

Recitation A

The Queen of Crime: Agatha Christie

Agatha Christie is known throughout the world as the Queen of Crime. Her books have sold over a billion copies in English with another billion in 100 foreign languages. She is the most widely published author of all time and in any language, outsold only by the Bible and Shakespeare. She is the author of 80 crime novels and short story collections, 19 plays, and six novels.

Agatha Christie's first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, was written towards the end of the First World War, in which she served as a volunteer nurse. In it she created Hercule Poirot, the little Belgian detective who was destined to become the most popular detective in crime fiction since Sherlock Holmes.

In 1926, after averaging a book a year, Agatha Christie wrote her masterpiece. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* was the first of her books to be published by Collins and marked the beginning of an author-publisher relationship which lasted for 50 years and well over 70 books. *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd* was also the first of Agatha Christie's books to be dramatized and to have a successful run in London's West End Theater. *The Mousetrap*, her most famous play of all, opened in 1952 and is the longest-running play in history.

Agatha Christie died in 1976, but she has left many books and iconic characters to entertain the readers of the world. If you would like to read some English books, you should try some by Agatha Christie. Some are very light and funny, while others are tense and mysterious. There is a good reason she has been so popular for nearly 100 years, and that is because she knew how to write a gripping and entertaining story that would keep her readers happy to the very end.

(298 words)