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There Is No Normal

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There Is No Normal

Dear Christopher Boone,

In The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time readers are able to identify the many ways that you are different. You take interest in many things that most people consider minor details and do not consider important. You approach every situation with logic alone rather than a combination of logic and emotion like many would. Despite these differences, you are very similar to everyone else. You have a need for order in your life that everyone has to some degree. Everyone just satisfies that need in different ways. While you find order in the comfort that math provides, another person may find that in something much more abstract like religion. On several occasions in your novel, you described your schedule; the majority of people find order in a schedule, though they may not be as detailed. I can personally relate to this need for order. I keep a schedule of all of my obligations in a weekly planner and I also find order in keeping my space organized. I understand that having some type of order in my life gives me more control over it and although you did not point out the reason behind this need for order, I believe it is very similar to mine.

In the novel, some of your reactions to different situations seem very out of the ordinary. For example, most people would not throw a fit due to being touched by someone that they know as well as a parent. Although your reactions are very different from what most people consider normal, the emotions that are bringing such dramatic responses are the same feelings that everyone else experiences. You experience sadness when you discover your father's lies about your mother, just like any other human would if they were betrayed by someone they love. You are fearful when you learn that your father killed Wellington, rationalizing that he is also capable

of killing you. Any other sane person would be afraid if they believed his or her life was in danger. Christopher, you appear to take pleasure in solitude, but the special hand-touch with your parents in lieu of a hug reveals that you also find peace in comfort of other people. I can relate to this; I find the most comfort in going for a run by myself with music blaring to drown everything else out or curling up in bed with my mother. Although, your late-night walks and hand-touches are different, the idea is the same.

In your book, it seemed very strange to read about all of the digressions of thought that varied from math puzzles, to astronomy, to Sherlock Holmes' hat. In English classes we are always taught to stay on topic and eliminate any unnecessary or unrelated information. Although these tangents seem out of the ordinary to most readers, they perfectly describe how people think; I was just thinking about watering tomato plants while writing this letter. We try to organize our thoughts on paper, but in reality everyone has random thoughts about unrelated interests pop into their head quite often. These deviations from the story at hand seem very strange, but in reality they prove how you are just like me and everyone else.

My ability to identify myself with you after thinking about how drastically different we are while reading your novel reveals to me that I am not normal and you are not normal. Every single person is so different that no one is normal; in fact, I have no idea what normalcy is and I doubt that I ever will. We all have common needs and common emotions, but we react and deal with these things in completely different ways. Given any two people, there will be similarities and there will be differences, but I do not know who gets to decide which of these characteristics are considered normal and which ones are considered strange. We are all unique and when it comes to people there is no definition of normal, just varying degrees of uniqueness.