

And Then There Were None

Book Discussion Questions

1. Talk about the characters—are any of them likable? Do you develop sympathy for anyone in particular: put another way, are some more sympathetic than others? Why might Christie have put together such an unpleasant cast of characters?
2. Was there any one individual you originally suspected? What about Dr. Armstrong, who goes off alone to find General Macarthur?
3. Locate the various clues Christie leaves along the way... 1) clues designed to lead us off the path, as in a red herring, and 2) clues that point to the real culprit.
4. What is the point of the poem "Ten Little Soldiers" and the fact that after each death one of the figurines on the dining room table goes missing? How do both poem and figurines function in the story? Why might Christie have used such a symbol?
5. Why does Emily Brent write in her diary the name Beatrice Taylor as the murderer? Does Brent feel guilt for what she had done...or not? Do any of the guests come to regret their past actions?
6. Talk about class and gender distinctions. Do you find it strange that Rogers continues to serve the guests despite the death of his wife? Or that women are in charge of meals and clean-up? What about the anti-semitic references?
7. Talk about the motive behind the murders of all the guests—which then might lead you into a discussion of legal justice vs. philosophical justice. Each of the guests is guilty of a crime, but not one that could be prosecuted in a court of law. Does each receive his/her just deserts? In other words, has true justice been accomplished by the end of the novel? Is the murderer insane as all the guests claim? Or is he/she acting with clear-headed logic and rationality?
8. Is the ending satisfying? Were you surprised by the identity of the murderer? Would you have preferred the final victim to discover who the killer was before dying? Why might Christie have withheld that information from readers, as well, until the epilogue?
9. Have you read any other Agatha Christie novels? Which ones...and how does this compare?

Questions courtesy of www.litlovers.com



About the author:

Agatha Christie

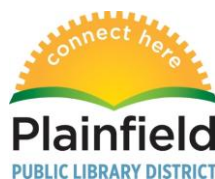


Dame Agatha Mary Clarissa Christie, DBE was a British crime writer of novels, short stories, and plays. She also wrote six romances under the name Mary Westmacott, but she is best remembered for the 66 detective novels and more than 15 short story collections she wrote under her own name, most of which revolve around the investigations of such characters as Hercule Poirot, Miss Jane Marple and Tommy and Tuppence. She also wrote the world's longest-running play *The Mousetrap*.

According to the Guinness Book of World Records, Christie is the best-selling novelist of all time. Her novels have sold roughly four billion copies, and her estate claims that her works rank third, after those of William Shakespeare and the Bible, as the world's most widely published books. According to Index Translationum, Christie is the most translated individual author, and her books have been translated into at least 103 languages. *And Then There Were None* is Christie's best-selling novel with 100 million sales to date, making it the world's best-selling mystery ever, and one of the best-selling books of all time. In 1971, she was made a Dame by Queen Elizabeth II at Buckingham Palace.

Christie's stage play *The Mousetrap* holds the record for the longest initial run: it opened at the Ambassadors Theatre in London on 25 November 1952 and as of 2012 was still running after more than 25,000 performances. In 1955, Christie was the first recipient of the Mystery Writers of America's highest honour, the Grand Master Award, and in the same year *Witness for the Prosecution* was given an Edgar Award by the MWA for Best Play. Many of her books and short stories have been filmed, and many have been adapted for television, radio, video games and comics.

Biography courtesy of www.litlovers.com



Ten strangers arrive on an island invited by an unknown host. Each of them has a secret to hide and a crime for which they must pay.

This is the story that made Agatha Christie the best-selling novelist of all time and is read the world over in more than 50 languages. "It was so difficult to do," she writes, "that the idea had fascinated me." It was an idea which is now the basis for many Hollywood horror films and has become a cliché to modern audiences, but it was Agatha Christie who was the first to do it and so successfully that the story has become her most adapted piece.

The whole thing is utterly impossible and utterly fascinating. It is the most baffling mystery Agatha Christie has ever written.

New York Times

Christie began the adaptations, determined to challenge herself further by moving the story to the stage. It was performed in 1943 under the book's original UK title, and the ending was changed as both she and the producers were concerned about leaving the audience on a low note. More recently in 2005, Kevin Elyot, screenwriter for many of the Poirot and Marple episodes, wrote a new version of the play, restoring the original ending of the novel and using the US title.

The first adaptation for cinema was in 1945 with René Clair's seminal film. This escalated Christie's stories to a whole new level and paved the way for an influx of adaptations, some of which Christie approved of and some which were made without her permission. 1949 saw *And Then There Were None* (again adapted under its original UK title) broadcast on the BBC, making it the first of Christie's novels to appear on TV. Another British channel, ITV, produced their own version in 1959 and an American TV version was also made. Subsequent adaptations include the 1965 film by George Pollock (famed for the Margaret Rutherford Marple films) and the 1974 version by Peter Welbeck, the first to be made in colour.

The Hindi film *Gumnaam* in 1965 added Bollywood touches, including music and comedy, to the plot but was an unlicensed production which Christie had not approved. Similarly, a West German adaptation, *Zehn kleine Negerlein*, was directed by Hans Quest in 1969. In 1970 the story appeared on French TV and there was even a 1981 six-part adaptation made in Cuba. 1987 saw a Russian version titled *Desyat' negriyat*; this was rare in its use of the novel's original ending. 1989 saw another US film, *Ten Little Indians*, directed by Alan Birkinshaw. It was made into a PC game in 2005 by The Adventure Company, the first in a series of Agatha Christie games. The identity of the killer was changed and it was ported to Wii in 2008. In 2009 HarperCollins, Christie's long-standing publishers, released a graphic novel adaptation and in 2010 BBC Radio 4 produced a full-cast 90 minute dramatisation.

The latest TV adaptation of *And Then There Were None* was released in the UK on BBC One in three parts, starting on the 26th December 2015. This latest incarnation returns to the dark roots of the story and is written by Sarah Phelps and produced by Mammoth Screen with Agatha Christie Productions. The all star cast includes Douglas Booth as Anthony Marston, Charles Dance as Justice Lawrence Wargrave and Aidan Turner as Philip Lombard.

<https://www.agathachristie.com/stories/and-then-there-were-none>

