

## OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/GRADE 9 ENGLISH/HOMEWORK 14

NAME (FIRST AND LAST): \_\_\_\_\_ GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_

**Note:** You do not have to print out the summaries and selections from page 1 to 6.

**SparkNotes Summaries of Chapter 4 to 5 of Agatha Christie's *Murder on the Orient Express*.**

### Chapter 4

At 8:45, the Orient Express arrives at Belgrade. Poirot gets out to stretch his legs, but because of the bitter cold, quickly returns to the train. The conductor informs Poirot his luggage has been moved to compartment number one, M. Bouc's carriage. M. Bouc moved to the Athens coach to allow Poirot a spot in first class. Compartment no. one is directly next to Mr. Ratchett and two doors down from Mrs. Hubbard. While returning to his compartment, Poirot is cornered by Mrs. Hubbard. She tells Poirot that she is "dead scared" of Ratchett and tells Poirot she heard Ratchett trying the communicating door between their apartments the night before. While speaking to Mrs. Hubbard in the corridor, McQueen and Arbuthnot pass by. Poirot hears McQueen tell Arbuthnot to come to his carriage to talk about India. After bidding Mrs. Hubbard goodnight, Poirot returns to his carriage, reads for one or two hours and falls asleep. "Some hours later" Poirot awakens to a loud groan or cry close at hand and the immediate sound of a bell ringing. The train had stopped and Poirot assumes it is at a station. The Wagon Lit conductor knocks on Mr. Ratchett's door. From inside a voice replies, "Ce n'est rien. Je ne suis trompe". Satisfied, the conductor moves on down the hall to another door with a light on. Poirot's watch reads twenty-three minutes to one in the morning.

### Chapter 5

The train still stopped, Poirot has difficulty sleeping in the curious quiet. As Poirot lies in bed, he hears the scuffle of slippers in the hallway. Someone in the car is ringing her conductor's bell over and over. When the conductor finally responds, Poirot hears the voice of Mrs. Hubbard who claims there is a man in her compartment. Poirot then rings his own bell and asks the conductor for some water. The conductor informs Poirot that the train has run into a snow bank and may be stuck for several days. After drinking his water and ready for sleep, Poirot hears a large thud in Ratchett's compartment next door. He looks outside his compartment, but only sees a woman in a scarlet kimono walking down the hallway and the conductor making entries in a book at the end of the hallway. At 9:45 a.m., the train still stopped, Poirot finally makes his way to the dining car where all the guests are gathered. The passengers are very anxious and worried about making connections and meeting relatives. After breakfast, M. Bouc calls Poirot to his cabin. M. Bouc tells Poirot that Ratchett has been stabbed to death. The coroner, Dr. Constantine, has determined that the crime occurred between midnight and two in the morning. Suicide is ruled out as Ratchett was stabbed ten-fifteen times. The window in Ratchett's compartment was left open, but M. Bouc think this was done purposefully to make someone think the murderer escaped out the window. If the murderer had escaped out the window he would have left tracks in the snow. The door was locked and chained on the inside. It is apparent that the murderer is still on the train in the Stamboul-Calais coach. M. Bouc asks Poirot to take the case and Poirot accepts.

### READING COMPREHENSION/VOCABULARY

Read the selections from page 2 to 6 and answer the questions from page 7 to 12. The words in the right column will help you locate them.

### Selection 1, from Chapter 4, “A Cry in the Night”

<p>The door next to them opened and the thin, pale manservant stepped out. Inside Poirot caught a glimpse of Mr. Ratchett sitting up in bed. He saw Poirot and his face changed, darkening with anger. Then the door was shut.</p> <p>Mrs. Hubbard drew Poirot a little aside.</p> <p>“You know, I’m dead scared of that man. Oh, not the valet—the other—his master. Master, indeed! There’s something <i>wrong</i> about that man. My daughter always says I’m very intuitive. ‘When Momma gets a hunch, she’s dead right,’ that’s what my daughter says. And I’ve got a hunch about that man. He’s next door to me, and I don’t like it. I put my grips against the communicating door last night. I thought I heard him trying the handle. Do you know, I shouldn’t be surprised if that man turns out to be a murderer—one of these train robbers you read about. I dare say I’m foolish, but there it is. I’m downright scared of the man! My daughter said I’d have an easy journey, but somehow I don’t feel happy about it. It may be foolish, but I feel anything might happen. Anything at all. And how that nice young fellow can bear to be his secretary I can’t think.”</p> <p>Colonel Arbuthnot and MacQueen were coming towards them down the corridor.</p> <p>“Come into my carriage,” MacQueen was saying. “It isn’t made up for the night yet. Now what I want to get right about your policy in India is this—”</p> <p>The men passed and went on down the corridor to MacQueen’s carriage.</p> <p>Mrs. Hubbard said good night to Poirot.</p> <p>“I guess I’ll go right to bed and read,” she said. “Good night.”</p> <p>“Good night, Madame.”</p> <p>Poirot passed into his own compartment, which was the next one beyond Ratchett’s. He undressed and got into bed, read for about half an hour and then turned out the light.</p> <p>He awoke some hours later, and awoke with a start. He knew what it was that had wakened him—a loud groan, almost a cry, somewhere close at hand. At the same moment the ting of a bell sounded sharply.</p> <p>Poirot sat up and switched on the light. He noticed that the train was at a standstill—presumably at a station.</p> <p>That cry had startled him. He remembered that it was Ratchett who had the next compartment. He got out of bed and opened the door just as the Wagon Lit conductor came hurrying along the corridor and knocked on Ratchett’s door. Poirot kept his door open a crack and watched. The conductor tapped a second time. A bell rang and a light showed over another door farther down. The conductor glanced over his shoulder.</p> <p>At the same moment a voice from within the next-door compartment called out:</p> <p><i>“Ce n’est rien. Je me suis trompé.”</i></p> <p><i>“Bien, Monsieur.”</i> The conductor scurried off again, to knock at the door where the light was showing.</p> <p>Poirot returned to bed, his mind relieved, and switched off the light. He glanced at his watch. It was just twenty-three minutes to one.</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary</b></p> <p>Valet</p> <p>Hunch</p> <p>Presumably</p> <p>Scurried</p>
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## Selection 2, from the first couple of pages of Chapter 5, "The Crime"

<h3 style="text-align: center;"><u>THE CRIME</u></h3>	Vocabulary
<p><b>H</b>e found it difficult to go to sleep again at once. For one thing, he missed the motion of the train. If it <i>was</i> a station outside it was curiously quiet. By contrast, the noises on the train seemed unusually loud. He could hear Ratchett moving about next door—a click as he pulled down the washbasin, the sound of the tap running, a splashing noise, then another click as the basin shut to again. Footsteps passed up the corridor outside, the shuffling footsteps of someone in bedroom slippers.</p> <p>Hercule Poirot lay awake staring at the ceiling. Why was the station outside so silent? His throat felt dry. He had forgotten to ask for his usual bottle of mineral water. He looked at his watch again. Just after a quarter past one. He would ring for the conductor and ask him for some mineral water. His finger went out to the bell, but he paused as in the stillness he heard a ting. The man couldn't answer every bell at once.</p> <p>Ting...ting...ting...</p> <p>It sounded again and again. Where was the man? Somebody was getting impatient.</p> <p>Ting...</p> <p>Whoever it was was keeping their finger solidly on the push.</p> <p>Suddenly with a rush, his footsteps echoing up the aisle, the man came. He knocked at a door not far from Poirot's own.</p> <p>Then came voices—the conductor's, deferential, apologetic, and a woman's—insistent and voluble.</p> <p>Mrs. Hubbard.</p> <p>Poirot smiled to himself.</p> <p>The altercation—if it was one—went on for some time. It's proportions were ninety per cent of Mrs. Hubbard's to a soothing ten per cent of the conductor's. Finally the matter seemed to be adjusted. Poirot heard distinctly:</p> <p><i>"Bonne nuit, Madame,"</i> and a closing door.</p> <p>He pressed his own finger on the bell.</p> <p>The conductor arrived promptly. He looked hot and worried.</p> <p><i>"De l'eau minérale, s'il vous plait."</i></p> <p><i>"Bien, Monsieur."</i> Perhaps a twinkle in Poirot's eye led him to unburden himself.</p> <p><i>"La Dame Américaine—"</i></p> <p>"Yes?"</p> <p>He wiped his forehead.</p> <p>"Imagine to yourself the time I have had with her! She insists—but <i>insists</i>—that there is a man in her compartment! Figure to yourself, Monsieur. In a space of this size." He swept a hand round. "Where would he conceal himself? I argue with her. I point out that it is impossible. She insists. She woke up and there was a man there. And how, I ask, did he get out and leave the door bolted behind him? But she will not listen to reason. As though, there were not enough to worry us already. This snow—"</p> <p>"Snow?"</p> <p>"But yes, Monsieur. Monsieur has not noticed? The train has stopped. We have run into a snowdrift. Heaven knows how long we shall be here. I remember once being snowed up for seven days."</p>	<p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p></p> <p>Deferential Voluble</p> <p>Altercation</p>

### Selection 3, from Chapter 5, "The Crime"

<p>"What is this country anyway?" demanded Mrs. Hubbard tearfully.          On being told it was Yugo-Slavia she said:          "Oh! one of these Balkan things. What can you expect?"          "You are the only patient one, Mademoiselle," said Poirot to Miss Debenham.          She shrugged her shoulders slightly.          "What can one do?"          "You are a philosopher, Mademoiselle."          "That implies a detached attitude. I think my attitude is more selfish. I have learned to save myself useless emotion."          She was not even looking at him. Her gaze went past him, out of the window to where the snow lay in heavy masses.          "You are a strong character, Mademoiselle," said Poirot gently. "You are, I think, the strongest character amongst us."          "Oh, no. No, indeed. I know one far far stronger than I am."          "And that is—?"          She seemed suddenly to come to herself, to realize that she was talking to a stranger and a foreigner with whom, until this morning, she had only exchanged half a dozen sentences.          She laughed a polite but estranging laugh.          "Well—that old lady, for instance. You have probably noticed her. A very ugly old lady, but rather fascinating. She has only to lift a little finger and ask for something in a polite voice—and the whole train runs."          "It runs also for my friend M. Bouc," said Poirot. "But that is because he is a director of the line, not because he has a masterful character."          Mary Debenham smiled.          The morning wore away. Several people, Poirot amongst them, remained in the dining car. The communal life was felt, at the moment, to pass the time better. He heard a good deal more about Mrs. Hubbard's daughter and he heard the lifelong habits of Mr. Hubbard, deceased, from his rising in the morning and commencing breakfast with a cereal to his final rest at night in the bedsocks that Mrs. Hubbard herself had been in the habit of knitting for him.</p>	<p><b>Vocabulary</b></p> <p>Implies</p> <p>Estranging</p> <p>Communal</p>
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**OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/GRADE 9 ENGLISH/HOMEWORK 14****NAME (FIRST AND LAST):**\_\_\_\_\_ **GRADE:**\_\_\_\_\_**Selection 1**

1. Referring to the context of the sentence or of the selection itself, explain the meaning of each of the following words. **Explain how you know.** In addition, copy down a definition from the dictionary. However, if you are confident that you know the word's meaning, simply share your prior knowledge without copying down a dictionary definition.

i. Valet

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ii. Hunch

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iii. Presumably

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iv. Scurry

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2. What is your impression of Mrs. Hubbard's character?

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### Selection 2

1. Referring to the context of the sentence or of the selection itself, explain the meaning of each of the following words. **Explain how you know.** In addition, copy down a definition from the dictionary. However, if you are confident that you know the word's meaning, simply share your prior knowledge without copying down a dictionary definition.

i. Deferential

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ii. Voluble

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iii. Altercation

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2. What atmosphere does Christie's writing create at the beginning of Chapter 5?  
How is it created?

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### Selection 3

1. Referring to the context of the sentence or of the selection itself, explain the meaning of each of the following words. **Explain how you know.** In addition, copy down a definition from the dictionary. However, if you are confident that you know the word's meaning, simply share your prior knowledge without copying down a dictionary definition.

- i. Imply

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- ii. Estrange

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- iii. Communal

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2. “She seemed suddenly to come to herself, to realize suddenly that she was talking to a stranger...” What is your impression of Mary Debenham? (Does she know the old lady very well, or is she make superficial statements about someone she doesn’t really know?)

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#### Selection 4

1. Referring to the context of the sentence or of the selection itself, explain the meaning of each of the following words. **Explain how you know.** In addition, copy down a definition from the dictionary. However, if you are confident that you know the word’s meaning, simply share your prior knowledge without copying down a dictionary definition.

- i. Sardonic

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- ii. Haphazard

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- iii. Antecedent

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iv. *Bona fide*

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2. Do we know for sure that it is not a suicide? Explain.

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3. Why does the *chef de train* assume that the murderer was female? What would you say to him if you were on the train?

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4. Why does Mr. Bouc have so much faith in Mr. Poirot's detective work? Based on your reading of the novel so far, what detective skill, if any, has Mr. Poirot exhibited?

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**Selections 4 and 5**

To whom does the mystery narrative draw attention as a possible murder suspect? Do you think you have been misled in any way by Christie's writing? Explain your hunch/suspicion by referring only to chapters 4 and 5, or to the first 5 chapters of the novel. (If you have read the entire novel, simply explain how the narrative draws attention to a character as a possible murder suspect.)

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**THE END**