

# The Moving Finger

*Agatha Christie*

## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### Part 1 (Chapters 1–4)

#### 1 Comprehension

Are these sentences true or false? Rewrite any that you think are false.

- 1 Jerry and Joanna are not brother and sister.
- 2 Megan wears attractive clothes.
- 3 Jerry has been injured in an aeroplane accident.
- 4 Joanna's boyfriends are weak men.
- 5 Jerry finds the governess beautiful.
- 6 Village life is full of scandal and gossip.

#### 2 Vocabulary

Complete the sentences with the correct adjectives from the box.

weak	curling	bitter	good-looking	expressionless
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- 1 Her perfect face, the \_\_\_\_\_ golden hair, the tall beautifully shaped body.
- 2 Mrs Cleat is an unusual woman with a \_\_\_\_\_ sense of humour
- 3 Owen Griffith is not one of those \_\_\_\_\_, artistic young men you've always liked.
- 4 He had a long neck, a long \_\_\_\_\_ face and a long thin nose.
- 5 She had all the confidence that her brother did not have and she was \_\_\_\_\_ in a strong outdoor way.

#### 3 Comprehension

Choose the correct answer.

- 1 Mrs Cleat is:
  - a) the cook
  - b) the local witch
  - c) the servant
- 2 Joanna likes:
  - a) weak men
  - b) confident men
  - c) tall men
- 3 Dr Owen Griffiths thinks the letter writer writes out of:
  - a) anger
  - b) pity
  - c) madness
- 4 Megan wears:
  - a) tights
  - b) socks
  - c) stockings
  - d) trousers
- 5 Village life is usually:
  - a) quiet
  - b) noisy
  - c) busy
  - d) exciting

#### 4 Vocabulary

Find ten words connected to village life.

A	B	I	S	O	L	A	T	E	D	P	Q	H
G	C	A	F	S	H	K	U	W	D	W	L	E
O	B	S	G	C	F	L	V	M	J	F	L	M
S	G	H	S	D	G	K	S	D	Q	A	O	S
S	J	G	T	K	J	D	C	H	U	R	C	H
I	F	H	L	T	F	I	U	W	I	M	F	O
P	O	S	T	O	F	F	I	C	E	S	O	P
J	K	N	U	W	H	O	N	I	T	D	S	A
T	D	W	L	E	V	M	N	P	U	G	J	O
V	I	C	A	R	F	H	L	T	D	W	L	E

#### 5 Follow-up activity

Now complete the sentences with the correct word from the wordsearch.

- 1 A village usually has a \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 The \_\_\_\_\_ was right in the centre of the village.
- 3 The \_\_\_\_\_ could be seen from far away.
- 4 The small local \_\_\_\_\_ was owned by an old couple.
- 5 The \_\_\_\_\_ was near the church in the centre of the village.
- 6 Village life was full of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 Life in a village was \_\_\_\_\_ and peaceful.
- 8 Everyone in the village would go to the \_\_\_\_\_ to buy groceries.
- 9 A lot of local meat and vegetables come from the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 10 Many people who live in quiet villages feel quite \_\_\_\_\_.

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## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### Part 2 (Chapters 5–8)

#### 1 Comprehension

Are these sentences true or false? Rewrite any that you think are false.

- 1 Jerry bumps into Maud Dane-Calthrop, who says she hasn't received any anonymous letters.
- 2 Mrs Symmington was very ill. She didn't commit suicide.
- 3 Agnes' dead body was discovered in the cupboard.
- 4 Cyanide kills wasps.
- 5 A knife was found in the base of Agnes' spine.
- 6 Miss Marple saw someone deliver an anonymous letter to the house.

#### 2 Grammar

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs from the box.

kill	commit	hit	gossip	stab	poison
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- 1 Mrs Symmington \_\_\_\_\_ suicide.
- 2 Agnes \_\_\_\_\_ with a knife.
- 3 Agnes \_\_\_\_\_ on the back of the head and \_\_\_\_\_ in the neck.
- 4 The locals \_\_\_\_\_ about the two people that were murdered.
- 5 Mrs Symmington \_\_\_\_\_ herself by taking cyanide.

#### 3 Comprehension

Circle the correct answer.

- 1 Megan was *excited by/happy about/saddened by* the death of Mrs Symmington.
- 2 Megan went to stay with *Jerry and Joanna/the Dane-Calthrops/Dr Griffiths and his wife*.
- 3 Agnes was *with people/alone/with her friend* in the house when she was murdered.
- 4 Agnes was *shot/stabbed with a knife/poisoned*.
- 5 Mr Pye had very strange *visitors/animals/habits*.

#### 4 Vocabulary

Find eight words connected with the two deaths.

A	V	J	K	H	V	J	C	H
P	D	K	S	F	G	B	Y	Y
I	P	U	U	G	S	T	A	B
F	O	N	I	H	K	A	N	O
G	I	W	C	N	U	D	I	N
V	S	K	I	L	L	E	D	E
X	O	N	D	V	L	O	E	D
Y	N	I	E	B	V	N	A	K
B	E	F	M	A	F	O	N	D
I	D	E	A	D	G	I	I	E

#### 5 Follow-up activity

Now complete the sentences with the correct words from the wordsearch.

- 1 She poisoned herself with \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 The girl was \_\_\_\_\_ with a knife.
- 3 She was found \_\_\_\_\_ in the cupboard.
- 4 The killer attacked her with a knife aiming at the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 A \_\_\_\_\_ was used to kill Agnes.
- 6 A single \_\_\_\_\_ would have been enough to have killed Agnes.
- 7 Cyanide \_\_\_\_\_ Mrs Symmington.
- 8 Mrs Symmington's death appeared to be \_\_\_\_\_.

## The Moving Finger

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## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

## Part 3 (Chapters 9–12)

## 1 Comprehension

Are these sentences true or false? Rewrite any that you think are false.

- 1 The town was full of gossip about the two murders.
- 2 Miss Marple stayed with Miss Griffith.
- 3 Agnes was killed with a knife.
- 4 Jerry does not take Megan to London.
- 5 Joanna had a visit from Dr Griffith, who gave her a photo of a diseased kidney.
- 6 Jerry, one evening, investigates the Women's Institute.

## 2 Vocabulary

Circle the correct answer.

- 1 Jerry catches *the bus/a taxi/the train* to go to London.
- 2 Jerry asks Megan *to the cinema/to marry him/to a funeral*.
- 3 Megan *is not in love with Jerry/hates Jerry/loves Jerry*.
- 4 Megan *accepts/rejects/denies* Jerry's proposal of marriage.
- 5 Megan can *horse-ride/dance/play volleyball*.
- 6 Megan was wearing *muddy boots/shoes/plimsolls*.

## 3 Comprehension

- 1 Which of these three phrases does Miss Marple use to describe the successful murder?
  - a) 'You've got to make people look at the wrong thing and in the wrong place.'
  - b) 'You've got to make people look at the right thing and in the right place.'
  - c) 'You've got to make people look at the right thing and in the wrong place.'
- 2 Miss Marple has further views on the murderer. Which of these sentences does she NOT say?
  - a) 'I myself,' said Miss Marple, 'would probably look for somebody very sane.'
  - b) 'I'm afraid,' said Miss Marple, 'that people who are young and pretty are likely to be chosen by the writer.'
  - c) 'That's the least interesting thing I've heard yet.'

## 4 Grammar

Insert the correct form of the verb into each sentence.

- 1 The ice \_\_\_\_\_ under my feet when I stood on it. (crack)
- 2 The girl is \_\_\_\_\_ at the man. (grin)
- 3 He's \_\_\_\_\_ loudly. It's really annoying! (whistle)
- 4 They left the lights \_\_\_\_\_. (switch on)
- 5 A knife had been \_\_\_\_\_ into her skull. (push)
- 6 She had \_\_\_\_\_ something with white wool. (knit)

## 5 Comprehension

- 1 Which two letters of the alphabet told the superintendent that the letter had originally been intended for someone else?
  - a) e and a
  - b) m and f
  - c) a and u
- 2 Why does Miss Marple think Mrs Cleat can't be the murderer?
  - a) Because she is a good witch, not a bad one.
  - b) Because she could have made the murder seem like a natural death.
  - c) Because she collects the wrong type of plants for committing murder.
- 3 Why is Mr Burton cross with Megan?
  - a) Because she is ugly and dresses badly.
  - b) Because she is dull and unattractive.
  - c) Because she could look nice but doesn't try.

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## STUDENT ACTIVITIES

### Part 4 (Chapters 13–15)

#### 1 Comprehension

Are these sentences true or false? Rewrite any that you think are false.

- 1 Dr Owen Griffiths accepts Joanna's hand in marriage.
- 2 Elsie Holland doesn't receive an anonymous letter.
- 3 Megan saw what Mr Symmington was doing with the pills in her mother's room.
- 4 Miss Marple doesn't think that Megan is courageous.
- 5 Megan asks Mr Symmington for money.
- 6 Mr Symmington gives Megan some notes.

#### 2 Comprehension

Choose the correct option that relates to the story.

- 1 Love is a(n):
  - a) madness
  - b) fever
  - c) illness
- 2 Aimée denies:
  - a) going on holiday
  - b) writing a letter
  - c) murdering Agnes
- 3 Mr Symmington wanted to:
  - a) marry Elsie
  - b) have a peaceful life
  - c) live with his wife
- 4 The anonymous letters represented:
  - a) a man's mind
  - b) a woman's mind
  - c) a child's mind
- 5 Megan was good at:
  - a) pretending
  - b) blackmailing
  - c) lying

#### 3 Grammar

- a) Complete the sentences with the verbs in the present tense. The sentences do NOT relate to the story.

blackmail	sew	bump into	dare	swear
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- 1 She \_\_\_\_\_ her way through life.
- 2 He \_\_\_\_\_ her to jump.
- 3 They often \_\_\_\_\_ into one another in the street.

- 4 She \_\_\_\_\_ with great skill.
- 5 The men often \_\_\_\_\_ at each other.

- b) Now put the verbs in the sentences into the past tense.

- 1 She \_\_\_\_\_ her way through life.
- 2 He \_\_\_\_\_ her to jump.
- 3 They often \_\_\_\_\_ into one another in the street.
- 4 She \_\_\_\_\_ with great skill.
- 5 The men often \_\_\_\_\_ at each other.

- c) Finally, complete the sentences using the verbs in the past perfect form.

- 1 She \_\_\_\_\_ her way through life.
- 2 He \_\_\_\_\_ her to jump.
- 3 They \_\_\_\_\_ often \_\_\_\_\_ into one another in the street.
- 4 She \_\_\_\_\_ with great skill.
- 5 The men \_\_\_\_\_ often \_\_\_\_\_ at each other.

#### 4 Comprehension

One sentence in each set is true. Which one?

- 1
  - a) The murderer was Richard Symmington.
  - b) The murderer was Mr Pye.
  - c) The murderer was Aimée Griffith.
- 2
  - a) Miss Marple thought it odd that Elsie had not received an anonymous letter.
  - b) Jerry didn't visit the Women's Institute.
  - c) Megan was not in love with Jerry after all.
- 3
  - a) Megan didn't see Mr Symmington with Mrs Symmington's pills.
  - b) Jerry and Megan were happily married.
  - c) Miss Marple was not very helpful in solving the murder.

ANSWER KEY (STUDENT ACTIVITIES)

Part 1 (Chapters 1–4)

1 Comprehension

- False. Jerry and Joanna are brother and sister.
- False. Megan wears unattractive clothes.
- True
- True
- True
- True

2 Vocabulary

- Her perfect face, the curling golden hair, the tall beautifully shaped body.
- Mrs Cleat is an unusual woman with a bitter sense of humour.
- Owen Griffith is not one of those weak, artistic young men you've always liked.
- He had a long neck, a long expressionless face and a long thin nose.
- She had all the confidence that her brother did not have and she was good-looking in a strong outdoor way.

3 Comprehension

- b
- a
- a
- c
- a

4 Vocabulary

A	B	I	S	O	L	A	T	E	D	P	Q	H
G	C	A	F	S	H	K	U	W	D	W	L	E
O	B	S	G	C	F	L	V	M	J	F	L	M
S	G	H	S	D	G	K	S	D	Q	A	O	S
S	J	G	T	K	J	D	C	H	U	R	C	H
I	F	H	L	T	F	I	U	W	I	M	F	O
V	O	S	T	O	F	F	I	C	E	S	O	P
J	K	N	U	W	H	O	N	I	T	D	S	A
T	D	W	L	E	V	M	N	P	U	G	J	O
V	I	C	A	R	F	H	L	T	D	W	L	E

5 Follow-up activity

- A village usually has a vicar.
- The church was right in the centre of the village.
- The tower could be seen from far away.
- The small local inn was owned by an old couple.
- The post office was near the church in the centre of the village.
- Village life was full of gossip.
- Life in a village was quiet and peaceful.
- Everyone in the village would go to the shop to buy groceries.
- A lot of local meat and vegetables come from the farm.
- Many people who live in quiet villages feel quite isolated.

Part 2 (Chapters 5–8)

1 Comprehension

- False. Jerry bumps into Maud Dane-Calthrop who says she has received three anonymous letters.
- False. Mrs Symmington did commit suicide.
- True
- True
- False. A knife was found in the base of Agnes's skull.
- False. Agnes saw someone deliver an anonymous letter to the house.

2 Grammar

- Mrs Symmington committed suicide.
- Agnes was killed with a knife.
- Agnes was hit on the back of the head and stabbed in the neck.
- The locals gossiped about the two people that were murdered.
- Mrs Symmington poisoned herself by taking cyanide.

3 Comprehension

- Megan was excited by/happy about/saddened by the death of Mrs Symmington.
- Megan went to stay with Jerry and Joanna/the Dane-Calthrops/Dr Griffiths and his wife.
- Agnes was with people/alone/with her friend in the house when she was murdered.
- Agnes was shot/stabbed with a knife/poisoned.
- Mr Pye had very strange visitors/animals/habits.

4 Vocabulary

A	V	J	K	H	V	J	C	H
P	D	K	S	F	G	B	Y	Y
I	P	U	U	G	S	T	A	B
F	O	N	I	H	K	A	N	O
G	I	W	C	N	U	D	I	N
V	S	R	I	L	L	E	D	E
X	O	N	D	V	U	O	E	D
Y	N	I	E	B	V	N	A	K
B	E	F	M	A	F	O	N	D
A	Q	E	A	D	G	I	I	E

5 Follow-up activity

- She poisoned herself with cyanide.
- The girl was killed with a knife.
- She was found dead in the cupboard.
- The killer attacked her with a knife aiming at the skull.
- A knife was used to kill Agnes.
- A single stab would have been enough to have killed Agnes.
- Cyanide poisoned Mrs Symmington.
- Mrs Symmington's death appeared to be suicide.

Part 3 (Chapters 9–12)

1 Comprehension

- True
- False. Miss Marple stayed with the Dane-Calthrops.
- True
- False. Jerry does take Megan to London.
- False. Joanna had a visit from Dr Griffith who gave her a photo of a diseased lung.
- True

2 Vocabulary

- Jerry catches the bus/a taxi/the train to go to London.
- Jerry asks Megan to the cinema/to marry him/to a funeral.
- Megan is not in love with Jerry/hates Jerry/loves Jerry.
- Megan accepts/rejects/denies Jerry's proposal of marriage.
- Megan can horse-ride/dance/play volleyball.
- Megan was wearing muddy boots/shoes/plimsolls.

3 Comprehension

- a)
- c)

4 Grammar

- The ice cracked under my feet when I stood on it. (crack)
- The girl is grinning at the man. (grin)
- He's whistling loudly. It's really annoying! (whistle)
- They left the lights switched on. (switch on)
- A knife had been pushed into her skull. (push)
- She had knitted something with white wool. (knit)

5 Comprehension

- c)
- b)
- c)

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## Part 4 (Chapters 13–15)

### 1 Comprehension

- 1 False. Dr Owen Griffiths does not accept Joanna's hand in marriage.
- 2 False. Elsie Holland does receive an anonymous letter.
- 3 True
- 4 False. Miss Marple thinks Megan is courageous.
- 5 True
- 6 False. Mr Symmington gives Megan a cheque.

### 2 Comprehension

- 1 a)
- 2 b)
- 3 a)
- 4 b)
- 5 b)

### 3 Grammar

- a)
- 1 She blackmails her way through life.
  - 2 He dares her to jump.
  - 3 They often bump into one another in the street.
  - 4 She sews with great skill.
  - 5 The men often swear at each other.
- b)
- 1 She blackmailed her way through life.
  - 2 He dared her to jump.
  - 3 They often bumped into one another in the street.
  - 4 She sewed with great skill.
  - 5 The men often swore at each other.
- c)
- 1 She had blackmailed her way through life.
  - 2 He had dared her to jump.
  - 3 They had often bumped into one another in the street.
  - 4 She had sewn with great skill.
  - 5 The men had often sworn at each other.

### 4 Comprehension

- 1 a)
- 2 a)
- 3 b)