A cacophony of noises, lights, and colors; we live in a world where the loudest voices overpower the most brilliant individuals who are just waiting to be heard simply because they are different than ourselves. Bringing to life the unique mind of those who are ostracized because of how they perceive the world, Thomas Jefferson High School for Science and Technology s production of The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time teaches us that sometimes a small, strange investigation leads to self-discovery, whether we re ready or not.

The stage adaptation (Simon Stephens) of The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time is based on Mark Haddon s best-selling book of the same title, originally published in 2003, wherein the murder mystery draws inspiration from Arthur Conan Doyle s Sherlock Holmes series. The play ran on West End for five years from 2012-2017, garnering seven Olivier Awards, including Best Play, during its run.

Set in Swindon, England, The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time follows a 15-year-old boy, Christopher Boone, with Asperger s syndrome, which prevents him from understanding human emotions and causes him to interpret the world in a unique manner. When his neighbor s dog, Wellington, is murdered, Christopher embarked on an investigation to find the culprit, leading to a much bigger mystery about his own family.

The secluded, cautious Christopher (Joshua Mutterperl) is thrown into a whirlwind of discovery when he examines the murder of Wellington. Mutterperl masterfully portrays the autistic Christopher with consistent and accurate physicalities and ticks. His zeal and involvement in his scenes, whether it be through witty remarks, effectively using silence or lack thereof, or hyper-realistic relationships with his castmates, enticed the audience into exploring the complexities of the nuanced character of Christopher.

Christopher s strict, yet caring, father, Ed (Evan Howard) disapproves of Christopher s mission. Providing depth to a normally superficial character, Howard s commanding stage presence melts away as he develops his relationship with his son and returns with vigor when he betrays Christopher s trust. Siobhan (Valerie Nayak), Christopher s supportive teacher and later voice of reason, encourages Christopher to follow his heart and dreams. Throughout the entirety of the show, Nayak consistently brings vivacity and life to the role model. Her subtle physical nodes and maintenance of an effective accent bring to life the caring school teacher.

Adding to Christopher s unique perspective of life, the multipurpose, minimalistic set (Saf Dandashi, Matthew Rothlisberger, Quentin Lovejoy) effectively showcases the unique mind of Christopher, easily changing from a winding path in Swindon to a crowded tube in London. Time, effort, and research was shown throughout the shows costuming (Elen Rowe, Macy Wright, Emma Barnes), through the extensive and masterful use of color to show how Christopher feels about the character, using red to mean trust, yellow/brown to show distrust, blue to signify his mind, and using intermediary colors to signify a shift in character s relationships. Clearly, the most breathtaking technical element was the Grid (Matthew Rothlisberger, Alexandra Trotter); the impressive set-piece utilizes 240 LED and over 2500 lines of code to project bright colors, using the same color specialization as costuming.

With heartfelt performances and breathtaking technical elements, Thomas Jefferson High School s production of The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-time is truly one for the books, enrapturing audiences and giving a chance to previously quiet minds to be heard. They encourage us to take a leap into the unknown, regardless of what we might face on the other side.