



Introduction to Mystery

Mrs. Duggan

Grade 7 English Language Arts

2013

Essential Questions

- What makes mystery, crime and punishment so intriguing to humans?
- How does the power of observation help us in life?
- How do authors create mood, build suspense and develop characters?

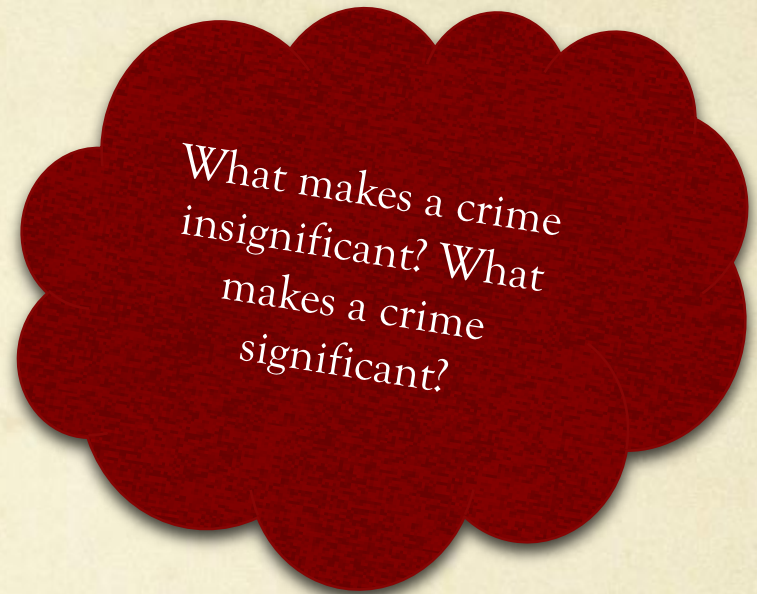


Six Characteristics of Detective Stories

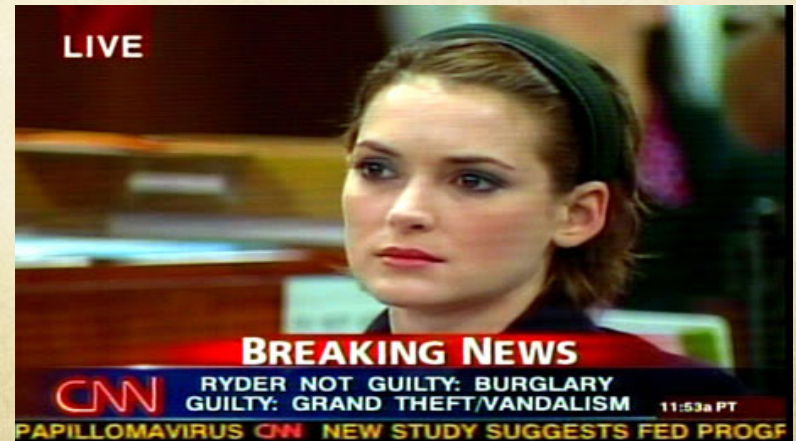
C. Hugh Hoffman defines detective stories as, “*a novel or short story in which a crime, usually a murder – the identity of the perpetrator unknown – is solved by a detective through a logical assembling and interpretation of palpable evidence, known as clues.*”

Rule #1: The crime must be significant.

- Most detective stories involve murder, though Conan Doyle tied the majority of his crimes to greed and theft.



VS.



Rule #2: The detective must be a memorable character.

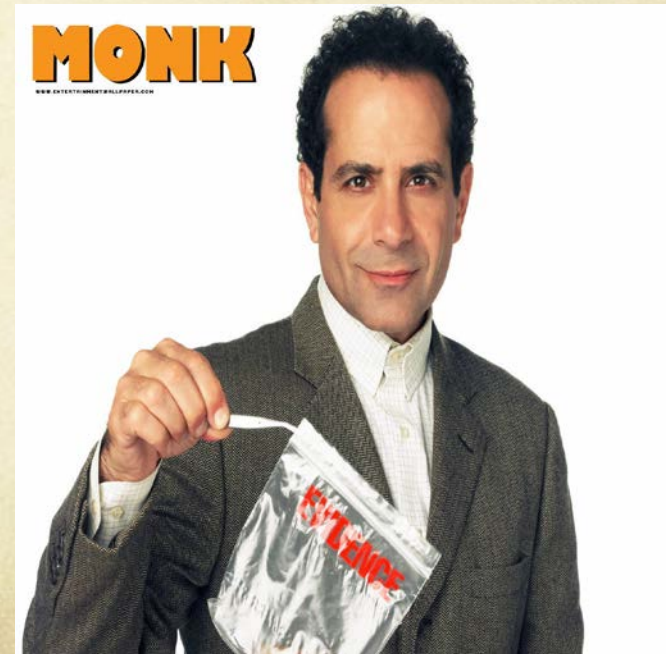
- The detective must have defining characteristics that makes him/her interesting.
- Detectives may be highly intelligent, observant, clever, or quirky.

Detectives on TV



Psych – To avoid being suspected of having involvement in various crimes, Shawn convinces police his psychic powers help him solve crime. Really, he uses the power of strong observation to crack the case.

Monk – Though intellectually brilliant, Detective Monk is incredibly quirky who has almost uncontrollable OCD with many irrational phobias such as milk, lady bugs, messes, etc.



Detectives on TV

Inspector Gadget - Although proving time and time again to be an ineffective detective, Inspector Gadget's has comical appeal in addition to never ending gadgets in an attempt to help solve mysteries.



Veronica Mars - Seventeen year old Veronica works as a secretary for her father's Private Investigator firm, where she becomes interested in detective work.

Rule #3: The criminal must be a worthy opponent.

- Criminal needs to be clever enough to match the detective.
- If the criminal wasn't clever, the mystery would be easy to solve and not interesting.

Rule #4: The clues must be made available to the reader.

Why is it important that the reader take part in solving the mystery?

The reader must feel they take a part in solving the crime.



Rule #5. The suspects must appear early in the story to help the detective and reader figure out the perpetrator.

6. Solution must be obvious and logical.

Solution can't be a result of accident or supernatural intervention.

Detective must be able to explain all aspects in a logical way that makes sense to the reader.



Elements of the Mystery Genre in Literature

Academic Vocabulary

- **Mystery** – Something that is a secret, unknown, or unclear
- **Crime** – An act that is against the law
- **Detective** – A person who investigates the crime or mystery and gathers information to solve it.
- **Crime Scene** – The location where the crime or mystery takes place.
- **Witness** – Someone who saw the crime being committed and can provide information to the detective to help solve.
- **Evidence**– Something physical that is left behind that helps prove who committed the crime. (i.e., broken window or fingerprint)
- **Clues** - Hints that help the reader and detective solve the mystery. They can be things that people say or do, or objects that provide important information.

Elements of the Mystery Genre in Literature

Academic Vocabulary

- **Suspect** – A person who is believed to have possibly committed the crime based on a potential motive or clues
- **Alibi** – An excuse that a suspect uses to show that he or she was somewhere other than at the scene of the crime when the crime was committed.
- **Victim** – Someone who is harmed or suffers some loss because of the crime that was committed.
- **Sleuth** – Another name for a detective

Sherlock's Observation

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9b3KM2p1nHs>