

Mark Haddon

Quotes

*People, Book, Thinking, Writing, Children, Mean, Literature, Stars, Fall, Fiction,
Two, Mind, World, Moving, Kids, Math, Stupid, Real, Believe, Lying*

I was born too late for steam trains and a lazy eye meant I'd never be an astronaut.

~Mark Haddon

It wasn't about believing this or that, it wasn't even about good and evil and right and wrong, it was about finding the strength to bear the discomfort that came with being in the world.

~Mark Haddon

And it occurred to him that there were two parts to being a better person. One part was thinking about other people. The other part was not giving a toss what other people thought.

~Mark Haddon

I like dogs. You always know what a dog is thinking. It has four moods. Happy, sad, cross and concentrating. Also, dogs are faithful and they do not tell lies because they cannot talk.

~Mark Haddon

On the fifth day, which was a Sunday, it rained very hard. I like it when it rains hard. It sounds like white noise everywhere, which is like silence but not empty.

~Mark Haddon

No one wants to know how clever you are. They don't want an insight into your mind, thrilling as it might be. They want an insight into their own.

~Mark Haddon

Everyone has learning difficulties, because learning to speak French or understanding relativity is difficult.

~Mark Haddon

You love someone, you've got to let something go.

~Mark Haddon

From a good book, I want to be taken to the very edge. I want a glimpse into that outer darkness.

~Mark Haddon

For me, disability is a way of getting some extremity, some kind of very difficult situation, that throws an interesting light on people.

~Mark Haddon

Reading is a conversation. All books talk. But a good book listens as well.

~Mark Haddon

I knew there was a story; once you find a dog with a fork through it, you know there's a story there.

~Mark Haddon

And this shows that sometimes people want to be stupid and they do not want to know the truth.

~Mark Haddon

I think most writers feel like they're on the outside looking in much of the time... All of us feel, to a certain extent, alienated from the stuff going on around us.

~Mark Haddon

All the other children at my school are stupid. Except I'm not meant to call them stupid, even though this is what they are.

~Mark Haddon

Children simply don't make the distinction; a book is either good or bad. And some of the books they think are good are very, very bad indeed.

~Mark Haddon

Use your imagination and you'll see that even the most narrow, humdrum lives are infinite in scope if you examine them with enough care.

~Mark Haddon

I think the U.K. is too small to write about from within it and still make it seem foreign and exotic and interesting.

~Mark Haddon

If kids like a picture book, they're going to read it at least 50 times. Read anything that often, and even minor imperfections start to feel like gravel in the bed.

~Mark Haddon

My book has a very simple surface, but there are layers of irony and paradox all the way through it.

~Mark Haddon

I don't mean that literary fiction is better than genre fiction, On the contrary; novels can perform two functions and most perform only one.

~Mark Haddon

... why I like timetables, because they make sure I don't get lost in time.

~Mark Haddon

...and I went into the garden and lay down and looked at the stars in the sky and made myself negligible.

~Mark Haddon

Every life is narrow. Our only escape is not to run away, but to learn to love the people we are and the world in which we find ourselves.

~Mark Haddon

I started writing books for children because I could illustrate them myself and because, in my innocence, I thought they'd be easier.

~Mark Haddon

As a kid, I didn't read a great deal of fiction, and I've forgotten most of what I did read.

~Mark Haddon

I've written 16 children's books and five unpublished novels. Some of the latter were breathtakingly bad.

~Mark Haddon

Most of my work consisted of crossing out. Crossing out was the secret of all good writing.

~Mark Haddon

...and I wrote a book and that means I can do anything

~Mark Haddon

..and only sticks and stones can break my bones.

~Mark Haddon

Find the extraordinary inside the ordinary.

~Mark Haddon

Writing for children is bloody difficult; books for children are as complex as their adult counterparts, and they should therefore be accorded the same respect.

~Mark Haddon

Bore children, and they stop reading. There's no room for self-indulgence or showing off or setting the scene.

~Mark Haddon

At 20, 25, 30, we begin to realise that the possibilities of escape are getting fewer. We have jobs, children, partners, debts. This is the part of us to which literary fiction speaks.

~Mark Haddon

The one thing you have to do if you write a book is put yourself in someone else's shoes. The reader's shoes. You've got to entertain them.

~Mark Haddon

Madness doesn't happen to someone alone. Very few people have experiences that are theirs alone.

~Mark Haddon

With English literature, if you do a bit of shonky spelling, no one dies, but if you're half-way through a maths calculation and you stick in an extra zero, everything just crashes into the ravine.

~Mark Haddon

I want my name to mean me.

~Mark Haddon

I read very, very little fiction as a kid. All the books I can remember are junior science books.

~Mark Haddon

I like having my back pressed against a wall and being made to work harder so I don't embarrass myself.

~Mark Haddon

Lots of things are mysteries. But that doesn't mean there isn't an answer to them. It's just that scientists haven't found the answer yet.

~Mark Haddon

Most murders are committed by someone who is known to the victim. In fact, you are most likely to be murdered by a member of your own family on Christmas day.

~Mark Haddon

I do not tell lies. Mother used to say that this was because I was a good person. But it is not because I am a good person. It is because I do not tell lie.

~Mark Haddon

...and there was nothing to do except to wait and to hurt.

~Mark Haddon

Indeed, I am repeatedly astonished by the number of really good writers who understand human beings so well on paper but don't know how to deal with them in real life.

~Mark Haddon

As to the number of novels I've abandoned... I shudder to think. I have thrown away five completed novels, and that's a gruesome enough figure. But not necessarily a waste of effort.

~Mark Haddon

Well, we're meant to be writing stories today.

~Mark Haddon

But I said that you could still want something that is very unlikely to happen.

~Mark Haddon

I find people confusing.

~Mark Haddon

I think good books have to make a few people angry.

~Mark Haddon

I've come to realize that most good ideas are precisely the ones you can't describe.

~Mark Haddon

I've worked in television long enough to know that when you stop enjoying that type of thing you go home and do something else.

~Mark Haddon

Fiction that responds to recent world events is a hostage to fortune because all momentous events look very different a year, two years, three years later.

~Mark Haddon

There's something with the physical size of America... American writers can write about America and it can still feel like a foreign country.

~Mark Haddon

You could ask for hugs if you were feeling sad or you'd hurt yourself, but when it happened spontaneously it made you feel warm inside.

~Mark Haddon

Appalling things can happen to children. And even a happy childhood is filled with sadnesses.

~Mark Haddon

When I was 13 or 14, I started devouring novels; literature took quite a while to take me over, but it caught up just in time to save me from becoming a mathematician.

~Mark Haddon

Jane Austen writes about these humdrum lives with such empathy that they seem endlessly fascinating

~Mark Haddon

You make a film you feel is as real as possible and hope people react as though it were real.

~Mark Haddon

Things can be funny when people are uneasy. It softens them up and stops them falling asleep on the sofa. I like those moments where people half-smile and half-wince.

~Mark Haddon

I like poetry when I don't quite understand why I like it. Poetry isn't just a question of wrapping something up and giving it to someone else to unwrap. It just doesn't work like that.

~Mark Haddon

If one book's done this well, you want to write another one that does just as well. There's that horror of the second novel that doesn't match up.

~Mark Haddon

Family, that slippery word, a star to every wandering bark, and everyone sailing under a different sky.

~Mark Haddon

Science and literature give me answers. And they ask me questions I will never be able to answer.

~Mark Haddon

Many childrens writers dont have children of their own

~Mark Haddon

I could invent another world. I'm not terribly keen on this one.

~Mark Haddon

I thought Bill Bryson's *A Short History of Nearly Everything* was remarkable. Managing to be entertaining while still delivering all that hard science was a pretty good trick to pull off.

~Mark Haddon

Jane Austen was writing about boring people with desperately limited lives. We forget this because we've seen too many of her books on screen.

~Mark Haddon

If you enjoy math and you write novels, it's very rare that you'll get a chance to put your math into a novel. I leapt at the chance.

~Mark Haddon

The way of creating believable characters is not by conforming to a set of PC rules.

~Mark Haddon

I think one of the things you have to learn if you're going to create believable characters is never to make generalizations about groups of people.

~Mark Haddon

Show me the artist anywhere who's had an utterly stable mental life, and I'll buy you hot dinners for the rest of your life.

~Mark Haddon

I went to boarding school and then I went to Oxford, and I know how easy it is for certain groups of people to become wholly insulated from ordinary life.

~Mark Haddon

And I know I can do this because I went to London on my own, and because I solved the mysteryâ€"and I was brave and I wrote a book

and that means I can do anything.

~Mark Haddon

And then I thought that I had to be like Sherlock Holmes and I had to detach my mind at will to a remarkable degree so that I did not notice how much it was hurting inside my head.

~Mark Haddon

How pleased we are to have our eyes opened but how easily we close them again.

~Mark Haddon

The secret of contentment lay in ignoring many things completely.

~Mark Haddon

Payments to the disabled are getting slashed and people like me are getting a tax cut. Who could possibly think that is a good thing?

~Mark Haddon

I do not like strangers because I do not like people I have never met before. They are hard to understand.

~Mark Haddon

And what he meant was that maths wasn't like life because in life there are no straightforward answers in the end

~Mark Haddon

He really did not care whether he survived or not, so long as it rendered him unconscious and absolved him of responsibility.

~Mark Haddon

..because when we look up into the sky at night there will be no darkness, just the blazing light of billions and billions of stars, all falling.

~Mark Haddon

I think I've learnt that there is no character so strange that you haven't shared their experience in some small way.

~Mark Haddon

Being clever was when you looked at how things were and used the evidence to work out something new.

~Mark Haddon

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