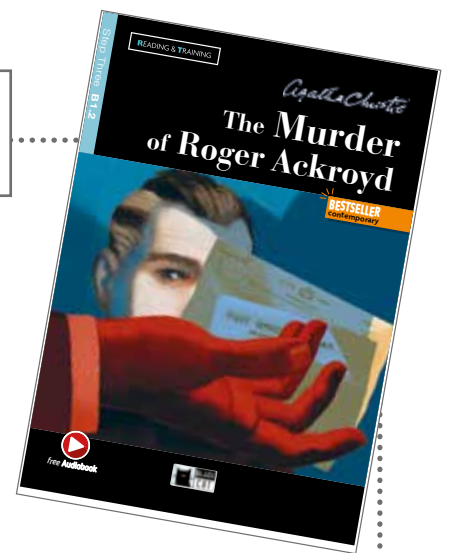


level  
B1.2

## READING ACTIVITY 1/7



### THE MURDER OF ROGER ACKROYD

#### INTRODUCTION

Agatha Christie's *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* has been called her greatest novel and one of the best crime stories of all time. The story is told in the first person – by the narrator, Dr Sheppard.

The story is set in the quaint English countryside where world-famous detective Hercule Poirot is enjoying a quiet life in the village of King's Abbot. Like all English villages, dark secrets and gossip are a part of everyday life. When Poirot's friend Roger Ackroyd is murdered, Poirot must solve one of the strangest and most complex mysteries of his brilliant career. An array of people seem to be involved, but *who* is the real murderer?

#### PREDICTION • WHAT DO YOU THINK?

##### 1. Are the following sentences true (T) or false (F)?

1. The narrator has important clues to give Poirot.
2. Roger Ackroyd had a lot of personal secrets.
3. The murderer lives in King's Abbot.
4. The murderer kills Roger Ackroyd for revenge.
5. Many people in the village hate Roger Ackroyd.
6. The murderer is a woman.

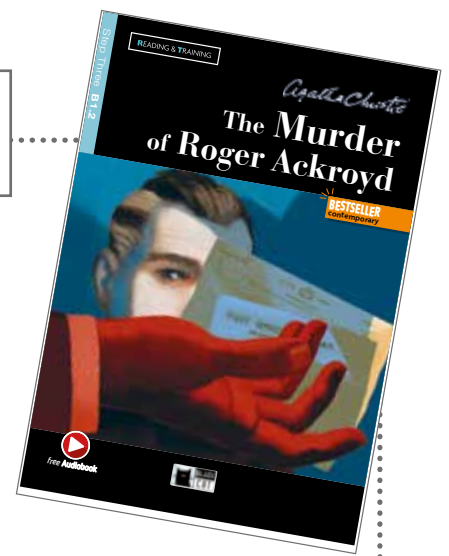
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*Mark your answers and when you finish reading the story check to see if you predicted correctly.*



level  
B1.2

## READING ACTIVITY 2/7



### READING ACTIVITY

#### Part 1 – Read the excerpt and then do the activities below.

A murder has been committed and the narrator, Dr Sheppard, tells us about it, before informing Hercule Poirot.

‘Don’t touch anything, Parker,’ I said sharply. ‘Go and telephone the police at once. Then tell Mr Raymond and Major Blunt.’

Parker hurried away. I did what I had to do, careful not to disturb the position of the body or touch the dagger. Soon Raymond and Major Blunt arrived, and I could see that even the unemotional Blunt was deeply upset.

‘I suppose there’s no question of suicide?’ Raymond said.

‘No man could stab himself in such a way, I answered. ‘it’s murder. But why?’

‘Roger hadn’t an enemy in the world,’ said Blunt quietly.

Raymond was looking through the papers on the desk. ‘Was it a burglary? But I can’t see anything missing.’

Blunt made a slight movement of his head towards the floor in front of the fireplace. Several envelopes had fallen there, but Mrs Ferrars’s letter was gone. At that moment, Parker came back with inspector Davis from the local police. I told Davis that Ackroyd had been dead for about half an hour, possibly longer. The study door had been locked and the window closed with the latch put across.

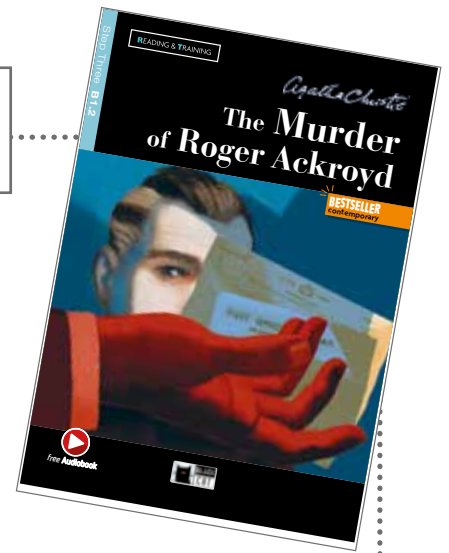
Davis went to the window and drew the curtains. ‘Well, it’s open now.’ He examined the windowsill. ‘This is how the murderer came in, and how he left. Look, here.’ There were marks on the sill from the man’s shoes. Davis asked us about strangers in the area.

(from Chapter 3)



level  
B1.2

## READING ACTIVITY 3/7



### ODD ONE OUT!

**2A. Choose the word that does not belong to the group.**

- upset   bothered   disturbed   relaxed
- rival   friend   enemy   adversary
- accident   burglary   robbery   theft
- stranger   foreigner   native   visitor
- locked   shut   closed   open
- latch   lock   key   bolt

**2B. Complete the sentences with the odd words.**

- It was cold because the window in the study was .....
- The old man was hurt in the car .....
- She was very ..... during her holiday at the sea.
- He can't get into the house because he lost his .....
- Hercule Poirot was a ..... of Belgium.
- Hercule Poirot was a ..... of Roger Ackroyd.

### QUICK QUIZ!

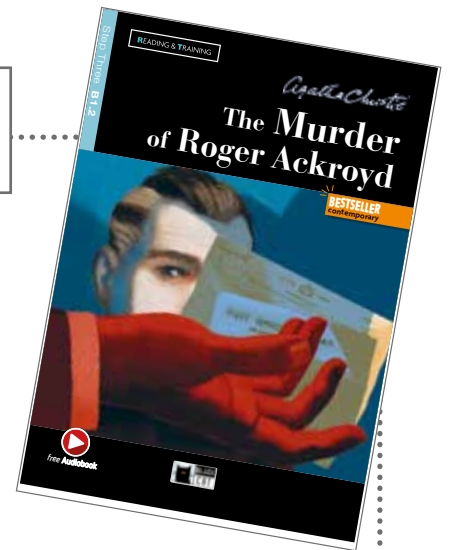
**3. Complete the table with the correct form of the adverb.**

ADJECTIVE	ADVERB
1. sharp	.....
2. careful	.....
3. good	.....
4. deep	.....
5. dangerous	.....
6. fast	.....



level  
B1.2

## READING ACTIVITY 4/7



### Part 2 – Read the excerpt and then do the activity below.

*Hercule Poirot has been called to investigate the murder and we can already see his great attention to small details, that others ignore.*

‘Interesting,’ said Poirot. ‘Nobody would want to sit in a chair in such a position. Now who pushed it back into place again, I wonder?’ No one could answer this question.

‘It was back in its original place when I arrived with the police sir,’ Parker told him. ‘I’m certain of it.’

‘Surely it isn’t important?’ I said.

‘It is completely unimportant,’ Poirot answered. ‘That is why it is so interesting.’ He went to the window and looked out. ‘You say it was nine o’clock, Dr Sheppard, when you met this stranger outside the gate?’

‘Yes, I heard the church bell ring nine times.’

‘If a man were at the gate now,’ he asked, ‘how long would it take him to reach the house—to reach this window?’

‘Five minutes or less,’ I told him. ‘But only for someone who knows the property well.’

Poirot asked to see Mr Raymond. The secretary couldn’t remember any strangers who had visited Mr Ackroyd recently, except a salesman from a dictaphone<sup>1</sup> company the previous week. The salesman was a short man with blond hair, and was nothing like the stranger at the gate.

Poirot’s investigation of the house ended in the drawing room. From there, he pushed open the window and stepped onto the terrace. Inspector Raglan was just coming around the corner.

‘So there you are, monsieur Poirot,’ Raglan said. ‘I’m afraid the mystery is solved. Perhaps you can help us next time.’

‘So quickly,’ Poirot said, ‘Wonderful! How did you come to the solution?’

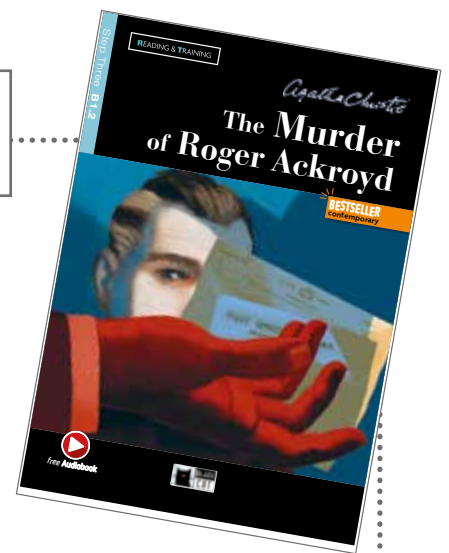
(from Chapter Four)

1 **dictaphone** : a machine that records someone speaking; usually the recording is played again and the person’s words are written down or typed.



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B1.2

## READING ACTIVITY 5/7



### 4. Are these sentences true (T) or false (F)?

- Hercule Poirot asked a question about the position of a chair in the room.  T  F
- Poirot decided that the position of the chair was unimportant but interesting.  T  F
- Dr Sheppard met a stranger outside the gate when the church bell rang nine times.  T  F
- Poirot refused to see Mr Raymond who was the secretary.  T  F
- A salesman from a dictaphone company visited Mr Ackroyd several times.  T  F
- Inspector Raglan informed Poirot that the mystery was already solved.  T  F

### QUICK QUIZ!

#### 5. Circle the correct word.

- Poirot was *very/much* interested in the smallest details.
- There weren't *many/much* strangers in the village of King's Abbot.
- How *much/many* money did Mr Ackroyd really have?
- Dr Sheppard seemed *much/very* worried about his new patient.
- Poirot had *much/many* doubts about the difficult mystery.

