

# **Hazardous Duty**

**By Christy Barritt**

## Teacher's Packet I

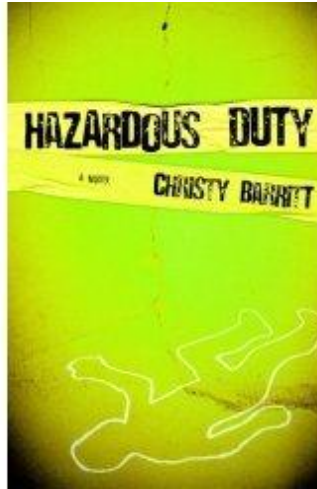
This packet includes the following:

Hazardous Duty in a nutshell  
Overview of materials  
Four (4) book club assignment sheets  
Project sheets with 24 projects for your students to choose from  
Author study/scavenger hunt on Christy Barritt

These detailed assignments (worksheets)  
Creating a poster  
Show me, don't tell me writing  
Character traits  
Sequencing/cause and effect activity  
Vocabulary of literature flash cards (23 sets)

Coming in teacher's packet II  
Bookmark template  
Point of view activity  
Tracking the suspects worksheet  
Prediction and confirmation log  
Vocabulary of careers flash cards  
Gabby job interview role play & rubric  
Unit culminating drama activities

## **Hazardous Duty in a nutshell:**



Buying a gun to kill your wife: \$3,000

Hiring Trauma Care to clean afterward: \$1,500

Having that same cleaner uncover evidence that frames you: priceless

On her way to completing a degree in forensic science, Gabby St. Claire starts her own crime scene cleaning business. “Yeah, that’s me,” she says, “a crime scene cleaner. People waiting in line behind me who strike up conversations always regret it.”

When a routine cleaning job at a senatorial candidate’s home turns up a murder weapon the police overlooked, she realizes that the wrong person is in jail. But the owner of the weapon is a powerful foe . . . and willing to do anything to keep Gabby quiet. Gabby and her gorgeous and single neighbor Riley team up to find the killer before another murder occurs.

The book would be “murder mystery chick lit.” While murder mystery is supposed to be suspenseful and chick lit is supposed to be funny, this novel nicely combines both. Even some gory episodes are made fun to read. 240 pages, soft cover

Can be ordered from [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

**“Writing Mysteries Can Be Murder” an audience interactive mystery dinner theater script based on Hazardous Duty is currently available free of charge on the [teacherspayteachers.com](https://www.teacherspayteachers.com) website.**

# **Hazardous Duty**

## **Materials overview**

Welcome to the world of snooping, I mean investigating, literature. Use any and all of these resources to lead literature circles, discussion groups or create assignments based on the novel Hazardous Duty by Christy Barritt.

Good readers build their vocabulary as they read. The bookmark can be reproduced, folded and glued shut to not only keep place while reading but to also collect interesting words, character information, clues with the corresponding page numbers.

The novel has been divided into four reading assignments with questions and tasks to go with each one. Nothing is sacred about doing it in four assignments; change to suit your group. The task sets a purpose for reading and preparing students for discussion in a group.

Other materials are designed for independent work so that students may be working while the teacher is meeting with another group. They provide practice and reinforce the skills that good readers need to succeed. They include comprehension, visualization, point-of-view, summarizing, connecting to the text, identifying character traits, and identifying the setting.

The materials give students extra practice in writing not only to explain their thinking and to demonstrate their understanding, but to become better writers. A variety of ways to respond to the novel are provided for differentiated instruction and to cover a number of Gardner's multiple intelligences. SOL numbers are given on the literature vocabulary cards that correspond to the Virginia Standards of learning. We are indebted to Jennifer Presson for the idea for these.

Additional materials will be included in packet II. Since many readers will be able to identify with Gabby's search for a more meaningful career than her current one, Hazardous Duty and its sequel, Suspicious Minds career exploration will be included. These can serve as a launch point to discuss how one determines what career they wish to pursue and the actual pursuit of preferred employment despite temporary setbacks.

**Book:** **Hazardous Duty**, by Christy Barritt

Day/Date of my next meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Pages I need to read by my next meeting: pg. 1-69

Things to snoop, I mean investigate:

1. New or interesting words I want to use, share and remember:

Word: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Word: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Once you have finished your reading, write two questions to ask your group at your next meeting. Try to make them OPINION questions, such as “Why do you think...”, or “How did you feel when...”, or “What would you do if...”.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Personal journaling prompt

Make a connection. Think of a time when you felt you were in danger. What was it like? What happened during and after? Has anything else happened to Gabby or another character that is similar to something that has happened in your life?

**Book:** **Hazardous Duty**, by Christy Barritt

Day/Date of my next meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Pages I need to read by my next meeting: pg. 70-129

Things to snoop, I mean investigate:

1. New or interesting words I want to use, share and remember:

Word: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Word: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Select a passage (one paragraph or two) that is either a favorite part or a part that you think is important. It may be important because it provides a clue to solving the mystery or because it reveals something crucial about a character. Bookmark or put a sticky note at the passage so you can easily read it to the group to talk about. Jot a note about why you selected it.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Personal journaling prompts to choose from

Gabby often speaks rashly and later regrets saying something. We call that “Putting her foot in her mouth”. That is an idiom that means saying something stupid, regrettable or too hastily. In one way or another you say the wrong thing at the wrong time to the wrong person. Jot down a time you, Gabby or someone else has “put their foot n their mouth” What was the effect of that mistake?

If I were (character) I would have done this differently.....

**Book: Hazardous Duty**, by Christy Barritt

Day/Date of my next meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Pages I need to read by my next meeting: pg. 130-158

Things to snoop, I mean investigate:

1. A new or interesting words I want to use, share and remember:

Word: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

2. Select a quote from Hazardous Duty that shows one character's opinion or an event or another character. Then, choose a different character whose opinion would be quite different. Make up a quote from his or her point of view about the same event or character. Share with others in your group without telling them which character you wrote it as. Can they guess who it is?

Write quote #1 (found on page #\_\_\_\_\_). “ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ ”

What did you learn about the character or events from this quote?

Choose a character \_\_\_\_\_ and write a quote from their point of view below.

“ \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ ”

How do their points of view differ and why?

3. Personal journaling prompts to choose from

If I were going to date a character in Hazardous Duty is would be (character) because.....

If Gabby (or another character) were my best friend I would advise her to .....

Respond to Gabby's quote on page 138 “Church...just another empty pursuit as people try to find meaning in life.”

**Book: Hazardous Duty**, by Christy Barritt

Day/Date of my next meeting \_\_\_\_\_

Pages I need to read by my next meeting: All of them!

Things to snoop, I mean investigate:

1. New or interesting words I want to use, share and remember:

Word: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Word: \_\_\_\_\_ Page \_\_\_\_\_

Meaning: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. Good readers evaluate what they read: Think of one or two questions you can ask the group to generate discussion. Your questions can cover the accuracy of the technical details (cleaning, criminal procedures, running for office). Did the dialogue sound natural and characters believable? Did the author avoid stereotypes? Did the setting work? Did you have enough facts to solve the mystery when the protagonist did? Prepare to share what you liked best and least.

3. Personal journaling prompts to choose from

If Hazardous Duty were being made into a movie, I'd like to play the part of (character) because.....

If I were writing a sequel I would have the following happen in the first two chapters.....

# Projects for **Hazardous Duty**

*(Note to teachers. Point values should be edited to suit your class)*

Go for a 100 by completing a series of projects ranging from simple to complex. You choose the ones that appeal to you.

Each task is assigned a maximum point value. Do it well for all the points. Keep choosing until you reach that 100 and an A+ grade.

## **10 Point journal prompts**

- A. If you could change places with one of the characters in the novel which one would it be? Why would you pick this character? Use specific examples and details from the story and write a short explanation.
- B. Move the setting of the story by changing the time and the place. Explain how this would change the novel. Give examples from the story.**
- C. Write a poem that tells about a piece of the story: the plot, a character, the setting, or the conflict. Write a brief explanation of the poem and what it means to the novel. (you may complete this task 3 times per project)
- D. Which one of the characters would make a good friend? Explain why you would pick them as a good friend. Give specific examples from the story.**
- E. If you could give any character in the novel a present to help them in the story what would you give them and why? Explain using details from the story how this would help the character.
- F. Create a book mark that illustrates the story. On the back of the book mark pick 5 words that describe the novel and write a short reason for each word. Make sure the title and author of the books are on the bookmark.**
- G. Create an advice column for the characters. Write letters asking for advice from the characters based on the problems they face in the novel. Respond back with advice that could help them. (You may do this up to three times as three separate projects as long as you use a different character for each letter) You should make connections to your own life and the events in the book.

## **15 Point TASKS**

- A. Write and perform a radio or TV commercial (1 minute long) to sell Hazardous Duty. Use detail. A written copy must be handed in.
- B. Write a letter to the author explaining your thoughts about the novel. What you liked, what you did not like and how you connected to the characters in the novel.**
- C. Create a new character to add to the novel or to appear in the sequel, Suspicious Minds. Describe this character and tell what role they would play in full detail giving examples from the novel where they would be added or make an impact.
- D. Create a collage using magazine pictures and words that describe Hazardous Duty (plot, characters, both) Fill the space creatively and so it is pleasing to the eye. Write a brief blurb to be posted underneath it.**
- E. If no sequel was written many unfinished story lines would need to come to a close. Rewrite the ending with resolution for Gabby's important relationships and career goals.



- F. Redesign the front and back cover of Hazardous Duty. Include all the important information about the novel; a story blurb, information about the author, etc. (look at different book covers in the same genre for ideas)

## 20 Point TASKS

- G. Interview a character. Write the interview questions and the answers the character would give in the interview. You must have at least 15 open ended questions and answers. Can be done in writing or as a role play.**
- H. Gabby opened the book changing around lines to a song so she could use it to advertise her services. Pick a familiar rap or melody (EX: Mary had a Little Lamb or If your Happy and You Know it) and change the lyrics so they tell about the novel. (minimum of two verses if it is a short song)
- I. Draw a picture of one of the characters in the novel that is described well. Using quotes from the book point out different things about the character on your picture. You must have at least 10 quotes for your picture.**

## 40 Point TASKS

- A. Summarize the plot of the novel by creating a cartoon version of the novel. Use at least 8 frames to tell the story of the book. Use color and words.
- B. Design the front page of a newspaper with headlines and a story about what happened in the book. There must be at least picture on the front page. Other newspapers can provide a template and creative ideas for the layout and story.**
- C. Create a visual time line of the events in the story. Use a virtual timeline like one found at the readwritethink website or on mural paper. Include 15-20 events with blurbs and a visual.
- D. Is there something mentioned in Hazardous Duty that you would like to know more about? (say... forensic science?) Research that topic (after getting approval) and write a report about it. Make sure you include a paragraph explaining why you picked this and how it relates to your novel.**
- E. Pretend you are a character from the story and write a diary for the character explaining the events of the story as seen from their point of view. Include what happens as well as how they felt during this time. You must have at least 6 diary entries. These entries must be at least 2 paragraphs long.
- F. Research and write a report about the author of the novel. Include information about their life and books they have written. Include a photo of the author.\***
- G. Create a Time Capsule for your novel. The time capsule must have at least 12 objects in it that represent something about the novel. Each item must have a short written explanation of why it means something to the novel. You should tell as much about the novel through your Time Capsule as possible. Also include a letter explaining where you would bury the time capsule and why.
- H. Create a News Show about the novel. Your newscast must be at least 3 minutes long and include information about Hazardous Duty. Have some type of visual besides the book to accompany your newscast.**

# **Hazardous Duty**

## **Author Study on Christy Barritt**

Purpose:

Encourage students to become life-long readers with a love of being read to and reading for pleasure.

Lesson Objectives:

1. Students will read, analyze and respond to literature
2. Students will develop an awareness & appreciation of authors, genres and styles
3. Students will make a connection between Hazardous Duty and the author who wrote the novel, gaining insight that authors are real people with families, hobbies, etc.
3. Students will use technology to research authors and collect information
4. Students will organize author information into a presentation and communicate with others
5. Students will consider writing as a hobby or profession

Students use technology to research, summarize and write .

### **Links to websites**

Personal website: [www.christybarritt.com](http://www.christybarritt.com)

The Suspense Zone: <http://www.thesuspensezone.com/Interview%20Christy%20Barritt.html>

Armchair Interviews: [http://reviews.armchairinterviews.com/reviews/hazardous\\_duty](http://reviews.armchairinterviews.com/reviews/hazardous_duty)

Mystery Lovers Corner: <http://www.sleuthedit.com/ChristyBarritt/ChristyBarritt.html>

(Please note: Answers to the scavenger hunt are given in ( ) after the questions for teacher convenience. They should be deleted before page is printed for students)

# **Hazardous Duty by Christy Barritt**

## **Author Study Worksheet**

1. Where and when was Christy Barritt born? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2. What type of writing does the author do? What audiences might enjoy her books?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What events, jobs, people etc in the author's biography or interviews may have had an influence on her writing? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. What is the author's life like today? Where does she live? Is she married? Kids, pets or hobbies?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. What other books has Christy Barritt written? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Scavenger hunt questions**

What was the prize for the only contest she ever won? (Kissing a pig)

How did Christy Barritt get the idea for the character Gabby St. Claire? (Writing another article)

Where did she work in the publishing business? (Standard Publishing in Cincinnati)

What advice does she have for new writers - (Write from the heart)

On which website would you find her character chart? (Christybarritt.com)

# **Hazardous Duty**

## **Advertising 101**

### **Design a marketing poster**

Role: Advertising executive (or team)

A: the public (or a segment of the public likely to enjoy Hazardous Duty)

F: Poster

T: Design a Poster that will persuade others to read Hazardous Duty

#### Requirements

1. Visual(s) (graphics, pictures, clip art, etc. ) that are related to the book, attractive and appealing
2. Title and Author (spelled correctly) that stands out clearly. (Hint: Word Art works great for computer generated projects)
3. A Blurb in your own words – Invite the reader to look more closely with 4 sentences describing the storyline. Do not tell how the book ends. (Hint: use a text box for ease in moving around)
4. A Personal Recommendation\_– Write a couple of sentences telling why you think the viewer would like the book. Include specifics! Use quotation marks around your recommendation, and then type your name below as the originator of the quote.
5. Bold Adjectives that draw attention to the poster (Hint: Word Art. Example: suspenseful!)

# **Hazardous Duty**

## **Show Me, Don't Tell Me**

Like most published authors, Christy Barritt used the main character's actions or dialogue to show the reader what is happening or to describe a character. Find examples from the beginning, the middle, and the end of the book that demonstrate this.

| <b>Page</b>       | <b>Character</b> | <b>Actions or dialogue that show</b> |
|-------------------|------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Beginning of book |                  |                                      |
|                   |                  |                                      |
|                   |                  |                                      |
| Middle of book    |                  |                                      |
|                   |                  |                                      |
|                   |                  |                                      |
| End of book       |                  |                                      |
|                   |                  |                                      |
|                   |                  |                                      |

The next step: Show me!

Write one sentence about the following characters that show an emotion or character trait. For example: Show me: Sierra loves the parrot. You write: Sierra fed the parrot his favorite food then tenderly put him back in his cage.

OR Show me: Gabby was mad. You write: Gabby slammed the car door.

Pick a couple of these below and Show me by writing sentences of your own.

Show me: Mildred was worried about Harold

Show me: Parker was frustrated.

Show me: Gabby was embarrassed about her sooty clothes

Show me: Michael Cunningham was mad at Gabby's snooping

Show me: Candace was happy

Show me: Riley was tired.

Show me: Detective Adams was confused.

# **Hazardous Duty**

## **Sequence of events**

1. Detectives often have to sequence events to solve a mystery. This helps them remember what has happened and discover possible cause and effect relationships. Jot down 7 or 8 developments in the plot thus far.

a.

b.

c.

d.

e.

f.

g.

h.

If one event was caused by another earlier event draw an arrow from the CAUSE to the EFFECT. Here is an example:

CAUSE: Sierra finds a parrot outside but can't keep it because of her cats

EFFECT: Riley gets talked into keeping the parrot



# **Hazardous Duty**

## **Character Traits**

1. Collect some evidence. Gabby collects information on the people she suspects of being involved in the murder including character traits. A trait is a word or even phrase that describes a character's personality (such as thoughtless, wise, fearful, brave, selfless, lazy or dishonest). Select a main character from this book and two traits that could describe him or her. Collect evidence from the text: (character's words, thoughts, and deeds) that show that trait.

Character: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Trait \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence in Words: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence in Thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence in Deeds: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Trait \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence in Words: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence in Thoughts: \_\_\_\_\_

Evidence in Deeds: \_\_\_\_\_

# Hazardous Duty


## Literature Vocabulary Connections

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <b>7.6c</b><br><br><p style="text-align: center;"><b>fact</b></p>   | <p><b>a statement that can be proven</b></p> <p>Parker is a detective.<br/>Gabby has red hair.</p>  |
| <b>7.6c</b><br><br><p style="text-align: center;"><b>opinion</b></p>  | <p><b>a statement that is NOT based on facts</b></p> <p>Parker is gorgeous.<br/>Gabby's hair is dreadful.</p>   |
| <b>7.6a</b><br><p style="text-align: center;"><b>internal text structures<br/>(to enhance comprehension)</b></p> <p>Because Harold had previously been convicted of arson, police assumed he was a prime suspect.</p> | <p><b>how information is organized in a passage</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cause/effect relationships</li> <li>• Comparison and contrast</li> <li>• Listing or enumeration</li> <li>• Sequential or chronological</li> <li>• Concepts/definition</li> <li>• Generalizations</li> </ul>  |
| <b>7.6a</b><br><br><p style="text-align: center;"><b>signal words<br/>for organizational patterns</b></p>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◦ <i>as a result of, consequently</i> for cause-and-effect</li> <li>◦ <i>similarly, on the other hand</i> for comparison/contrast</li> <li>◦ <i>first, three</i> for enumeration or listing</li> <li>◦ <i>today, meanwhile</i> for sequential or chronological</li> <li>◦ <i>refers to, thus</i> for concept/definition</li> <li>◦ <i>always, in fact</i> for generalization</li> <li>◦ <i>begins with, in order to</i> for process</li> </ul> |
| <b>7.6a</b><br><br><p style="text-align: center;"><b>external text structures<br/>(to enhance comprehension)</b></p>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Boldfaced or italics type</li> <li>• Underlining</li> <li>• Indentation</li> <li>• Sidebars</li> <li>• Illustrations, graphics, photos</li> <li>• Footnotes and annotations</li> <li>• Headings and Subheadings</li> </ul>   |



|   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>7.4a</b><br><br><b>root word</b>   | <b>base of a word where prefixes and suffixes are added</b><br>(Example: <b>Detective</b> )  |
| <b>7.4a</b><br><br><b>prefix</b>  | <b>affix placed at the beginning of a word to change its meaning or to create a new word</b><br><br><i>(examples: <b>rewrite</b>, <b>misplace</b>)</i> |
| <b>7.4a</b><br><br><b>suffix</b>  | <b>An affix added to the end of a word to change its meaning /function or to form a new word.</b><br><br><i>(example <b>Hazardous</b>)</i>             |
| <b>SOL 6.7f</b><br><br><b>Dialogue</b><br>(inside “ ”)                              | <b>the words spoken by characters in a book, a film, or a play, or a section of a work that contains spoken words</b>                                  |
| <b>6.4 a</b><br><b>Setting</b><br>Hazardous Duty -Present Day Norfolk, a few weeks) | <b>When and where a story takes place (time, place, and duration)</b>  |
| <b>6.4 a</b><br><br><b>plot</b>   | <b>Sequence of events that support the central conflict and resolution in a story</b>  |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>6.4 a<br/>conflict</b>  | <b>A struggle or problem<br/>between opposing forces<br/>A character can have internal<br/>and external conflicts</b> |
| <b>6.4 a<br/>resolution</b><br>(No peeking at the back of the book to see)                   | <b>The solution to the conflict or<br/>problem</b>  |
| <b>6.4 a<br/>sequence</b>  | <b>The order of events in a story</b>   |
| <b>6.4 a<br/>character traits</b>  | <b>What a character says, thinks,<br/>does, and how they respond<br/>to other characters</b>                          |
| <b>6.4 a<br/>theme</b>   | <b>The central idea or purpose in<br/>a story.</b>  |
| <b>6.4b<br/>Genre</b><br>(Hazardous Duty can be considered<br>mystery, chick-lit or romance) | <b>Different categories of<br/>literature such as historical<br/>fiction, biography, or science<br/>fiction</b>       |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>6.4b</b><br><b>fiction</b>  | <b>A made-up story: short story, novel, plays, folk tales</b>   |
| <b>6.4b</b><br><b>novel</b>  | <b>An extended work of fictional literature</b>   |
| <b>6.4g</b><br><b>internal conflict</b><br>(Who should Gabby date? Should she stop snooping?)  | <b>A conflict that takes place within a character (when a character struggles to make a tough decision)</b>   |
| <b>6.4g</b><br><b>external conflict</b><br>(Will Harold be convicted of arson, will the murderer be caught?)   | <b>When a character is struggling against an outside force such as another character or a natural event.</b>  |
| <b>8.5 b,c</b><br><br><b>Foreshadowing</b><br><br>(We can't tell you or we'd give away the surprise)   | <b>The author's use of clues to hint at what might happen later in the story. Writers use this to build their reader's expectations and to create suspense.</b> |
| <b>8.5 b,c</b><br><br><b>Flashback</b><br>(Gabby thinking about her brother's disappearance)  about her | <b>a scene within a story that interrupts the sequence of events to relate events that occurred in the past</b>   |