SUMMER READING STUDY GUIDE
for The Murder of Roger Ackroyd by Agatha Christie

This study guide is a tool to help you organize your thoughts while reading and provide notes for studying; however, it is not intended to inform you of possible test questions. The study guide will not be reviewed or discussed in class. Reviewing the study guide alone will not insure an adequate grade on summer reading assessments. You should use active reading strategies including making notes in the margin with predictions or questions, highlighting character descriptions, and summarizing the main events of each chapter.

Author: __________________________
First Published: 1926
Type of Work: ____________________
Time of Work: The early 1920’s
Setting: __________________________________________

Be able to identify the following characters in The Murder of Roger Ackroyd

Keep track of alibis!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Character</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Roger Ackroyd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flora Ackroyd</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ursula Bourne</td>
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<tr>
<td>Geoffrey Raymond</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Russell</td>
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<td>Dr. James Sheppard</td>
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<tr>
<td>Hercule Poirot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mrs. Cecil Ackroyd</td>
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<td>Ralph Paton</td>
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<td>Major Hector Blunt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parker</td>
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<td>Charles Kent</td>
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<td>Caroline Sheppard</td>
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<td>Mrs. Ferrars</td>
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Places in The Murder of Roger Ackroyd

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Place</th>
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<tr>
<td>King’s Abbot</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fernly Park</td>
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The Larches
King’s Paddock
The Summer House at Fernly Park
Three Boars Inn

Objects in *The Murder of Roger Ackroyd*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Object</th>
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<tr>
<td>The Tunisian Dagger</td>
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<td>Dictaphone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Ring</td>
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<td>The Little Gray Cells</td>
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<td>The Manuscript</td>
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**Plot Questions**

**Chapter 1  Dr. Sheppard at the Breakfast Table**

1. From whose residence is Dr. Sheppard returning at the very beginning of the novel?
2. Who has died?
3. Why is he reluctant to tell his sister Caroline about what he learned?
4. What is Caroline’s theory about Mrs. Ferrar’s death?

**Chapter 2  Who’s Who in King’s Abbot**

1. What do Mrs. Ferrars and Roger Ackroyd have in common?
2. How is Ralph Paton related to Roger Ackroyd?
3. Who does Sheppard remember that he saw walking closely and talking and what is suspicious about this?
4. Who wants to meet with Dr. Sheppard?
5. Why does Miss Russell visit Dr. Sheppard? What clues does the doctor get that makes him realize that she is NOT just there for her knee?
Chapter 3 The Man Who Grew Vegetable Marrow

** in the states, we call vegetable marrow *squash*

1. How does Sheppard his new neighbor? Who is he?
2. What does Poirot (pronounced Po-row) tell Sheppard about Ralph Paton?
3. Who does Caroline overhear near the river? What does she hear?
4. What does Ralph confess to Sheppard?

Chapter 4 Dinner at Fernly

1. Where does Sheppard go at the beginning of the chapter?
2. What does Sheppard notice about Miss Russell when he arrives at Fernly Park?
3. What is the noise he hears?
4. After dinner, what does Roger Ackroyd tell Dr. Sheppard?
5. As Dr. Sheppard is leaving, whom does he run into?
6. What phone call does Sheppard receive when he gets home?

Chapter 5 Murder

1. Why is Parker confused when Sheppard arrives?
2. What do they find?

Chapter 6 The Tunisian Dagger

1. What events make Parker look like a suspect?
2. Who is Inspector Raglan?
3. Who is Officer Davis? Why does he ask about the Tunisian Dagger?
Chapter 7  I Learn my Neighbor’s Profession

1. Who is waiting for Dr. Sheppard when he returns from work the next morning?
2. What does she want?
3. Even though Poirot agrees to help, what warning does he give to Flora?
4. When the three arrive at Fernly Park, what do they notice about the following:
   a. Shoe prints
   b. Chair
   c. The fire

Chapter 8  Inspector Raglan is Confident

1. Are there any new clues – in addition to the clues/events you found in chapter 5?
2. What two items does Poirot notice in the guest house?

Chapter 9  The Goldfish Pond

1. What important question does Poirot ask at the beginning of this chapter?
2. As Poirot and Sheppard walk along, who do they see chatting? Is there anything odd about what they see?
3. What is glimmering in the pond? What initial is engraved inside of it?

Chapter 10  The Parlormaid

1. Poirot gets his answer about the will in this chapter: how will Ackroyd’s money be dispersed?
2. Is everyone happy with the amount of money each receives?
3. Which household member does not have an alibi?

Chapter 11  Poirot Pays a Call
1. Where does Poirot ask Sheppard to go in this chapter?

2. Who is Mrs. Folliot? Why is Sheppard suspicious of her?

3. Why does Poirot ask Caroline about Sheppard’s patients, and not Sheppard?

**Chapter 12 Round the Table**

1. For whom do the police issue a grand search in the beginning of this chapter?

2. What does Poirot point out about the fingerprints?

3. What does Poirot insist that everyone is keeping?

**Chapter 13 The Goose Quill**

1. Poirot and Sheppard discuss the case over dinner that evening. Write down what they discuss about:
   a. Miss Russell
   b. The stranger that Sheppard passed on the street
   c. The goose quill
   d. Ursula

2. Sheppard points out that Ralph has three very good motives. What are they? Why doesn’t Poirot agree with him?

**Chapter 14 Mrs. Ackroyd**

1. What is different about the narration in this chapter?

2. Mrs. Ackroyd summons Sheppard to her bedside. What does she say she wants? What does she really want?

3. What happened when Mrs. Ackroyd was poking around Mr. Ackroyd’s office?

4. Who helps Poirot find out information about Ralph’s boots? What does she find out?

**Chapter 15 Geoffrey Raymond**
1. Poirot’s theory about everyone hiding something is slowly coming true. What did Mrs. Ackroyd have to hide? What does Raymond have to hide?

2. At the end of the chapter, Poirot and Sheppard go to Fernly Park for what reason?

Chapter 16  An Evening with Mah Jong

1. What piece of evidence does Sheppard give to his friends, Miss Ganett and Colonel Carter?

2. Who does Caroline think Flora is dating? What does Sheppard think?

Chapter 17  Parker

1. What information does Parker finally give to Poirot and Sheppard?

2. How much money did Mrs. Ferrars withdraw from her bank account in the last year? Why?

3. What is Poirot’s theory about the killer?

4. Who is the stranger?

Chapter 18  Charles Kent

1. What do they find out about Charles Kent?

2. How does the goose quill help Poirot?

Chapter 19  Flora Ackroyd

1. What does Inspector Raglan find out that disproves Poirot’s plan about Kent?

2. What does Flora confess to in this chapter?

3. What secret about Flora does Poirot tell Blunt?
Chapter 20  Miss Russell

1. Why is Miss Russell distraught about Kent being a suspect?

2. What does Poirot ask Inspector Raglan to send to the newspaper and why?

Chapter 21  The Paragraph in the Paper

1. Who doesn’t believe the newspaper announcement? Why is this suspicious?

2. What secret does Poirot find out about Ursula Bourne?

Chapter 22  Ursula’s Story

1. Briefly summarize Ursula’s story.

2. Why does Ralph lie to Mr. Ackroyd, and why does Ursula eventually tell him the truth?

3. Why does Ralph seem even more guilty now?

Chapter 23  Poirot’s Little Reunion

1. What is Poirot reading during this chapter? Who wrote it?

2. What news does Poirot reveal first at his meeting and what is the response?

3. Poirot suggests that no one was in the room with Ackroyd when he died. How does he say this could have happened?

4. Who shows up at the end of this chapter?

Chapter 24  Ralph Paton’s Story

1. Finally, Sheppard reveals his secret. What is it?

2. How did Sheppard “help” Ralph?

3. What does Poirot say he now knows at the end of the chapter? Why doesn’t he reveal it?
Chapter 25  The Whole Truth

1. James tries to guess why Poirot doesn’t reveal the murderer. What are two of his guesses?

2. Poirot begins to reveal his theory. Summarize his ideas below.
   a.
   b.
   c.
   d.
   e.

Chapter 26  And Nothing but the Truth

1. Poirot finally reveals his murderer! Who is it?

2. What does he want Sheppard to do about it?

3. How does Sheppard react to this news?

Chapter 27  Apologia

1. How does the narration change in this chapter?

2. What does Sheppard say was the original intent of his manuscript?

3. What does he admit to?

4. Who is the murderer and how does it happen?

5. What does Sheppard plan to do in the end?

General Topics to Think About

What clues does the author plant in the novel that hint at the identity of the true murderer?

Discuss the surprise ending of the story. What is your opinion about the author's twist of the conventional use of the narrator as the mouthpiece for truth? What effect does this have on the believability of the story?
What techniques does the author use to distract us from and disguise the real killer throughout the story?