argues that fictional stories where mystery and crime were the central issues were narrated as early as ancient Greece. Furthermore, many other critics and scholars point to the play *Arden of Faversham* (1592), attributed to William Shakespeare, as the first play that deals with a crime and its resolution by the detective Franklin presented to us by (presumably) Shakespeare (Routledge, 2019).

For detective fiction, the 19th century saw its literary debut in every sense. Many critics have affirmed that Poe inaugurated it with three of his short stories mentioned above: "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" (1841), "The Mystery of Marie Roget" (1842) and "The Purloined Letter" (1844). Each of these narrations is of great value, as it is thanks to them that the characteristics of the detective genre were established (Pittard, 2003), which would later inspire many other authors of the mid-twentieth century, such as Agatha Christie. Many literary critics have described the year 1841 as the year that marks the beginning and opens the doors to the stardom of this genre in America.

Throughout the first pages and this section, detective novels have been discussed, but it is fundamental to highlight the fact that in the late 19th century, most narratives of detective fiction had a short story format. The main reason for its use is that they hold the reader's attention much better than long, drawn-out narratives. Moreover, it is easier for the author to create suspense and mystery through short narratives, as longer ones may lead to monotony or even to a much more complex and elevated plot which can result into the loss of the reader and, therefore, to his/her disinterest. This is perceived in most of Poe's works. Later, however, other authors, notably Edmund Clerihew Bentley and his bestseller *Trent's Last Case* (1913) promoted much denser and longer storytelling.

1.2.1. Edgar Allan Poe

Returning to the main idea of this section and stressing the fact that Poe is known as the father of this genre, the following lines aim to briefly narrate his life: who he was and some of his most important works.

Edgar Allan Poe was born in 1809 in Massachusetts (United States) and died in 1849 in Baltimore. He was an American short story writer, literary critic and poet. His parents were actors who performed in various theatres in the east of America. Unfortunately, his mother, Elizabeth Arnold Poe, died of tuberculosis leaving Edgar and his siblings, Henry and Rosalie, orphans. Their father, David Poe, abandoned his family long before his wife died.

Due to the death of their mother, the siblings were raised and educated in different families. Edgar lived his entire childhood in Richmond with the successful Scottish merchant John Allan and his wife Frances in Richmond. Since they had no children, given his wife's weak condition, they decided to take him into their care. Although they did not adopt him, they gave him their middle name, Allan.

Time went by and at the age of seventeen he decided to attend the University of Virginia in 1826 to study Latin and Greek. But unable to cope with the academic expenses and the differences with his father due to his taste for gambling, he abandoned his studies. Because of this, he decided to move to Boston and enlisted in the army of the United States. After some time and after publishing his first collection of poems, *Tamerlane, and Other Poems*, he moved to Baltimore with his aunt Maria Clemm and her daughter, Virginia. He began to sell some of his early short stories and started working as a publisher. Later, in 1836, he decided to marry his cousin Virginia, who was only thirteen years old. After years of publishing poems, short stories and working as an editor, he finally published "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" in 1841, which made him known as a pioneer of detective fiction.

In the years before his death, his wife died in the same way as his mother before her, of tuberculosis, and for years he developed a strong addiction to alcohol and suffered many depressions to such an extent that he was found unconscious on the streets of Baltimore. Days later he died of congestion of the brain.

One of the works that made him one of the most important figures in detective fiction was "The Murders in the Rue Morgue", published in 1841, where he proposes "the first locked-room mystery" (Humpherys, 2017). This concept refers to the idea that the detective and other characters are confronted with the enigma that the crime has been committed in a room through which, at first glance, it is impossible that anyone could have entered or left. Because of this, the detective's main mission is to solve the case by finding out how the criminal was able to get out of the room and lock it from

the inside. "The Mystery of Marie Roget" was published a year later, in 1842. Poe based it on an unsolved real crime. "The Purloined Letter" (1844) made use of psychology to pose the crime. This work had a great influence on the early works of Arthur Conan Doyle, particularly *A Scandal in Bohemia* (1891).

All these short stories share something in common, apart from an unsolved crime, and that is that through them Poe brought to life the figure of Le Chevalier Auguste Dupin. He is a fictional detective defined by his eccentricity, brilliance and a great capacity for reasoning to solve any case. Furthermore, Humpherys (2017) argues that Dupin shows no emotions whatsoever, is endowed with an air of superiority over the police but also over the other characters, and with the ability to attend to the real and true details and discard the false. Moreover, he goes on to comment that Poe introduces the technique of narrating through the detective, creating the idea that it is the detective himself who has the information and knows the facts, and leaving the reader and the author himself inferior to the brilliance of the detective. Thanks to this, Poe ensures that the suspense and atmosphere of mystery is maintained to the very last pages of the story.

This section could not be closed without highlighting the influence Poe had on later writers not only in America but also abroad. As Hadley (2017) points out, Poe "introduced a type of detective and some plot characteristics that were imitated by other authors on both sides of the Atlantic for the next one hundred years" (p. 1). Moreover, he was a great reference for Agatha Christie one century later, in the 20th century.

1.2.2. Arthur Conan Doyle

Arthur Conan Doyle is remembered worldwide for his famous detective Sherlock Holmes. Interestingly enough, he is such a famous character that even many people remember the detective much more than the author himself. Many literary critics and historians attribute the spread of detective fiction in Britain to Wilkie Collins with his work "*The Woman in White*" (1860). Nonetheless, it is undeniable that it is in the late 19th century when the genre gained prominence in Britain thanks to Doyle and his detective Sherlock Holmes with his first appearance in "*A Study in Scarlet*", published in 1887.

Arthur Conan Doyle was born in 1859 in Edinburgh and died in 1930. He had a fairly quiet childhood in a wealthy family. He decided to study medicine. He worked for a few years as a surgeon, but soon came to the conclusion that it was not his vocation and that he was not good enough. For this reason, he left this profession and decided to move to the English south coast, in Portsmouth, and devoted most of his time to writing.

It was then that he created one of the most famous figures in detective fiction: Sherlock Holmes. This detective first appeared in *A Study in Scarlet* (1887) and was such a success that he went on to write more works featuring this fictional character.

In his time as a doctor he met Dr. Joseph Bell, a surgeon and fellow physician. Doyle was fascinated by his charisma, intelligence and wit and part of the personality of Sherlock Holmes is based on him. But not only Dr. Bell influenced his creation, he also took Poe's detective Dupin (Martin, 2021) as a reference. This reflects that he was attracted to a real person, a real man in this case, and also to a fictional character. Furthermore, he was inspired by the couple formed by Quixote and Sancho in Miguel de Cervantes' "*Don Quijote de la Mancha*" (1605). Sherlock Holmes is always accompanied by Dr. Watson, a doctor characterised by his clumsiness and loyalty towards Holmes (Fernández et al., 2004).

Knowing what Detective Holmes is like is vital as he appears in four full-length novels and a large number of short stories. André and Fernand (2008) conducted a rigorous study on the personality of Sherlock Holmes and proposed a series of aspects that can be summarised as follows. Sherlock Holmes is endowed with an incredible and astonishing perception that makes him able to attend to and perceive many implicit inferences that are not very obvious, unimportant or of no value to the reader. This is linked to the fact that Holmes possesses an uncanny intelligence as, through the stories told by Doyle, one can observe the detective's great ability to finish and resolve any case.

Moreover, as mentioned above, that technique of reasoning that Poe had already proposed with his detective Dupin, will also be present in Holmes. However, Doyle goes a step further and where Poe started from the idea of discarding the unreal or false until he is left with what is real, Doyle proposes a technique of "abductive reasoning" (p. 117). This new technique involves drawing from the observed data, through reasoning, a series of hypotheses that will help to explain the final mystery.

Holmes is a character who shows a maturity throughout the different works. As the character "ages", his perception and the way he receives information and data changes. In addition, he witnesses a deterioration of many of his psychic mechanisms, such as memory. Martin (2021) adds that Holmes is rather cold, dispassionate, and with few emotions. Hence, his difficulty in interacting with people except Dr. Watson. Martin goes on to state that he had no interest in romantic relationships and displayed views towards women that today might be seen as misogynistic.

Finally, Sherlock Holmes had a somewhat obsessive personality, especially with his ideas and his way of thinking, but he also had an obsession with drugs such as cocaine and morphine, and developed an addiction to them. She ends by commenting that this falls within the canon of the 19th century detective in England, as both drugs were completely legal.

Doyle is remembered for his great collection of short stories, published as "casebooks", where the brilliance of Holmes and his faithful friend Dr. Watson can be seen (Routledge, 2019). One of his most important titles is *The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes* (1892) where "A Scandal in Bohemia" stands out; or *The Memoirs of Sherlock Holmes* (1894), where Doyle killed Sherlock Holmes. Fans reacted to this and demanded a revival of the character, so Doyle brought him back to life and continued to appear in many more stories.

This section has discussed two of the most famous authors of the detective fiction genre in the late 19th century both in America and in Britain. From Edgar Allan Poe (1840s) to Arthur Conan Doyle, many other detective stories were published by British writers such as Charles Dickens, Wilkie Collins or Joseph Thomas Sheridan Le Fanu. Among American authors we should highlight the famous and pioneering writer Anna Katherine Green, one of the first detective writers in America and who stood out for her perfectly interwoven plots/threads and for her surprising and endearing stories; or the English queen of mystery, Agatha Christie, who will be of special interest in this Master's thesis.

1.3. Detective literature in the 20th century

While it is true that the detective fiction genre reached its literary debut and recognition in the late 19th century with Edgar Allan Poe and continued to grow with other authors such as Wilkie Collins and Arthur Conan Doyle among other writers, it is the 20th century that was the real hit in this genre. For this reason, the period from 1900 to 1940 is known as the Golden Age of the detective fiction. It was not only very popular in America but also overseas, including Britain.

More and more authors were betting on this genre and, as a result, more and more readers were immersed in its lines. This is why detective fiction was considered one of the best top-ranking literary genres at the beginning of this century, becoming a genre of mainstream culture (Erdmann, 2009). It is true that the format that was previously used where each book started and ended with the solving of the case but continued with the same detective in the following books was still maintained. This format was still dominant even more than 80 years later. However, this century presents certain changes both in the detective character and in the plots. As Erdmann (2009) predicts, the "political, cultural, social and historical surroundings" (p. 12) now have a great influence on the stories written.

The Golden Age writers include Agatha Christie, Dorothy Leigh Sayer, Dashiell Hammet, and Margery Allingham, among others. In their works, the echo of Poe is undeniable: Poe's puzzle plot or formula, his reasoning technique and the figure of a

picturesque and enigmatic detective. At the beginning of the century, despite living in an era where America was covered in crime, violence and corruption, these authors eschewed criticism in their works and did not show or reflect reality. It was a few years later, from the 1920s onwards, when this genre would be used to depict and criticise society by authors such as Stanley Gardner and later, Evan Hunter.

Furthermore, from the 1920s onwards, a new aspect or personality began to be given to the figure of the detective, the so-called “hard-boiled detective” (Routledge, 2019). This new character is defined as a worldly person who accepts different challenges and risks by doing what he considers to be right. With this, the fictitious detective makes the readers realise that although he is a simple person, one more in society, he has a heroic part inside him or her that makes him or her act in that specific way and move forward. This new type of detective gives rise to the hard-boiled detective stories that began to gain relevance with the publication of “*Red Harvest*” (1929), by Dashiell Hammet. Hammet introduces the detectives Continental Op and Sam Spade, characterised by their tough qualities, their masculinity and, associated with this, by the fact that they now exchange the reasoning technique for their masculine intuition or premonitions (Hadley, 2017). Raymond Chandler and his work “*The Big Sleep*” (1939), where he proposes this same type of detective, but in a softer and more refined version, is also a good example of the early 20th century’s production.

After this period, from the 1940s to the end of the century, the 1990s, what is to be found in almost all the works by these authors is the reflection of the American society where crime, violence and corruption is perceivable in its streets. American society was affected by its entry into the Second World War and lived through years of political and economic disasters and was not prepared for them. In addition, there was a period of great financial crisis, the so called The Great Depression of 1929. All this led irrevocably to dark times characterised by a loss of hope and perspective alongside an increase in crime. This is why many authors decided to illustrate the reality in which they were immersed and create an even more realistic detective (Horsley, 2003). Horsley defines this new detective as a much more independent, brusque, tough and lonely figure, but with a dash of heroism. Unlike the detective Sherlock Holmes created by Conan Doyle, a brilliant character capable of solving any crime, now the detective is sometimes unable to re-establish order and put things right on his own.

1.3.1. Agatha Christie

If there is one British writer in particular who should be singled out in 20th century detective fiction it is undoubtedly Agatha Christie, also known by other names such as “the Queen of Mystery” or “the Queen of Crime”.

Agatha Mary Clarissa Miller was born in 1890 in Torquay (England). Her father was an American and educated her at home. Her mother was a storyteller who forbade her to learn to read until she was eight years old. However, on her own initiative, she learnt to read at the age of five. At the age of eleven she published her first poem and was already showing signs of becoming a writer. That same year, her father died of pneumonia and her mother decided to travel to Egypt, a period that marked her for the rest of her life.

When she returned to England, she tried to do some publishing after winning some prizes for her poetry, published in *The Poetry Review*, but it was not very successful and she rapidly became disillusioned. At this time, she was writing under the pseudonyms 'Mac Miller' and 'Nathaniel Miller'. For this reason, she decided to ask a family friend and author for help. Thanks to him, she began writing short stories that would lead her to stardom later.

In 1912, she met Archie Christie, an aviator of the Royal Flying Corps decided to marry, albeit without money. Later, they divorced because Archie fell in love with another woman and shortly after, her mother died due to bronchitis. She determined to work as a nurse in a hospital due to economic problems and it was there where she gave life to the character detective Hercule Poirot, making his debut in *The Mysterious Affair at Styles* (1916), her first novel. Through her work as a nurse, Christie learnt a lot about different poisons and this knowledge may be perceived in many later works where she mentions and uses them as the main cause of death, *Sparkling Cyanide* (1945) or "*The Crooked House*" (1949), to name but a few.

Years later, in 1930, she met Max Mallowan, an archaeologist of the Middle East and they fell madly in love and married in Scotland. This episode of her life inspired her to write her first romantic novel under the name of Mary Westmacott. They lived a prosperous and financially comfortable life and from this came the birth of their daughter Rosalind. The Middle East had a great impact on Agatha Christie, inspiring her to write novels set in that atmosphere: *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934), *Murder in Mesopotamia* (1936), *Death on the Nile* (1937), or *Appointment with Death* (1938). She finally died in 1976.

There is so much research and so many authors who have spent years delving into the figure of the astonishing Agatha Christie that it would be overwhelming to attempt to sketch out each of them in this dissertation. However, one thing is universal: Agatha Christie remained and continues to remain an unknown writer in many aspects of her life. If there is one thing Christie loved most, it was her privacy, which she kept safe throughout her life. It is thanks to her novels and their endearing stories and plots that many historians, critics and fans have been able to create an image of her. Fake or real, more physical or psychic, it is certain that Agatha has garnered millions of readers

all over the world, her books have been translated into more than 103 languages, she has sold more copies of her books than the Bible or Shakespeare and she is one of the most important top-selling writers in the world (Schicksal, 2019).

For a great part of the 20th century, especially from 1920 to 1940, Agatha Christie has been considered, undoubtedly, the most famous and popular writer of detective fiction and mystery. Many literary critics have studied in detail each and every one of her works and the characters she created. In addition, there are also many subsequent writers that Christie has influenced with her plots and her charismatic characters. Alongside this, there is also no denying the influence she continues to have today, with many new editions of all her stories still being published and the large number of film adaptations that have been and are being made all over the world.

As Martin (2021) pointed out, Agatha Christie wrote approximately 66 detective fiction books and around 15 short story collections with more than 100 stories. There are many works that she left as her legacy. Nonetheless, her novel *And Then There Were None*, which was formerly known as *Ten Little Indians* in America and *Ten Little Niggers* in the United Kingdom, published in 1939, is considered one of the best-sellers of all time along with *Murder on the Orient Express* (1934). Christie described this novel as one of her most difficult and hardest books to write.

The following lines cannot begin in any other way than by talking once again about Edgar Allan Poe. Poe, just as he influenced Arthur Conan Doyle, and many other important and renowned authors, also inspired Agatha Christie (Wenru, 2013). However, it is true that in Christie's detective fiction, some differences are to be found, which will be discussed later. It could be said that Agatha Christie was traditional, but at the same time innovative and did not follow the imposed rules. This is why she became one of the top writers in the world.

Firstly, the most striking difference is the new setting Christie proposes in her stories. While Poe created a more closed atmosphere, set in a single room where the crime took place (the "locked room" concept), she changed this device and added more breadth, so that many of her stories, and therefore crimes, take place in a variety of settings (Routledge, 2017). For example, in an aeroplane, as seen in *Death in the Clouds* (1935); on a cruise ship, *Death on the Nile* (1937); or even in an entire house, *The Crooked House* (1949). These are some of the many new and refreshing scenarios she proposes in her stories.

In addition, she had a great interest in human nature and many of her plots relate to the motivations that lead human beings to act desperately on many occasions. She was interested in how greed, desire for power, money or revenge, the jealousy or envy lead a healthy person to lose his or her mind and end up committing heinous and cruel crimes (Lebrasse, 2022). This is something that had not been seen so implicitly in the

previous century, and it is with Christie, that this kind of criticism or reflection takes on greater significance in the approaching years. Lebrasse goes on to mention that although Christie has a somewhat more traditional style of writing, it is true that it is this kind of compelling plots, reflections and stories that made her one of the best known names in the genre.

Agatha Christie not only creates one detective, but delights her audience with two: Hercule Poirot and Miss Marple. Just as Poe influenced many authors with his detective Dupin, and later Arthur Conan Doyle with Holmes, Christie does so with her two detectives, inspiring much of contemporary detective fiction authors years later (Martin, 2021).

In consideration of the foregoing, Miss Marple is a protagonist in many of her novels and makes her first appearance in *The Murder at the Vicarage* (1930) and since then she remained an important character in many other novels until finally in *Sleeping Murder* (1976) she dismissed. Physically, she is an older woman whose passion is crime, lives in St. Mary Mead and is always accompanied by her nephew, Raymond West. Christie characterised her with the typical appearance of the classic Victorian English woman of the time, but endowed her with an incredible observation skill, mischievousness and a characteristic rebelliousness that made her not follow the rules imposed by the society of the time. Christie delighted the reader with a rather strong, resolute and independent female character (Schicksal, 2019).

On another note, Christie was based on a Belgian policeman from the First World War to bring Hercule Poirot to life. This detective is characterised by being intuitive, critical, highly intelligent and, frequently, considers himself superior to the rest (Pandia, 2020). He is also capable of solving any crime that seems impossible. He is infallible and no case has ever escaped his privileged mind.

Poirot is without doubt a very original character who stands out for his unconventionality, as Csorba (2021) stated. The most distinguishing and amusing aspect about him is his funny black moustache that does not go unnoticed wherever he goes. The fact that he is such a distinctive character is what makes him stick in the reader's mind for years and be unforgettable. Another particular trait is that Poirot has a small obsession with the clothes he wears, which must always be neat and clean (Csorba, 2021).

Previously, Dupin applied his "reasoning technique" to solve crimes, later, Holmes made use of his "abductive technique", but Poirot leaves those techniques behind and relies upon his own intellect, referring to it as his "little grey cells" (Hardesty, 1983). With his intellect, Poirot is able to unravel any crime or case that has no apparent answer or explanation.

One of Agatha Christie's greatest attractions has always been undoubtedly her ingenuity which she demonstrates throughout all her stories along with her incredible intellectual thinking. Thanks to these skills, she was able to create highly brilliant and engaging plots. In addition, it is crucial to make reference to her amazing ability to create "puzzles" in her stories, following in this sense the same line as Poe a century before. Like Poe, Christie introduces the reader to a crime, to its corresponding investigation and to a series of clues through her detective and, in the very end, the detective himself is able to solve the case by means of explaining how all the crime was carried out by the criminal or murderer (Robert Merrill, 1997).

As a final note to conclude this long point, Agatha Christie has somehow not gone away completely, as Sophie Hannah was chosen by Christie's heirs to continue creating adventures with the beloved Hercule Poirot. Without a shadow of a doubt, readers and fans of "the queen of mystery" are more than happy as her books have been and continue to be very well received. Some of her titles are *The Monogram Murders* (2014), *Closed Casket* (2016), *The Mystery of Three Quarters* (2018) or *The Killings at Kingfisher Hill* (2020).

1.4. Detective fiction for young readers

If anything is central to this dissertation, it is that the ultimate goal is to design a didactic unit for young students using a detective fiction novel. This is why it is paramount to write about when it emerged, which writer initiated it and what benefits it presents. Therefore, a section will be devoted to summarise the main points.

As it has been discussed throughout the preceding lines, detective fiction gained a lot of popularity in the early 20th century both in America and Britain but also overseas. More and more adults immersed themselves in its incredible plots and asked for more stories to read. In the same way, teenagers were gradually getting into the genre and were fascinated by it. However, they suffered from restrictions and limitations in some countries, such as Russia, because many pedagogues and critics of the time considered this genre unsuitable for children and teenagers. Why deny literature to young people? Maslinskaya (2020) makes an arduous study and gives some answers to the above question. Firstly, they pointed out that the stories might encourage young people to imitate what they read. Thus, they feared that they might imitate the behaviour of the different thieves, murderers or robbers that the stories narrated. Secondly, they alluded to the idea that young people did not have the same level of moral sense as adults and this could lead to misinterpretations of the novels. They clung to the idea that a book had to be "healthy" (p.29) in the sense that it had to represent much more good than bad, and, in detective fiction, everything is surrounded by the evil and the impure. Thirdly, they argued that young people needed true stories

that showed reality rather than fantastic stories that distorted reality. Not very coherent, given the critical essence that detective stories acquired in the 20th century, depicting the reality as it is: full of horror, crime and immorality. Finally, Maslinskaya ends by commenting that many of these pedagogues and critics referred to the idea that detective stories extolled individualism over society, since in the end, it was the detective as the one who solved the crime and the case without the need for friends or family, that is to say, without help they were able to shine on their own.

Detective fiction for a young audience had a hard time in its beginnings, especially in some countries. Fortunately, little by little it started to penetrate more and more into the readership and in the end, it gained an incredibly reception in almost all societies. One of the most influential and important figures in the development and spread of a solid market for crime and detective stories for children was the American writer called Edward Stratemeyer (Routledge, 2010). He began his career as a writer of this genre with his series "The Rover Boys", which has had about thirty titles published between 1899 and 1926 under the pseudonym of "Arthur M. Winfield". Thanks to these stories, where Stratemeyer narrated the lives and deeds of three brothers and students of a military boarding school characterised by being adventurous, ingenious, risk-takers, he gained great popularity and success (Peterson, 2018). These brothers challenged the authorities and criminals themselves through defiant exploits where mystery, crime and suspense were the main ingredients.

This section cannot be concluded without mentioning the benefits of detective stories or fiction among young people. On the one hand, the first and most obvious benefit is that it encourages young people to read. Young readers are challenged through the plot of the story to solve the puzzle it presents, observe details, discard unhelpful information and discover the culprit of a series of characters (Seisser, 2014). Connected to this, this genre can be of real benefit to young people who excel in mathematical-logical intelligence. Secondly, it may help them decide what they want to be in the future, as there are many forensic references in this type of story. This can lead them to want to be a policeman, investigator, undercover agent or any job related to crime and investigation. Thirdly, it can strengthen their creativity. Although the author starts from a context of reality, it is true that at the same time s/he presents a fantastic world where the impossible or unthinkable has happened. Thanks to these scenarios and atmosphere, the young reader can let his or her imagination run wild and apply it to any other field. Not forgetting either that they can develop a degree of maturity and empathy through reading, as they can understand the situation of the victim, but also that of the criminal.

1.5. Benefits of using literature in English classroom

There is no doubt that using literature in the English classroom is a categorical success. It is true that it requires a lot of effort on the part of the teacher, especially in the search for specific literary texts to use and how to exploit them in class, or even in the design of activities that are interesting and fun for potential students. Without forgetting that it is vital to choose a genre that makes them curious so as not to lose their motivation at any time. The idea is to involve the pupil in the class.

As it was pointed out, applying literature in the EFL classroom has many different benefits. The following are some of the most esteemed ones:

- Literature is a vital support for teachers as it helps them to bring more variety to their classes. As Mohammed (2019) claims, literature in English classroom "invariably opens new windows through which the teachers can approach their materials" (p.1). That is to say, it is possible to bring up real examples of English related to particular events, moments, situations, etc. This simple fact helps to move from the abstract to something physical, and, consequently, students are more receptive, motivated and will remember different concepts or vocabulary much better. Furthermore, Mohammed goes on to argue that students are able to learn the vocabulary found in literary texts more easily than from typical endless long lists of vocabulary. Undoubtedly, this is due to the fact that students are learning vocabulary in context and are observing a real and contextualised usage. For this reason, it raises their degree of language awareness.
- It develops and strengthens creativity. The student-readers enter an alternate, fantastic world, more or less real in some cases, helping them to give free rein to their imagination. Moreover, they can extrapolate this creativity to many other aspects, for example, to the language they use in everyday conversations, through different idioms, synonyms, metaphors, etc. (Daskalovska & Dimova, 2012). Creativity is not only shown in art and writing, but also through words and communication.
- It enhances the communicative knowledge of the language as whenever authentic material is used, learners are able to perceive the actual reality of the language. This prepares them to deal with the English language in real contexts and to be able to participate in authentic communicative exchanges or experiences.
- What remains of the authors after they die are their texts, their stories. In no case have they left any instructions about how to read their texts or how they

should be interpreted and, therefore, there are no incorrect interpretations. Or, referring to the present day, current authors do not write a post on Instagram saying that their novels should be read and interpreted in a particular way. This is why applying literature in our teaching moves students from being passive to active readers. What matters is not the interpretation at the end, but how the learner has developed and elaborated a series of processes to arrive at his or her own interpretation. Moreover, as Daskalovska & Dimova (2012) point out, the interpretations of texts can also be influenced by the personality of the learners or by cognitive, psychological, affective or even social factors.

- The skill they will mainly practise is reading, but as Demetriou and Ruiz Mas (2009) mention, they can also practise other skills such as speaking, through reciting poems or singing songs; listening to of a live play, podcasts, or storytelling; and finally, writing a new ending, describing a character or a landscape.
- Independence from technologies. It is true that we owe a lot to technology and nowadays, it is an essential tool in many areas of our lives. However, like everything else, it has disadvantages, and one of them is the dependence that is being created towards mobile phones, computers, tablets, consoles, etc. Literature helps to break this dependence, to enjoy the time a little more, to make us see that pages are also fun and, finally, to disconnect from what enslaves us.

2. PART II: DIDACTIC UNIT

2.1. Introduction

The final objective of this Master's Thesis is the design and elaboration of a didactic unit based on literature aimed at the 1st year of "Bachillerato". For this purpose, Agatha Christie's novel *Death in the Clouds* (1935) has been chosen. In this case, a graded reader adapted to the students' level of English as a foreign language by the publisher Collins has been selected. Applying authentic literature has obvious benefits, as mentioned above, since the student is confronted with a real context and its real linguistic expression, but it is true that it may cause boredom or frustration when the student does not understand a large part of the original text and does not see progress. This is why a graded book, in cases where the learner still has a low to middle level in terms of vocabulary and grammar, is the best option to effectively introduce English literature in the classroom. Thanks to this policy, at the end of the book the student may feel rewarded and motivated for the next reading text, and due to all the new notions acquired, both vocabulary, idioms or grammatical structures, s/he will gradually move on to non-adapted readings.

2.2. Justification

This unit has been designed and developed taking into account the *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages* (CEFRL),¹ which "provides a common basis for the elaboration of language syllabuses, curriculum guidelines, examinations, textbooks, etc. across Europe" (2001: 10). Therefore, the unit is based on the specific needs of learners when studying and learning a modern language, in this case English. Moreover, various aspects have been considered such as the different skills and knowledge that need to be developed among the students in order to achieve a reasonable degree of effective communication according to their level. In addition, the whole didactic unit is built in accordance with the Order of January 15th 2021, which develops the curriculum in Non-Compulsory Education in Andalusia.

With this didactic unit, the main aim is for students to improve their reading and comprehension skills through reading, but also through the different tasks, activities and projects proposed. In addition, other activities are also included to improve the skills of listening and speaking, essential skills focused on communication. Finally, a specific

¹ Council of Europe. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, Teaching, Assessment*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 2001.

objective of this unit is to allow the student to perceive literature as something dynamic and fun and not as something compulsory, monotonous and tedious.

2.3. Contextualisation

Concerning the contextualisation of this didactic unit, it is intended to be implemented in the I.E.S Miguel Sánchez López, located in Torredelcampo (Jaén). The high school is situated in an urban area where the average family belongs to the middle-class and has sufficient resources for the corresponding education of all the students.

The high school has different suitable technologies and resources for carrying out a wide range of activities and tasks along with adequate Internet connectivity. In addition, it is equipped with different areas such as a library with a wide catalogue of books, a gym, two sports courts, physics, chemistry and biology laboratories, a technology classroom-workshop, music and plastic classrooms, two fully renovated computer classrooms and a Therapeutic Pedagogy classroom.

In this high school all the Compulsory Secondary Education is taught along with the Non-Compulsory, including both 1st and 2nd of “Bachillerato” and even a High Level Training Cycle. Still further, the school provides bilingual teaching from the 1st year of ESO to the 2nd year of “Bachillerato” with different agreements with both England and Germany for total immersion programmes in both language and culture.

The didactic unit is designed for the 1st year of non-bilingual “Bachillerato”. Considering the characteristics of the students for whom this didactic unit is designed, most of them have a B1 level in English, so their level of English is reasonably good and makes it possible to carry out different tasks.

Finally, the class is composed of thirty students, fourteen boys and sixteen girls. There are 2 slow learners, who will be provided with appropriate activities to their linguistic level in all sessions, and 1 gifted student who will have specific extra or self-access material with a higher degree of difficulty. However, it is true that there is a great heterogeneity in the class in terms of aptitudes, abilities and interests.

2.4. Timing

This unit will be taught in the third trimester of the course, specifically in April, close to Book’s Day (April 23), which we will commemorate and celebrate by reading Agatha Christie’s chosen book.

Furthermore, there are seven sessions of fifty-five minutes each. The distribution of the schedule is three sessions per week as provided in the curriculum of this academic year, being Monday, Wednesday and Friday the days of the week where there are

English classes for this group, so it will take two weeks and one day of the third week to complete the didactic unit.

Lastly, although each session is scheduled to be taught in fifty-five minutes, it is true that the last five minutes are given to the students to start reading the following chapters in class or resolve any doubts regarding the reading text since their only homework is the regular reading of five chapters per day. For this reason, the sessions are designed for fifty minutes.

2.5. Key competences

As the *Royal Decree 1105/2014* states, learning must take place through a series of competencies which involve a combination of practical skills, knowledge, motivation, ethical values and other social components to achieve effective action. Consequently, competencies are defined as "know-how" applicable to various contexts, both social, academic and professional (p.170). In addition, learning by competencies favours the learning processes themselves and the student's motivation and interest in learning, due to the interrelation between its components. A total of seven essential classroom competencies are identified; however, this didactic unit will promote the following:

- **Competency in Linguistic Communication (CLC):** Undoubtedly, this competence is one of the most relevant in language teaching since one of the most important objectives is to teach students to communicate in a foreign language. This competence is fostered through the different activities proposed where communication between students and student-teacher is fundamental.
- **Digital Competence (DC):** Currently, preparing digitally competent students is another of the key objectives that educational systems try to meet given the society in which we are immersed, since there are more and more digitalized resources and strategies at the disposal of users. Thanks to digitalization, there are many more means to exploit linguistic competence, so that both competences, go hand in hand in language classrooms. Traditional activities can be turned into more fun and varied, as well as more didactic, thanks to technologies. That is why many activities of this type have been created in this unit with this objective in mind.
- **Social and Civic Competences (SCC):** Learning a foreign language does not simply entail learning long lists of vocabulary or grammar; languages are also vehicles of cultural transmission. In addition, the greater the knowledge of a language, the greater the degree of respect and acceptance of a given community towards another community. On the other hand, this competence also helps the learner

to adapt more effectively to the society in which he/she is immersed and will help him/her to overcome various problems. For this reason, in one of the activities the student is proposed to read a news item about blackmailing to make him/her reflect on the problems that may be caused by the misuse of technology and how to act in the presence of this type of crime.

- **Sense of Initiative and Entrepreneurship (SIE):** This competence is clearly practised in the final project that the students are required to undertake. Students must record a literary podcast through which they narrate an invented story based on the characters in the graded book they have read. In addition, they must also create a poster to present their podcast to the rest of the class. Therefore, students must take different decisions and face different challenges and problems in order to complete the final project.

2.6. Objectives

From the learning achievements that students must attain at the end of the stage and the year, this unit includes the following:

▪ Stage objectives

As it is stated in the *Royal Decree 1105/ 2014*, the stage objectives of this didactic unit are:

- d) To strengthen the habits of reading, study and discipline, as necessary conditions for the effective use of learning, and as a means of personal development.
- f) To express themselves fluently and correctly in one or more foreign languages.
- g) To use with solvency and responsibility the information and communication technologies.
- k) To strengthen the entrepreneurial spirit with attitudes of creativity, flexibility, initiative, teamwork, self-confidence and critical sense.
- l) To develop artistic and literary sensibility, as well as the aesthetic criterion, by using sources of formation that may allow them to acquire cultural enrichment.

▪ Foreign Language objectives

Following the Order of January 15th 2021, the area objectives that are attained to this didactic unit are as follow:

Following the Order of January 15th 2021, the area objectives that are attained to this didactic unit are as follow:

1. Listen attentively and understand oral texts in the foreign language about different topics, in different genres and registers, directly uttered by the human voice or reproduced by audio storage and reproduction resources in different media.
2. Deliver oral productions of the foreign language with grammatical correctness, textual coherence and social appropriateness on diverse topics, genres and registers using one's own voice or resources for voice storage and reproduction.
3. Read and understand written texts in the foreign language about diverse topics, genres and registers in paper or digital format.
4. Write varied written texts with grammatical correctness, textual coherence and social appropriateness on diverse topics, genres and registers in paper and digital formats.
5. Be interested in the lexicon of the foreign language and learn it as organized by semantic fields and registers of formality as a means to produce oral and written manifestations of formal quality, textual coherence and social appropriateness.
7. Be aware of the function of the elements involved in the production of the vowel sound to imitate the native pronunciation of some standard variety of the foreign language.
9. Get to know representative literary works in the foreign language and read them at the level adapted to their comprehension possibilities in order to enjoy them and learn socio-cultural aspects of the culture, authors and events that took part in their production.

▪ **Didactic objectives**

1. To read a graded book and to understand its general meaning.
2. To acquire, identify and use new idioms related to crime and mystery.
3. To learn the rules of reported speech and to use it correctly both orally and in written form.
4. To write a short book review and short texts and sentences about different requested topics.
5. To record a literary podcast and introduce it orally by using a poster as visual support.

The following chart summarises the objectives and main key competences that are required from the students in this didactic unit:

DIDACTIC OBJECTIVES	STAGE OBJECTIVES	FOREIGN LANGUAGE OBJECTIVES	KEY COMPETENCES
- To read and understand the graded book <i>Death in the Clouds</i> by Agatha Christie. - To acquire, identify and use new idioms related to crime and mystery. - To learn the rules of the reported speech and to use it correctly both orally and in written form. - To write a short book review and short texts and sentences about different requested topics. - To record a literary podcast and introduce it orally by using a poster as visual support.	RD (1105/2014) d, f, g, k, l	(Order of January 15 th 2021) 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9	CLC DC SCC SIE

2.7. Contents

Regarding the contents to be worked on in this didactic unit, they will be linked to the objectives mentioned above, since it is the contents that help in the achievement of the set objectives and the acquisition of the competences. Furthermore, it is crucial to mention that the contents are related to the four skills, listening, speaking, reading and writing. For this reason, the contents are going to be broken down into 4 different blocks, as it can be seen below.

COMPREHENSION / PRODUCTION STRATEGIES

- Reading and understanding the graded book of Agatha Christie's *Death in the Clouds*
- Listening to and comprehending oral texts

- Writing sentences and short texts using new vocabulary and idioms
- Scanning a text to find information

COMMUNICATIVE FUNCTIONS

- Recognising reported speech within a narrative.
- Expressing opinions and points of view about a book.
- Interacting with classmates about current topics such as blackmailing.
- Recording of a podcast about a story connected with the graded book.

LINGUISTIC-DISCURSIVE STRUCTURE

- Reported speech: statements, yes-no questions, wh-questions, offers, suggestions, orders, commands and promises
- Reporting verbs
- Vocabulary related to crime and mystery
- Idioms associated to detective fiction

SOCIOCULTURAL AND SOCIOLINGUISTIC ASPECTS

- Recognising and perceiving the English language as a useful tool to communicate with different people around the world
- Learning some cultural aspects about a famous and well-known English writer such as Agatha Christie

2.8. Cross-curricular elements

Cross-curricular elements are those that do not refer exclusively to a particular and specific area of the curriculum that they have to be included in all the subjects of the Non-Compulsory Education and affect all of them. According to the *Royal Decree 1105/2014*, they are: reading comprehension; oral and written expression; audio-visual communication; information and communication technologies, entrepreneurship; civic and constitutional education; equity and educational inclusion of people with disabilities; gender equality and non-discriminatory attitude; prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts; development and strengthening of the entrepreneurial spirit; physical activity and balanced diet and education on road safety. In this didactic unit,

the cross-curricular elements that can be found in most of the activities proposed are the following:

- **Reading comprehension:** One of the central objectives of this final project is to make students improve their reading skill through the graded book *Death in the Clouds* by Agatha Christie. Furthermore, this didactic unit is oriented to help them with the official English exam at the “EVAU” in which most of the test is about reading comprehension, apart from grammar content and vocabulary.
- **Oral and written expression:** When studying and, therefore, learning a language, it is of paramount importance to express both in oral and written forms. For this reason, all activities have been thought regarding these two ways of communication. Besides, in their final project they are required to record a literary podcast and make a short presentation to introduce it in class and they are required to deliver a portfolio where their written expression will be tested.
- **Audio-visual communication:** Some activities in the unit encompass the listening of YouTube videos and a literary podcast where students must extract information.
- **Information and communication technologies, entrepreneurship:** To carry out the final project, they are supposed to investigate new apps or web pages to record the podcast, such as Anchor, Ivoox, Audacity, among others. Besides, they have to generate a Qr code of the mp3 recording to allow different people of the high school listen to it at any moment. Additionally, they are required to work in groups and make decisions about what story to narrate, what characters to choose, how to record it, etc. That means that they are the leaders of their projects and that will help them to develop a sense of entrepreneurship for the future.
- **Prevention and peaceful resolution of conflicts:** Although it is true that not the entire didactic unit is aimed at nurturing this cross-curricular element, students are given the situation of reading about a current piece of news on blackmailing and they have to think, help others and prepare themselves to avoid this type of crime in social media.

2.9. Interdisciplinarity

Interdisciplinarity is fundamental when designing a didactic unit since it ensures that there is no fragmented education at any time and fosters coordination and, above all,

cooperation among teachers of the different disciplines. In this didactic unit, the subjects involved are:

- **History:** Students learn about an important detective author of the 20th century, Agatha Christie. Studying thoroughly her life and some curious facts about her past along with the reading of one of her masterpieces such as *Death in the Clouds* (published in 1935) will the students to discover why she is worldwide known as the “Queen of Mystery”.
- **Art:** Students are in contact with audio-visual material (YouTube videos, literary podcasts, online scape room and online activities), which, after all, is another kind of art.

2.10. Methodology

If one aspect is clear when it comes to teaching languages, it is that there is no single, exclusive and effective methodology. Rather, it is necessary to make use of an eclectic methodology where various approaches are used in order to personalise teaching and to accommodate the great diversity of students and needs that exists in the classroom. This is why this didactic unit employs an eclectic methodology, as mentioned above, which include the following approaches:

- **Communicative approach:** The whole didactic unit is built around communication. In all sessions, students have to communicate information and express themselves on different topics. Moreover, this approach is one of the most effective in English classrooms, as learning a language is synonymous with being able to communicate with more people who speak the same language. Both the activities and the final project are oriented to making the students communicate.
- **Cooperative approach:** The unit is designed to be carried out most of the time collaboratively. This is the reason why students are required to work in small groups or in pairs most of the time and even in the final project. Thanks to this, they have a very active role in the different sessions. With this approach, we are helping them to create a concept of socialisation, cooperation and empathy, because that is what everyday life is all about. We are preparing competent students who must know how to work and cooperate in society. Furthermore, through this, they develop their own personality traits and individualities, as, although they work in groups, their individual work is also necessary to achieve the common goal.

- **Project-based learning:** All the sessions that make up the didactic unit are a series of steps that the student must go through so that, at the end, s/he is able to create a project, in this case a literary podcast and its corresponding presentation. Through this approach, the learner will develop the different skills and knowledge quite necessary to the final step.
- **Grammar-Translation method:** The teaching unit includes some traditional grammar activities for practising Reported Speech contents. Including this type of activities, even if they are traditional, have great benefits and advantages nowadays and the student learns some of the grammatical aspects that require more attention in a more secure and lasting way. However, it is true that this type of activity should not be overused as it could lead to boredom and loss of interest on the part of the learner.

2.11. Lesson Plan

The novel of Agatha Christie, *Death in the Clouds*, which will be used in the whole lesson plan can be found in this [Drive Document](#):

SESSION 1: DELVING INTO THE MYSTERY QUEEN			
ACTIVITY	SKILL(S)	DEVELOPMENT	APPENDIX
<u>WARM-UP</u> (5') <i>First steps</i>	Speaking	The teacher stars the lesson asking the students a couple of questions just to introduce the new topic. Firstly, questions closely related to literature, and then, to detective fiction. - Are you into reading? - Who knows Sherlock Holmes? - Do you have any idea what detective fiction means?	-
<u>ACTIVITY 1</u> (10') <i>Greeting Agatha Christie!</i>	Listening Writing Speaking	Teacher plays a short video about some aspects of Agatha Christie's life. They are given a worksheet with a couple of questions that they are required to answer while watching the video thoroughly. The video might be reproduced twice if the students present	1

		problems comprehending it. Once they finish, the questions will be corrected aloud immediately.	
ACTIVITY 2 (5') First impressions	Speaking	After watching the video and answering the questions, teacher asks them what they think of Agatha Christie and if they see her as an interesting writer to explore in the next two weeks.	-
ACTIVITY 3 (20') What happened?	Speaking	The teacher informs the students that, as it was mentioned in the video, Agatha Christie disappeared for eleven days and today it is still a mystery which she has never revealed. Many police officers, media, fans and family members conducted an exhaustive search to try to find her without success. However, she appeared after eleven days in a hotel all alone and supposedly with no memory of anything. Many doctors claimed that she had suffered a severe memory loss, others claimed that Christie was looking to frame her husband for cheating on her with another woman. Nonetheless, what is clear is that those days have remained a great unknown issue in the life and deeds of Christie. In groups of 4 four they have to imagine what might have happened to Christie during those days. To make the activity easier, the teacher gives them a piece of paper with a series of points to complete, as a kind of script to create the story. They will have seven minutes to do so. The remaining time will be dedicated to the presentation of the story. One member of each group will go to the board to tell the story. The choice of the spokesperson will be made through a web-page containing a roulette with 4 different colours. Beforehand, each member must have chosen a colour (yellow, red, blue or green). The roulette	2

		wheel is spun and when it stops, the colour that has come out will correspond to the pupil who will tell the story in front of the class. This is a fair and random way of choosing volunteers in class.	
<u>ACTIVITY 4</u> (10') <i>Death in the clouds: initiation</i>	Reading	In the last activity of this first section, the teacher introduces Christie's book, which will be read during the next two weeks but without mentioning the title since they will have to guess a title for it. The teacher talks about the date of publication, its synopsis and plot and its main features without revealing important data to maintain the curiosity among learners. Thereupon, the teacher hands them a photocopy of the first pages of Chapter 1 to read them aloud. Then, as it was said earlier, they have to think about an appealing title. Finally, the teacher reveals the title of the book. Furthermore, reading the first few pages in class may help the students to become more curious to see what happens in the next pages, and thus, student participation and cooperation is greatly increased. Once they finish, the teacher explains the portfolio that they have to make in the next five sessions. In addition, he comments to them that it will contribute to the final grade along with the project that they are supposed to do at the end of the sessions. The portfolio consists of a daily work which will consist of: - A glossary: the students must include the words they do not know while reading. The word must be included both in English and Spanish.	3 4

		- Activities: As the activities are developed, the teacher will specify what should be added in the corresponding section. - Review: Once they have finished reading, they should write a review between 100 and 120 words. Moreover, the last section will be dedicated to briefly describe (50 words) the character that most caught their attention or surprised them.	
Homework: Read chapters 1-5			
SESSION 2: GETTING TO KNOW THE CHARACTERS			
ACTIVITY	SKILL(S)	DEVELOPMENT	APPENDIX
<u>WARM-UP</u> (5') <i>The great detective</i>	Writing	Hercule Poirot is described in an extremely curious way. Agatha does not describe him as such, but it is through the different characters' comments and conversations that she manages to convey the image of Hercule Poirot. For this reason, it is interesting to know what image they have formed in their minds of this detective. To do this, students scan a qr code through their phones which directs them to <i>Mentimeter</i> . Once there, they must write two words (adjectives, nouns, verbs...) related to Poirot and submit them. At the same time, the teacher projects that same web page on the projector to see what the general impression of the detective was and comment on it.	5
<u>ACTIVITY 1</u> (10') Grammar explanation	-	The teacher begins explaining the grammar of Reported Speech (statements + verb changes from direct to indirect speech: time expressions and pronouns). After explaining it, the teacher asks them if there are any doubts, and if so, he/she will clarify them before continuing.	-

<u>ACTIVITY 2</u> (15') What was said?	Writing	In this activity, students are required to complete a worksheet. In it, they have to transform sentences of the five first chapters from direct to indirect speech. Although it is a rather traditional exercise, the benefits it brings are undeniable, since the student assimilates better the changes to be made and pays more attention to verb tenses and other expressions. After completing it, it will be corrected.	6
<u>ACTIVITY 3</u> (20') Creating an alibi	Speaking Writing	The class is divided into groups of 5. Each group chooses a passenger from those who have appeared in the first five chapters. The characters are: Jane Grey, Cicele Horbury, Madeleine, Norman Gale, Venetia Kerr, Dr. Roger Bryant, Mr. Clancy, Mr. Ryder, Jean Dupont, Armand Dupont, Madame Guiselle, Henry Mitchell and Albert Davis. Standing up, each group lines up and each member is assigned a number from 1 to 5. The first one has to think of a sentence in direct speech according to the character that the group has chosen. Once s/he has thought of it, tells it to the second member and this one has to pass it to indirect speech and tell it to the third one, and so on up to member number 5, who has to write down the phrase on a piece of paper. Then, s/he goes to the place of the first one and everyone moves one place. So, 1 goes to 2, 2 to 3, 3 to 4, 4 to 5 and 5 to 1. Then, the same process of thinking of a sentence related to the character is repeated for 5 turns. The result is that each group has had to create an alibi for each character. In addition, the sentences have a rule. In the first sentence they must use the present tense, in the second the past tense, in the third the future tense, and in the fourth and fifth two different	-

		modals. Once they finish, a mini debate is held among all the members of the groups to try to defend the character that he/she did not commit the murder using the writing sentences as a guide to explain their arguments. The teacher will act as moderator and will give way to the different groups to present their arguments. To do this, they must use mostly the grammar content: reported speech.	
Homework: The teacher divides the class into pairs. One member of the pair is A and the other B. A has to read chapters from 6 to 10 and B, 6 to 9.			
SESSION 3: I ASKED MY PARTNER: WHAT HAPPENED?			
ACTIVITY	SKILL(S)	DEVELOPMENT	APPENDIX
<u>WARM-UP</u> (10') <i>And that's what happened</i>	Speaking	Since B has not read chapter 10, so the mission of A is to narrate it to his/her partner. Once they finish, B has to answers a couple of questions in Genially to test if s/he has received a detailed summary of chapter 10. While B is doing this mini activity, A can start reading the following chapters so as not to waste the time.	-
<u>ACTIVITY 1</u> (10') <i>Grammar explanation</i>	-	The teacher explains the theory of reported speech, in this case, how to transform questions both wh- and yes/no type questions. In this time, the teacher tries to clarify all the doubts that may arise among learners.	-
<u>ACTIVITY 2</u> (15') <i>Asking questions in</i>	Reading Writing	Students are required to complete a worksheet with two different activities. In the first one, they have to transform sentences from direct to indirect speech through	7

<i>the detective's key</i>		examples from the book. In the second activity, they are supposed to search 6 questions in direct speech from chapters 6 to 10 and put them in indirect speech. Three sentences have to be wh-question type and the other three, yes/no question type.	
<u>ACTIVITY 3</u> (15') <i>Mona Lisa's robbery</i>	Listening Writing	Since the book that students are reading is about a murder, now, it is time to listen to information about a robbery. Therefore, the teacher plays a video and they have to watch it carefully. What they have to do is listen to the story, take sentences (both statements and questions) and transfer them to indirect speech. To minimize the degree of difficulty, the teacher stops the video when sentences that could be picked up are shown, and also to give them time to copy them.	8
Homework: Keeping the same pairs as the previous day, now it is B who must read chapters from 11 to 15 and A only from 11 to 14.			
SESSION 4: TOWARDS A MORE ENGLISH LANGUAGE			
ACTIVITY	SKILL(S)	DEVELOPMENT	APPENDIX
<u>WARM-UP</u> (10) <i>And that's what happened</i>	Speaking	Following the same procedure as in the previous session, student B, who reads all the chapters, narrates the last chapter (15) to student A. When s/he finishes, student A must answer a series of questions in Genially platform to see if student B has provided him/her with a good summary. While A is taking the test, B starts reading the next chapters.	-
<u>ACTIVITY 1</u> (5) <i>Be honest!</i>	Speaking	It is important to dedicate a couple of minutes to ask the students if they are enjoying the reading and the book in general as they are halfway through the book. So the teacher asks:	-

		- Are you enjoying the story? - Do you have any idea who the murderer might be?	
ACTIVITY 2 (10') <i>Grammar explanation</i>	-	The teacher explains the last part of grammar related to Reported Speech (orders, offers, promises, suggestions). Finally, s/he resolves doubts if they have arisen.	-
ACTIVITY 3 (10') <i>Time to practise!</i>	Writing Speaking	Students are given a worksheet where they have to transform sentences into reported speech taking into account the newly learnt grammatical contents.	9
ACTIVITY 4 (20') <i>Do you dare to enter?</i>	Reading Writing	The teacher explains that just as we use many idioms in Spanish, the same happens in English. He also emphasizes the importance of learning them in order to sound more like a native speaker and improve the level of English. S/he also mentions that Agatha Christie makes a great use of them in many of her novels, and this is why different idioms are going to be learned. These idioms are closely related to crime and mystery, the two ingredients that always appear in her novels. In pairs, they are going to do a scape room in which they have to deduce most of the meanings of idioms if they want to get out of the haunted house safely (instructions are inside the escape room). In addition, they must write down the idioms so as not to forget them as they will be needed later. When they finish, the students have become Poirot's assistant and while on vacation they have witnessed a murder. Now, they must write a short WhatsApp to Poirot telling him what has happened using at least 3 or 5 new idioms. In addition, in their individual portfolio they have	10

		to find three more idioms at home and add them to it. It is a more game-like activity to change the rhythm of the class and make them feel a bit more relaxed and motivated to continue with the rest of the sessions.	
Homework: Read chapters 16-19			
SESSION 5: PODCAST TIME!			
ACTIVITY	SKILL(S)	DEVELOPMENT	APPENDIX
<u>WARM-UP</u> (5') <i>Reviewing grammar</i>	Speaking	The teacher asks for two or three volunteers to summarise the grammar content of reported speech that has been taught during the previous sessions.	-
<u>ACTIVITY 1</u> (15') <i>Listening to a literary podcast</i>	Listening Speaking	Since part of the final project is the recording of a literary podcast, this first activity of session 5 will focus on showing them an example. First, the teacher asks: - Do you know what a podcast is? - Are you into listening to podcasts? Then, to show an example, the teacher records a podcast reading chapter 20 of the book and the students have to listen carefully paying attention to the content but also to the pronunciation, intonation and other important supralinguistic aspects. In addition, to check if they have understood the recording, they are required to answer a couple of questions after listening to it twice. - Who did Poirot go to Scotland Yard to visit / What for? - What was on the list that Inspector Japp began to read?	-

		- How many people were affected? How many were unaffected? - What was the most interesting thing about the case? - What was in Madame Giselle's saucer? What did it really mean?	
ACTIVITY 2 (10') Grammar: Reporting verbs	Writing	The teacher explains that in reported speech there are a wide variety of verbs that can be used in addition to the common verbs such as say, tell, ask, suggest, order, etc. The verbs to be taught are the following: accept, point out, complain, refuse, congratulate, threaten, explain, encourage, insist, remind. In their portfolio, they have to write a sentence with each of them using the Reported Speech (statements, questions, suggestions, orders, promises...)	-
ACTIVITY 3 (10') Deduce the meaning!	Writing	In pairs, students have to deduce the meaning of the following words by paying attention to the context in which they are written. Firstly, they must search for the word in the chapter and then write its meaning using their own words. To find the word in the chapter, they are required to use the scanning technique.	11
ACTIVITY 4 (10') Blackmail is also a crime	Reading Writing	In the chapters they had to read as homework, they will find out that Hercule Poirot has discovered that Lady Horbury was being blackmailed by Madame Giselle. Following this, the teacher explains to the students that nowadays more and more people are being blackmailed, especially through social networks, and it is necessary to take extreme caution to avoid this type of crime. Therefore, the teacher gives them a current piece of news about blackmailing. They have to read it individually and then, in groups of 5, discuss	12

		tips to avoid it or to help someone who may be susceptible to fall into this crime.	
Homework: Read chapters 20 to 25			
SESSION 6: TOWARDS THE FINAL PROJECT!			
ACTIVITY	SKILL(S)	DEVELOPMENT	APPENDIX
<u>WARM-UP</u> (5') <i>The farewell</i>	Speaking	Since the book has just been finished, the teacher may now ask them: - What did you think of the book? - Did you enjoy it? - Did you expect that ending?	-
<u>ACTIVITY 1</u> (15') <i>Final project: instructions</i> <i>The Heirs!</i>	-	The teacher explains the instructions to carry out the final project that will be evaluated together with the delivery of the portfolio that they have to do on a daily basis. The final project is the recording of a literary podcast in which they narrate a story that they have invented taking 2 or 3 characters from the book. The story must be about what has happened once the murderer has been discovered. For this reason, the name of the podcast is "The Heirs". The instructions/tips for the podcast are as follows: - Groups of 3 people. - Duration: 3 minutes - Pay attention to: intonation, rhythm... - Creativity and originality - Apps for recording: Anchor, Spreaker Studio, Podbean, Ivoox... In addition, session 7 will be dedicated to listening to each of the different podcasts. Moreover, they must make a poster of their story, one that is engaging and visual. They will present it before the listening of their	-

		corresponding podcast. On this poster, they must include a qr code with their audio, as those posters will be hung on the high school bulletin board so that anyone may listen to the amazing stories.	
ACTIVITY 2 (10') <i>Searching on the Internet</i>	Speaking Writing	The teacher explains that, when narrating stories, it is of utmost importance to link ideas to sequence them. Therefore, in groups of 3, the teacher asks them to search the Internet for different expressions and connectors to use in the recording and narration of their stories. They should add all these expressions and connectors in a Drive document , so that all groups can make use of this new and useful information.	-
ACTIVITY 3 (20') <i>Ready, set, go!</i>	-	Students are given these last 20 minutes to begin to organize themselves, think of an argument, form groups, and resolve any doubts that may arise.	-
SESSION 7: PODCAST'S TIME!			
This session is dedicated to the presentation of the posters and to listening to the podcasts. Once the presentations are finished, they will discuss which story they liked best and, in addition, the teacher will ask them what they thought of the experience of learning different aspects of grammar, idioms and vocabulary through literature along with what they thought of Agatha Christie as a writer.			

2.12. Resources

The necessary resources for the development of this didactic unit are:

- Graded book
- Computers
- Projector
- Internet connection
- Mobile phones
- Notebooks

- Pencils

2.13. Attention to diversity

As it was mentioned before in the contextualisation section, in the class there is two slow learners and one gifted student. It is crucial to cater for diversity and facilitate the acquisition of competences and the achievement of the different proposed objectives to these students. In addition, we have to take into account that these students have different learning styles and preferences and therefore it is necessary to adapt some of the activities in the different sections in order to make them feel integrated at all times and, above all, to satisfy their individual learning needs. Moreover, the involvement of the teacher and the classmates is of utmost importance too in order to make them feel comfortable and aware that they form part of the class as a whole.

To begin with, the homework for everyone has been to read 5 chapters a day. Slow learners do not need to meet this objective because of the length of the reading, so the gifted student is required to provide the two slow learners with a summary of the chapter each day, highlighting the most important events in the reading.

SESSION 1	
SLOW LEARNERS	GIFTED STUDENT
Activity 1: They are given the script of the video to make its understanding easier. Here, the portfolio's instructions are explained. The slow learners have specific instructions: - Extension of review of the book: 60 – 80 words - Writing of 7 sentences using reporting verbs, instead of 11 The rest of the activities/tasks are maintained.	Activity 3: Apart from the speaking, they are required to invent their own stories and write them.
SESSION 2	
SLOW LEARNERS	GIFTED STUDENT

Activity 2: The teacher creates two groups and puts each student into one. The classmates themselves help them to complete the exercise.	Activity 2: If s/he finished earlier, s/he is required to search in the chapters 1-5 more examples of direct speech statements and transform them into indirect speech.
SESSION 3	
SLOW LEARNERS	GIFTED STUDENT
Activity 2: The level of difficulty of this activity is reduced. They only have to complete 3 questions and look for two examples (one of each type) in the chapters. Activity 3: They are given the script of the video to make its understanding easier. They are required to write only 2 examples of the video just for make them more focused on the listening to try to improve this skill a little bit more.	Activity 2: Extra practice if s/he finishes earlier.
SESSION 4	
SLOW LEARNERS	GIFTED STUDENT
Activity 3: The teacher creates two groups and puts each student into one. The classmates themselves help them to complete the exercise. Activity 4: From the beginning these two slow learners are required to do the scape room with the help of their classmates to discover and deduce the meanings of the different idioms. However, if they feel anxious or stressed about it, they will be given the meanings of the different idioms and they will have to create a sentence with each of them as an alternative activity.	Activity 4: Instead of writing a short WhatsApp, s/he must write an informal e-mail to Poirot using at least 5 new idioms and following the appropriate structure of the e-mail.

SESSION 5	
SLOW LEARNERS	GIFTED STUDENT
Activity 1: They are given the script of the literary podcast. Activity 3: Instead of searching for the word through the different chapters, they are given the sentences in which those words appear and from that, they try to deduce the meanings.	Activity 3: Apart from the activity itself, s/he has to write a sentence with each of the newly learnt words. Activity 4: Once s/he finishes reading the piece of news, s/he has to summarise it to his or her two slow learners.
SESSION 6	
SLOW LEARNERS	GIFTED STUDENT
A part of the session is dedicated to explaining the final project and some requirements will be specified for these students.	
As the project is carried out in groups, one slow learner will be with a random group, while the other will be with a different group. The instructions remain the same. The leaders can help the slow learners to contribute to the fulfilment of the different tasks to create the final project.	Apart from recording the literary podcast and making the short presentation with its respective poster together with the portfolio, s/he will have to record a video (about 5 minutes) talking about Agatha Christie's life, highlighting some interesting points or curious facts.

2.14. Evaluation

The following table introduces the evaluation criteria that have been taken into account for this didactic unit.

EVALUATION CRITERIA	ASSESSABLE LEARNING STANDARDS
1. To read a graded book and to understand its general meaning (3.1). 2. To acquire, identify and use new idioms related to crime and mystery (3.6 + 2.6).	1. To read a graded book and understand it completely. 2. To acquire and use new idioms related with a specific topic.

3. To learn the reported speech grammar and to use it correctly both orally and in written form (3.5 + 2.5+ 4.5). 4. To write a short book review and short texts and sentences about different requested topics (portfolio) (4.1). 5. To record a literary podcast and introduce it orally (2.1).	3. To understand and use reported speech in communication. 4. To write a book review and other short texts related to specific topics. 5. To produce a literary podcast in groups and introduce it to the rest of the class orally.
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The following table introduces the marking criteria and the instruments for those evaluation criteria:

EVALUATION CRITERIA (Order of January 15th, 2021)	INSTRUMENTS	WEIGHING
2.1. To produce coherent, well-structured texts on topics of personal interest, every day or less familiar matters, in a formal, neutral or informal register, making appropriate use of the most common cohesive devices, and showing reasonable control of frequently used expressions, structures and lexis, both of a general and more specific nature.	FINAL PROJECT Rubric	25%
2.5. To use with reasonable accuracy the commonly used morphosyntactic structures, discourse patterns, connecting and cohesive elements in such a way that the discourse is well organised and adequately fulfils the corresponding communicative function(s).	Class work	5%
2.6. To select and use common and more specialised oral vocabulary related to one's own interests and needs in personal, public, academic and occupational/work-related areas, and commonly used expressions and idioms.	Class work	5%
3.1. To identify the main ideas, relevant information and general implications of texts of some length,	Class work	10%

well organised and with linguistic structures of some complexity, in a standard variety of language and dealing with both abstract and concrete topics within one's own field of specialisation or interest, in personal, public, academic or occupational/work-related domains, provided that difficult sections can be reread.		
3.5. To distinguish and apply to the comprehension of written text the specific meanings and functions generally associated with various syntactic structures in common use according to the context of communication (e.g. an interrogative structure to give an order).	Class work	5%
3.6. To know, select and use common and more specialised oral vocabulary related to one's own interests and needs in personal, public, academic and occupational/work-related areas, and commonly used expressions and idioms.	Class work	5%
4.1. To write, in any medium, clearly structured texts on a range of general and more specific topics related to one's own interests or speciality, giving descriptions in sufficient detail; writing in one's own words, and organising coherently, information and ideas drawn from different sources, and justifying one's own opinions on general or more specific topics, using elements of cohesion and coherence and commonly used lexis, or more specific lexis according to the context of communication.	Portfolio	35%
4.5. To use with reasonable accuracy the morphosyntactic structures, discourse patterns, connecting and cohesive elements in common use so that the discourse is well organised and adequately fulfils the corresponding communicative function(s).	Class work	5%

- **Final project's rubric**

	30%	15%	10%	5%
Organization and content	Information is presented in a logical and coherent sequence and the content is clearly defined.	Information is presented in a logical sequence which the audience can follow and most of the content is defined.	Information is not presented clearly enough and the content is only somehow defined.	There is no sequence of information and the content is not defined.
Linking words, connectors and expressions	The story includes a huge variety of linking phrases, connectors and expressions.	The story includes lots of linking phrases, connectors and expressions.	The story includes some linking words, connectors and expressions.	There are hardly any linking words, connectors and expressions.
Voice	Student speaks clearly; not too quickly or slowly and loudly enough for everyone to hear.	Student speaks clearly most of the time; sometimes too quickly or slowly and loudly enough for most of the audience to hear.	Student speaks not so clearly most of the time; frequently too quickly or slowly and hardly loud enough for the audience to hear.	Student mumbles or speaks too quickly or slowly and too softly for everyone to hear.
Eye contact	Student maintains eye contact	Student maintains eye contact most of the time	Student maintains eye contact rarely	Student does not make eye contact

	throughout the presentation.	throughout the presentation.	throughout the presentation.	with audience members.
Creativity / Originality	Very original literary podcast, presentation and poster; captures the audience's attention.	Original literary podcast, presentation and poster; most of the time captures the audience's attention.	Not very original and the audience's attention is rarely captured.	Repetitive with little or no originality and does not capture audience's attention.

- **Portfolio's rubric**

	35%	20%	10%	5%
Vocabulary	Student includes more than 4 words related to the topic.	Student includes 3 or 4 words related to the topic.	Student includes 1 or 2 words related to the topic.	Student does not include any words related to the topic.
Coherence	The text is completely understood and extremely connected to the topic.	The text is very well understood and connected to the topic.	The text is understood but it is not so related to the topic.	The text is not understood and it is not related to the topic at all.
Cohesion	Student uses more than 4 connectors and the ideas are well structured.	Student uses 3 or 4 connectors and the ideas are structured enough.	Student uses 1 or 2 connectors and the ideas are more or less structured.	Ideas are not well structured and there is no use of connectors.
	Student has understood	Student has understood	Student has not really	Student has not

Grammar content	the grammar content completely and makes a good use of it.	more or less the grammar content and is able to use it.	understood the grammar content and is not quite sure of how to use it.	understood the grammar content at all.
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3. Conclusion

To conclude, literature, in this case detective fiction, is a powerful resource for teaching English as we have seen throughout the first part of this dissertation and exemplified in the second part. Although, it is true that it requires more effort when choosing a book suitable to students' interests and motivations. Besides the fact that it implies the student to be prepared to face different literary works.

Moreover, suffice it to say that teaching English is not an easy task. However, there are many novelties and new teaching methods that can be applied to make this process much more dynamic and fun. This is the main reason why this didactic unit has been designed. Through it, the student is able to learn grammatical content, specifically Reported Speech, and vocabulary and idioms related to the topic of the novel *Death in the Clouds*. In addition, the student can be taught that literature is another option for learning a foreign language.

By last, reading is not something that everyone likes and it is okay if someone does not like it. Nor does reading classics make you a better reader. But what does matter is to give literature a chance. Read any book, be it fantasy, science fiction, utopia, etc.; reading to discover and discover yourself is what really matters. And if there is anything to end this dissertation with, it is the idea that reading has saved and continues to save lives through its pages. As a future English teacher, I hope to make students see that reading always offers a safe place and that, sometimes, the company of a book and its world is also another way to live.

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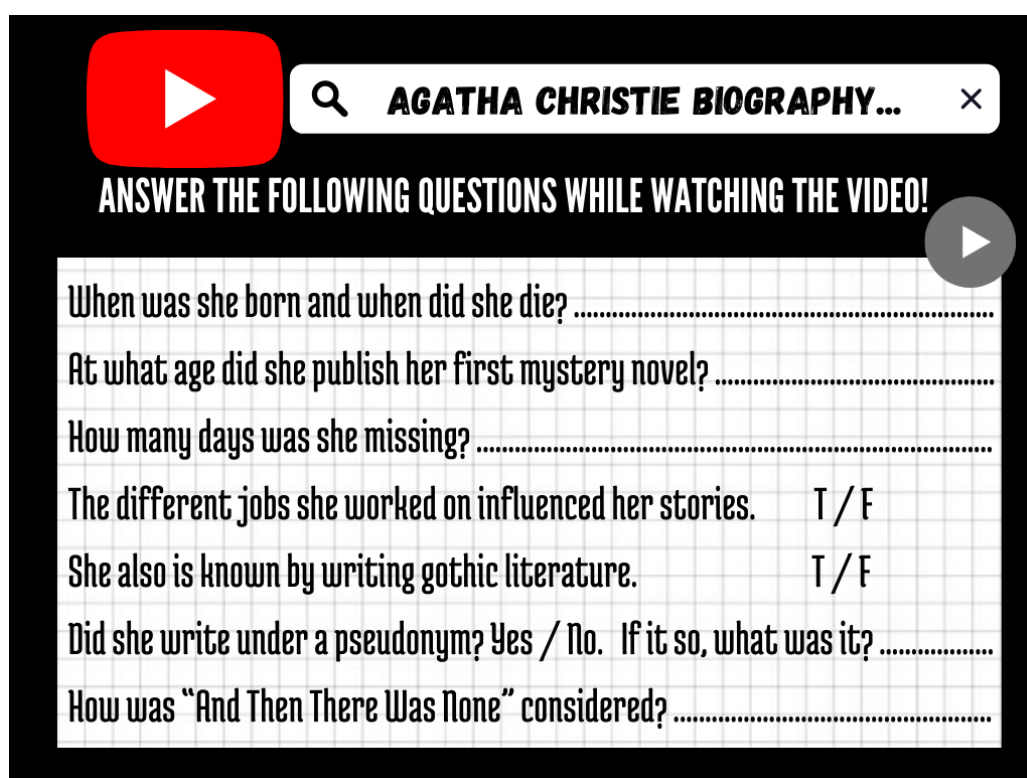
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Royal Decree 1105/14 of December, 26th (BOE number 3 of January 3rd) which establishes the core curriculum in Compulsory Secondary Education and Bachillerato.

Order of January 15th, 2021 (BOJA number 144 July 28th) which develops the curriculum in CSE, regulates attention to diversity and arranges the evaluation of the learning process.

5. Appendices

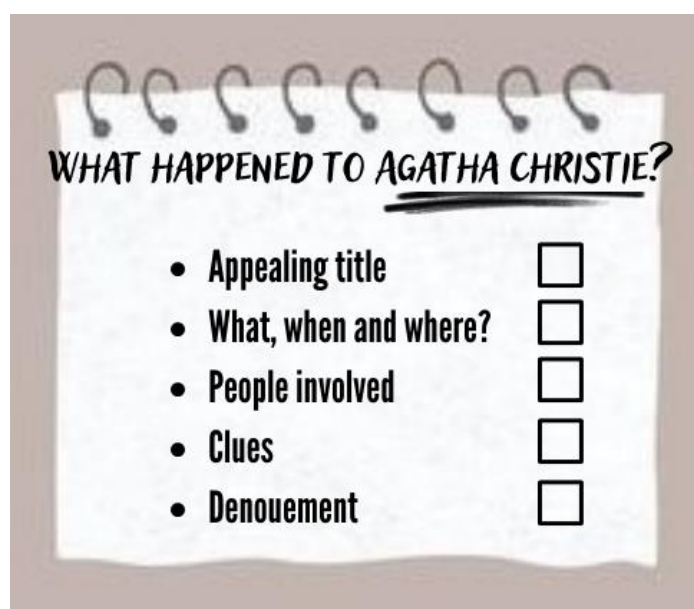
- Appendix 1



ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS WHILE WATCHING THE VIDEO!

- When was she born and when did she die?
- At what age did she publish her first mystery novel?
- How many days was she missing?
- The different jobs she worked on influenced her stories. T / F
- She also is known by writing gothic literature. T / F
- Did she write under a pseudonym? Yes / No. If it so, what was it?
- How was "And Then There Was None" considered?

- Appendix 2



WHAT HAPPENED TO AGATHA CHRISTIE?

- Appealing title ☐
- What, when and where? ☐
- People involved ☐
- Clues ☐
- Denouement ☐

Chapter 1 Paris to Croydon

The September sun shone on Le Bourget airport near Paris as the passengers entered the aeroplane Prometheus, for their flight to England. Jane Grey went to her seat in the rear cabin, at the back of the plane.

A woman was standing nearby, talking very loudly. 'My dear Cicely! Where were you staying? Juan les Pins? Oh, yes. No, I've been in Le Pinet. Let's sit together. Oh, can't we? I see ...'

A foreign voice said politely, 'Please, Madame, take my seat,' and a small, elderly man with a large moustache and an egg-shaped head got up from his seat. Jane looked at the two women for whom he had offered to move to a different seat. She had also been staying at Le Pinet, a popular holiday destination on the French coast, and she remembered one of the women standing nervously at a table in the casino. Her name was Lady Horbury. She was married to a Lord now, but she had once been a dancer in musical and comedy theatre. Unlike Lady Horbury, the other woman clearly looked like a real aristocrat.

Jane turned to look out of the window. She would not look at the young man who was sitting opposite her. If their eyes met, he might recognize her from that night at the casino! She felt shy and embarrassed in front of him.

At last, the plane took off, and there was Le Bourget spread out below them. The midday flight to London carried twenty-one passengers – ten in the front cabin, eleven in the rear, and there were two stewards on board to look after everyone. As the plane flew towards the English Channel. Jane thought about her adventure.

...the ground or stays
...verse is vast, and you

It started when she had won a hundred pounds in a lottery and decided to spend the money on a week at Le Pinet. Jane worked at a hairdressing salon called Antoine's, and her customers were always going down to Le Pinet. As Jane styled the hair of these rich and glamorous ladies, she thought, 'Why can't I go to Le Pinet?' Well, now she could. And so, she had.

Every evening of her holiday, Jane had gone to the casinos with a small amount of money to spend at the gambling tables. On her fourth evening, she decided to play at the roulette wheel. She won a little money, but lost more. As she waited to place her last bet of the evening, she saw that there were two numbers left which nobody had chosen: five and six. Which one would she choose?

The wheel began to spin, and Jane quickly placed her bet on number six. The ball clicked and settled.

'Le numero cinq, rouge,' said the croupier.

Number five! Jane could have cried with disappointment.

Then the man next to her asked, 'Aren't you going to collect the money you have won?'

'What money? I bet on number six!'

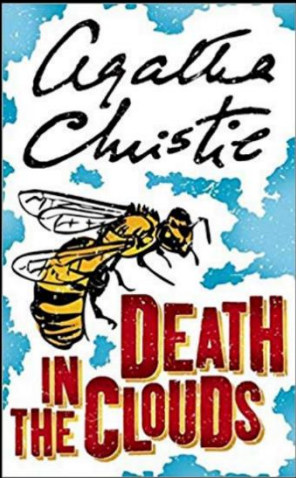
'No, you bet on five.'

Was it true? Perhaps she had. She picked up her money and looked doubtfully at the stranger.

'Well done,' he said, and with a friendly smile, he left. And now here was that same man, sitting opposite her on the plane to England...

- Appendix 4 (portfolio)

PORTFOLIO



NAME:

GRADE:

MY GLOSSARY



CHAPTERS 1 - 5

CHAPTERS 6 - 10

CHAPTERS 11 - 15

CHAPTERS 21 - 25

REPORTING VERBS

ACCEPT: _____

POINT OUT: _____

ACUSE: _____

COMPLAIN: _____

REFUSE: _____

CONGRATULATE: _____

THREATEN: _____

EXPLAIN: _____

ENCOURAGE: _____

INSIST: _____

REMIND: _____

CHAPTERS 16 - 20

3 NEW IDIOMS

- _____
- _____
- _____



- Appendix 5



- Appendix 6

TRANSFORM THESE SENTENCES INTO INDIRECT SPEECH

1. 'We don't seem to be making much progress,' sighed Norman.

.....

2. 'She's been dead for at least half an hour,' he said.

.....

3. 'There is a mark on her neck,' said Monsieur Poirot.

.....

4. 'The man in front of me came past to the back of the cabin,' he said.

.....

5. 'It is the famous arrow poison of the South American Indians,' said Hercule Poirot.

.....

6. 'You turn up in the most unexpected places, Monsieur Poirot,' said Inspector Japp.

.....

7. 'I am in charge of the Ellis Vale Cement Company', said James Bell Ryder.

.....

8. 'I can tell you that the jury accused me of being the murderer, Hercule Poirot!' said Jane.

.....

9. 'He will know medical research people that could easily have stolen some snake poison while visiting a laboratory,' said Japp.

.....

10. 'Antoine's may not want to employ a girl who's been involved in a murder case,' said Jane.

.....

- Appendix 7

ACTIVITY 1. QUESTIONS FROM DIRECT TO INDIRECT SPEECH

1. 'WHO DID YOU CALL TO RESERVE A SEAT IN THE AEROPLANE FOR MADAME GISELLE?' ASKED HERCULE POIROT.

.....

2. 'WHY DIDN'T HE JUST SAY THAT THE WOMAN HAD DIED FROM HEART FAILURE?'

.....

3. 'WHAT COULD BE SIMPLER THAN TO GET RID OF IT THAT WAY?' ASKED INSPECTOR JAPP

.....

4. 'DO YOU KNOW HOW SHE MADE THEM PAY?' ASKED MONSIEUR FOURNIER.

.....

5. 'HAD MADAME GISELLE BEEN IN PARIS BEFORE HER JOURNEY TO ENGLAND?' ASKED FOURNIER.

.....

6. 'WILL YOU NOT TELL ME WHAT IT IS?' ASKED POIROT.

.....

ACTIVITY 2. SEARCH IN THE TEXT!

WH-QUESTIONS

YES/NO QUESTIONS

- **Appendix 8**

[illegible]

▪ Appendix 9

REPORTED SPEECH: ORDERS, PROMISES, OFFERS AND SUGGESTIONS!

'Come with me to the Boulevard des Capucines,' ordered Poirot.

.....
.....

"Let us think about them one by one," suggested Dr. Bryant.

.....
.....

'I will lose down my practice, and I will go out to Canada and start again,' offered Norman.

.....
.....

will lose down my practice, and I will go out to Canada and start again,' offered Norman.

.....
.....

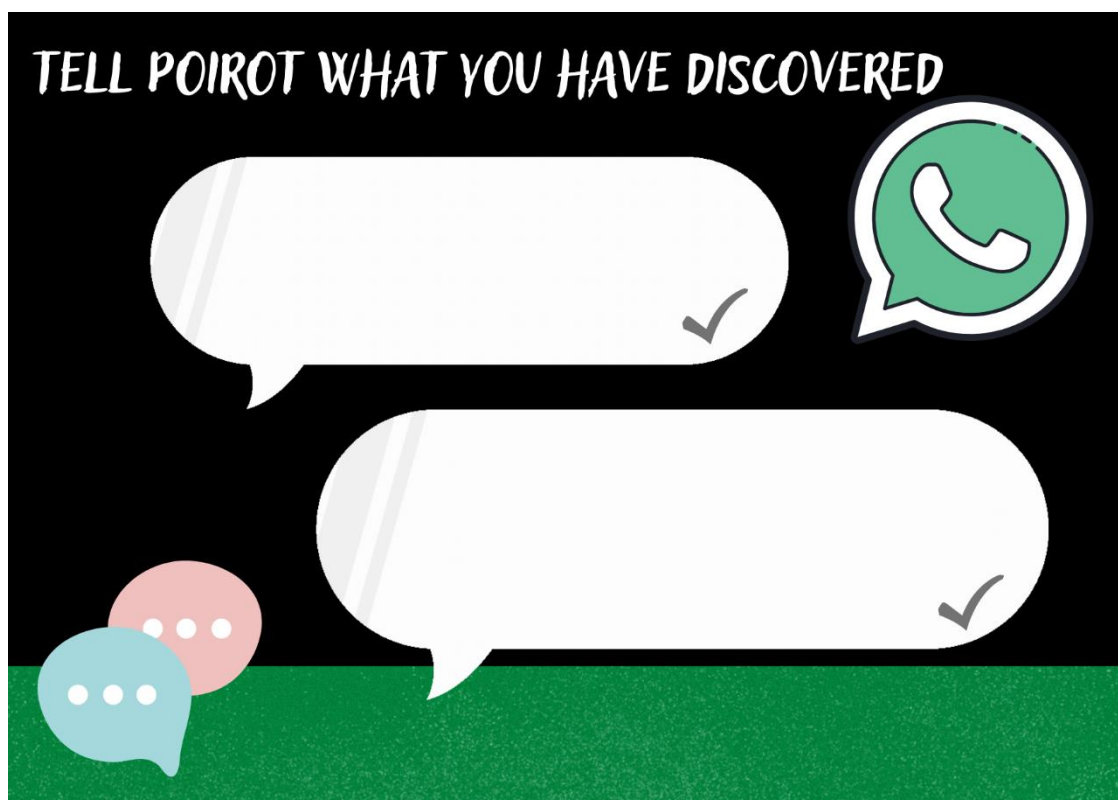
'Come, my friend. Let us go and eat,' suggested Fournier.

.....
.....

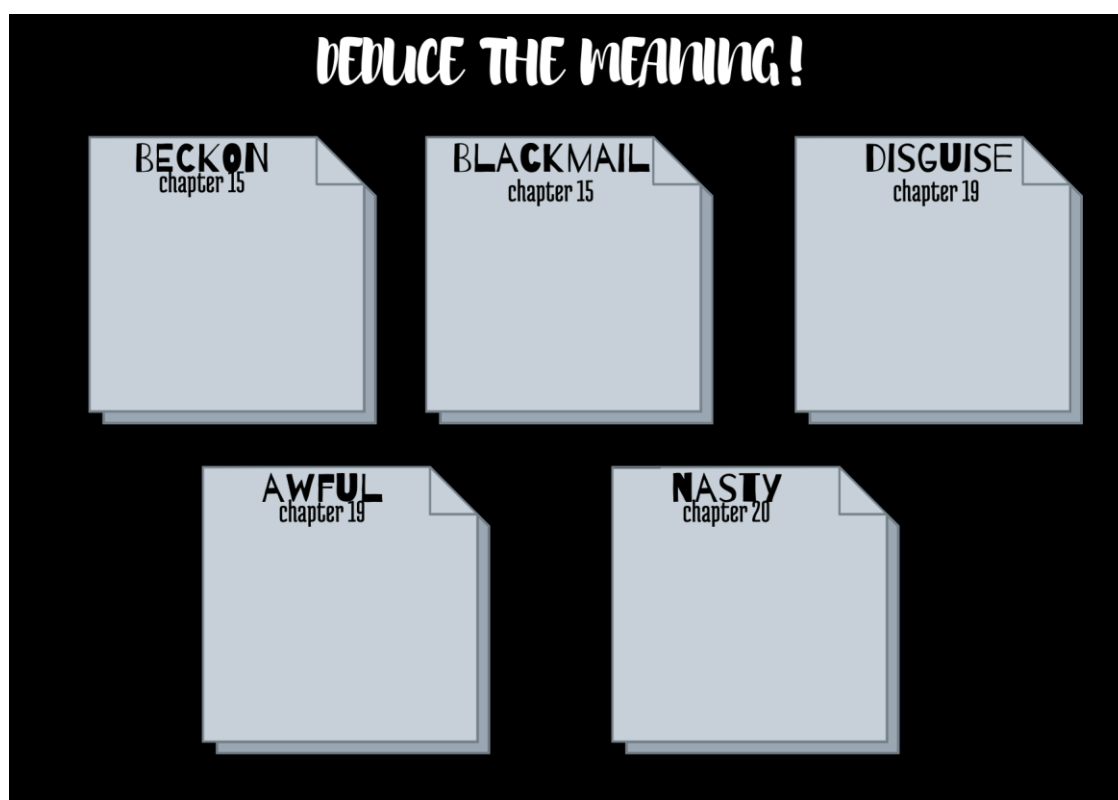
'I will come with you,' promised Mr. Clancy.

.....
.....

▪ Appendix 10



▪ Appendix 11



May 28, 2022
Leena Dhankhar

NEWSLETTER

THREE HELD FOR TRYING TO BLACKMAIL TRAFFIC POLICEMEN WITH MORPHED VIDEO

Gurugram: Three Delhi cab drivers and transporters were arrested on Thursday for allegedly trying to extort money from, and blackmailing two traffic policemen.

Three Delhi cab drivers and transporters were arrested on Thursday for allegedly trying to extort money from, and blackmailing two traffic policemen. The men claimed to be in possession of a video of the officers seeking a bribe for not imposing fines on traffic rule violators.

They demanded from the traffic policemen, threatening them with dire consequences if they failed to pay. They said they will upload the video on social media, which will get the police officers suspended. Police informed that no such video existed, and the men fabricated the story.

Police said a zonal officer, Mukesh Kumar, asked the men to show the video, but they did not have any recording of them accepting bribes.

"The extortionists took the zonal officer's mobile number and said they will send him the video. They sent a video in the evening but that too did not show anyone taking money," Kumar said.

"They started threatening me and said they will get the video viral if I don't give them ₹3 lakh. After several rounds of conversation over the phone, the amount was negotiated to ₹1 lakh and then I approached my seniors and narrated my ordeal," said Prem Singh.



The arrested were identified as Deepak, Satendra and Ashok, all residents of Delhi. The money, and a car was recovered from their possession.

Sangwan said all three are in the cab business and often stopped and interacted with policemen. There were many instances where they sought their support.