



Christopher is a big fan of Sherlock Holmes mysteries. Both he and Holmes share an unconventional way of looking at the world. Sherlock Holmes often solves cases by making logical deductions from evidence that other people overlook, such as an old shoe or a silk rope. His perspective allows him to see the importance of what others do not see.

Christopher has an unconventional perspective on subjects because of who he is. If you saw him, you would say he looks like anyone else. However, if you were around him for very long, you might be curious about some of his behaviors and attitudes. In Lesson 16, did you wonder why Siobhan has to tell Christopher not to tell Steve’s mother that Steve couldn’t even fetch a stick? Christopher is incapable of understanding how hurtful that comment could be to Steve’s mother.

What makes Christopher’s **perspective** unconventional? He has a specific disability, although it is never named in the book. You might get some idea of how it affects him from his list of “Behavioral Problems” in this passage. Use the **Response Notes** to make notes about Christopher’s behavior.

from **The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time**
by Mark Haddon

Response Notes

I used to think that Mother and Father might get divorced. That was because they had lots of arguments and sometimes they hated each other. This was because of the stress of looking after someone who has Behavioral Problems like I have. I used to have lots of Behavioral Problems, but I don’t have so many now because I’m more grown up and I can take decisions for myself and do things on my own like going out of the house and buying things at the shop at the end of the road.

These are some of my Behavioral Problems

- A. Not talking to people for a long time ⁴
- B. Not eating or drinking anything for a long time ⁵
- C. Not liking being touched
- D. Screaming when I am angry or confused
- E. Not liking being in really small places with other people
- F. Smashing things when I am angry or confused
- G. Groaning
- H. Not liking yellow things or brown things and refusing to touch yellow things or brown things
- I. Refusing to use my toothbrush if anyone else has touched it
- J.** Not eating food if different sorts of food are touching each other

Little kids do this

- K. Not noticing that people are angry with me
- L. Not smiling
- M. Saying things that other people think are rude ⁶
- N. Doing stupid things ⁷
- O. Hitting other people
- P. Hating France
- Q. Driving Mother's car ⁸
- R. Getting cross when someone has moved the furniture ⁹ ❖



⁴ Once I didn't talk to anyone for 5 weeks.

⁵ When I was 6 Mother used to get me to drink strawberry-flavored slimming meals out of a measuring jug and we would have competitions to see how fast I could drink a quarter of a liter.

⁶ People say that you always have to tell the truth. But they do not mean this because you are not allowed to tell old people that they are old and you are not allowed to tell people if they smell funny or if a grown-up has made a fart. And you are not allowed to say "I don't like you" unless that person has been horrible to you.

⁷ Stupid things are things like emptying a jar of peanut butter onto the table in the kitchen and making it level with a knife so it covers all the table right to the edges, or burning things on the gas stove to see what happened to them, like my shoes or silver foil or sugar.

⁸ I only did this once by borrowing the keys when she went into town on the bus, and I hadn't driven a car before and I was 8 years old and 5 months so I drove it into the wall, and the car isn't there anymore because Mother is dead.

⁹ It is permitted to move the chairs and the table in the kitchen because that is different, but it makes me feel dizzy and sick if someone has moved the sofa and the chairs around in the living room or the dining room. Mother used to do this when she did the hoovering, so I made a special plan of where all the furniture was meant to be and did measurements and I put everything back in its proper place afterward and then I felt better. But since Mother died Father hasn't done any hoovering, so that is OK. And Mrs. Shears did the hoovering once but I did groaning and she shouted at Father and she never did it again.

