Book Summary 1 Nienke Raaijmakers H4a

1. Title explanation

The curious incident of the dog in the night-time:
The story is about a boy, who found a dead dog in the garden of his neighbours. He’s going to find out what happened that night and who killed the dog (because he saw that the dog had many bleeding wounds which were made with a pitchfork).

1. Summary

The book is about an autistic, 15 year old boy, his name is Christopher. He lives in Swindon, near London. He knows every country of the world, including the capital cities and he also knows every prime number until 7507. Christopher loves facts, numbers, formulas and logic. He doesn’t like people that much, because he can’t really understand their emotions. But he loves dogs, because they only have four emotions: happy, sad, angry and concentrated.

The story starts with the home-coming from Mrs. Shears (the neighbour) and her murdered dog. Because Christopher loves dogs and detectives, he’ll fix the mystery of the “curious incident of the dog in the night-time”. He’s going to ask neighbours if they maybe have seen some suspected things. All the information he gets, he writes down in a little book.
His father doesn’t like that very much. He told Christopher not to be curious about other people’s lives. But Christopher doesn’t listen to him and he continues his research. He tells the reader that the book “the curious incident of the dog in the night-time” is actually written by him.

The book is not only about Christopher and his research. It’s also about Christopher’s life. His mother had a heart-attack when he was a little boy, but he can remember things very well, so he tells the reader of the book everything he still knows about his mother. He also explains some (math)mysteries.

One day, his father found his book, read it and took it away from Christopher. Christopher didn’t like that, and he would search his book to get it back. When his father goes away to repair some (heating) boilers, Christopher’s going to find his book. But he actually didn’t only find his book. He also found some letters, with his name on it. Of course he’s very curious about that, and he took the letters to his own room. When he read one of the letters, he gets immediately stomach ache. The letters are from his mother, and she wrote it not a long time ago! So, that means she’s alive, and the letters explain she has been living in London all the time.

Christopher’s father came home, and saw the letters. He’s very sad, because he didn’t explain anything about Christopher’s mother and he saw just right then that Christopher is very angry about him. Father tells the whole story to Christopher, and he also tells Christopher that he’d killed the dog. Christopher doesn’t understand if it’s a joke or not. Then he’s very afraid of his father and runs away, to his mother in London. After a long travel, her found her house. He sees that his mother is living together with Mr. Shears, his father’s biggest enemy!
Because his father had told the police about the flight of Christopher, his mother and him can’t stay in his mother’s house. They move back to Swindon, and live together in a little house. Because Christopher doesn’t like his father any more, his father tries to make him happy and he felt sorry, so he gave Christopher a dog, named Sandy.

1. Theme
The book has a few different themes:
- **family / love**: Christopher loves his parents, it doesn’t matter for him his mom left him
 and his father because she died, because, like Christopher told the reader, the
 memories are the ones which count.
- **Detective / Murder**: The dog that Christopher found has been murdered by someone,
 and Christopher tries to find out who killed the dog, and he’s going to be a detective.
2. Characters
There are a lot of people in the book, but I think they’re not that important, because they’re only a few sentences in the story. The most important people are Christopher and his dad.
- Christopher: Christopher is a round character person. In the beginning of the book, you
 get the impression that he’s a shy, but also a very curious guy.
 When you’ve read the book a while, you know that he definitely is a curious guy: he
 doesn’t have to find out who killed Wellington (the dog) and why. But because he’s very
 curious: he’ll found that out.
 Christopher is also a cheeky boy, which means that he doesn’t always listen to his dad
 and, because he doesn’t listen, makes the wrong decisions. You also get to know that
 Christopher is a very smart guy: he knows the prime numbers until 7507 and loves logic
 and math.
 At the end of the book, you get to know that Christopher is a fighter, which means that if
 he thinks he can do or fix something, he’ll do his very best to make that come true.

- Father: The father from Christopher is a flat character. He doesn’t have that many
 characteristics which are explained in the book. The only things the reader knows about
 him is that he’s a very friendly man and he likes his work a lot (he’s a heating-boiler
 fixer, and he enjoys it to work with his hands). The reader would expect that he’s very
 sad because his wife is dead, but in the end of the story is showed the reader that his
 wife isn’t dead, she’s actually living in London after a divorce with him.
3. Plot
The most important things that happened in the story were:
- The first scene: This is the scene in which Christopher finds the murdered dog and he
 decides to fix the mystery and this is where the whole story is about.
- The scene in which Christopher’s father took off Christopher’s book, because after this
 scene, Christopher finds some weird letters: they’re written to him, and they’re from his
 own mother.
- The scene in which Christopher found the letters which were from his mother and which
 were written to him. After that scene, the whole story changes: Christopher hates his
 dad because he didn’t tell him anything about it, and Christopher goes to his mom, in
 London.
- The last scene, because Christopher’s father is feeling very sorry for Christopher and
 what he’d done to him. In hope Christopher will not hate him anymore after, he gave
 Christopher a present, a dog, because he knows Christopher is fond of dogs.
4. Setting
It isn’t really clear when the story took place, because there’s no exact time in it. The story is happening in Swindon, that’s a little place near London. It’s happening very often in the street where Christopher lives, but it’s happening the most in his head, because you’re most of the time reading his thoughts and feelings. It’s also happening in London, where his mom lives, but that’s not that much time in the story.
5. Your opinion
I’ve got different feelings about this book. I first thought it was an easy book to read, but you’ve to be very concentrated to understand the story very well. The story is written with a bit of humour, which I like, because that makes it easier to read and you get to know the people a bit more.
If I were to identify with one of the characters in my book, it would be Mrs. Shears, because she’s a patient and nice neighbour from Christopher and she helps him a lot. I like to help people too, so I can identify me with her the most, I think.
If I were to talk about a round character in my book, it would be Christopher, because you’re getting him such known well in the story. In the beginning of the book, you think he’s a bit shy and he doesn’t like people that much. But when you’ve red the book for a while, you’re getting the impression that he indeed likes people, because he can handle with people very well.
If I were to describe a scene which struck me most in the book, it would be the scene in which Christopher found the letters from his mother, because he didn’t expect that she was alive or he didn’t expect to find something from her, which was meant for him.
The theme of the book could be best described as follows: murder/crime/detective, because that’s where the whole story is about: Christopher tries to find out who killed the dog and why.
The plot of the book could best be summarised as: Christopher finds a killed dog in the garden from his neighbours, and he wants to fix the mystery about the murder. He writes all the information he gets down in a book, but then his father got the book and he didn’t give it back to Christopher. Christopher doesn’t like that and he’s going to search his book. When he found it in a box, he also saw some letters with his name on it. They’re from his mother, and when he takes a look of the date they’re written, he realizes that his mother is still alive and that she’s living in London. When his father told him that he killed the dog, Christopher is going to his mother. Because his father felt really sorry for Christopher, he bought him a dog, named Sandy.
If I were to recommend this book to someone, I would give him the following reasons: it’s a very nice story, because it’s written with a sense of humour. That makes the story nice to read, even if you don’t like crime novels that much, like I did. The second thing that makes the story nice to read, is that the person (Christopher) has the same age of me, he’s 15 years old, so you can understand his problems a bit more than you were an adult or a 10 year old child.
In my book I did not like the first paragraphs, because I didn’t really understand the book for so far I’ve been reading it. But when I read the book a bit more, I understood where the story was about and I’ve read it whole.
If I were to describe a very important setting in my book, I would describe the first scene, because that’s where the whole story is about.
If I had a chance to talk to the writer of my book, I would definitely ask him why he wrote a book about a killed dog, and why he’d chosen the people like Christopher, because Christopher is a very different guy than others: he likes math, logic, the truth and prime numbers a lot, so you think in the beginning he’s a nerd and he hasn’t got friends and he only likes school, but that isn’t true.
In my opinion this book would deserve a 8 because the book is very funny written, but when I read the first parts, I didn’t really get the story, and that’s a bit a pity.