FREE PRINTABLE PACK · PARTY AND CLASSROOM KIT

Detective Party Kit

Easy · About 40 minutes in all · Age 8 and up

HOW IT WORKS

A mixed set for a party table, a rainy afternoon or the last lesson of term. Hand the sheets round in any order. The riddles work well read aloud.

IN THIS PACK

A detective word search — page 2

A mystery crossword (5 × 5) — page 3

Two wanted faces to crack — pages 4–5

A logic grid whodunnit — pages 6–7

Three detective riddles — pages 8–9

Answers — **pages 10–15**

PRINTING

Print pages 2–9 for the puzzles and keep the answers back. The sheets are A4 and plain black and white. On US Letter paper, choose “Fit to page”.

Detective Puzzles

Every puzzle here can be played free, with a new case each time, at detective-puzzles.com

November 2026 edition. Free to print and copy for home, classroom, library and club use. Not for sale. Please keep the Detective Puzzles name on the pages.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Detective Word Search: The Embassy Affair

Decoder A-001

I	N	W	D	E	C	O	Y	S	L
D	I	R	D	C	C	E	T	P	O
O	C	E	V	I	O	H	E	R	O
S	A	N	I	P	U	N	O	I	K
S	M	V	K	H	R	A	W	Y	O
I	I	E	T	E	I	T	E	A	U
E	L	R	O	R	E	A	N	D	T
R	L	A	R	A	R	S	R	K	C
M	E	M	O	A	R	H	P	A	R
K	C	D	E	D	B	A	S	N	Q

WORD LIST

Camille
Courier
Dimitri
Lookout
Natasha
Priya
Viktor
Cipher
Decoy
Dossier
Memo
Owen
Vera
Wren

SOLVE THE CASE

1. The Double Agent (the name missing from the grid): _____

2. Hidden message (read the leftover letters, left to right):

_____

3. The Meeting Point: _____

4. Coded word: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Decoder A-001

Coded	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
Plain	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**	**H**	**I**	**J**	**K**	**L**	**M**	**N**	**O**	**P**	**Q**	**R**	**S**	**T**	**U**	**V**	**W**	**X**	**Y**	**Z**	**A**

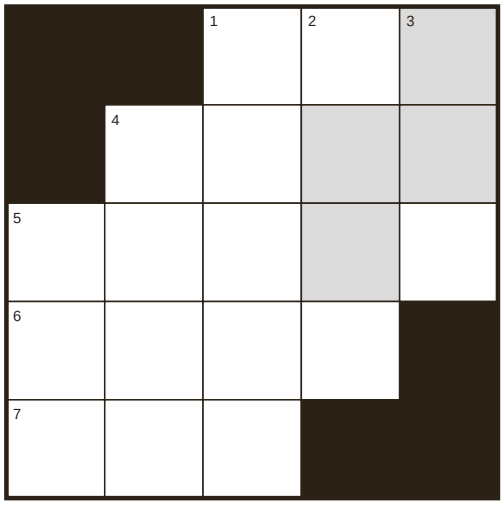
5. The Target: ☐☐☐☐☐☐☐☐

Detective Crosswords

Name _____ Date _____

Puzzle 1 — Case #878

The quiz night trophy vanished minutes before the final round. Five suspects. Four solid alibis. One is lying.



WHO?

One alibi word is missing from the grid — that suspect is lying.

Lena — FUSE
Wren — AREA
Cara — MOOR
Grace — ROSES
Kira — IOTA

WHERE?

The shaded squares spell it (read left to right, top to bottom):

___ ___ ___ ___

WHAT?

Squares 14 · 5 · 3 · 15 — count white squares only:

___ ___ ___ ___

My accusation:

_____

ACROSS

1. Shred
4. Tie up the boat, or open wild land
5. Softly fogged over
6. High-pressure ___, fair-weather zone
7. "___! We scored!"

DOWN

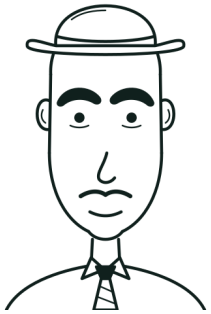
1. Thorny garden flowers
2. Greek letter meaning a smidgen
3. Lever open
4. Sticky swamp-muck that trapped the unwary
5. Month after April

The Sketch Artist

Case SA-R8LJN4 · Rough Sketch (Easy) · 4 witnesses

Somebody walked out of the lending library with a first-edition railway timetable. Four witnesses saw the thief, and no two sketches agree. Each stamp says how many of the four features on that sketch are right: hat, eyes, mouth and collar. It never says which. Exactly one face fits every stamp. Find it.

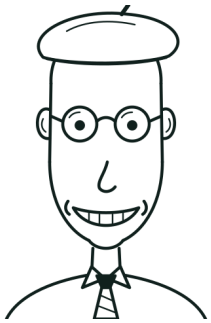
WITNESS SKETCHES



NOTHING RIGHT

1. Sister Agnes

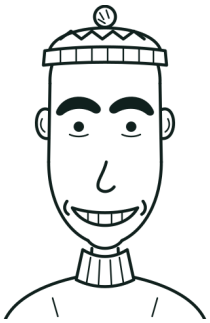
was polishing spectacles at the time



1 RIGHT

2. The night porter

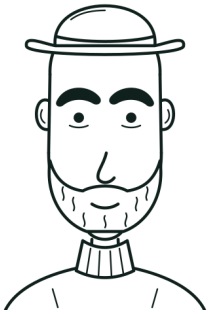
was running for the tram



1 RIGHT

3. Dr Quill

saw the thief by candlelight



2 RIGHT

4. The lamplighter

watched from the tea-shop window

FEATURES IN PLAY

Cross out each one you rule out.

HAT



☐ bowler hat



☐ beret



☐ bobble hat

EYES



☐ round spectacles



☐ monocle



☐ bushy eyebrows

MOUTH



☐ pencil moustache



☐ full beard



☐ toothy grin

COLLAR



☐ necktie



☐ fur collar



☐ roll-neck jumper

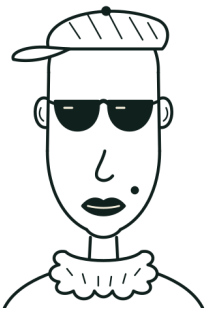
WANTED: Hat _____ Eyes _____ Mouth _____ Collar _____

The Sketch Artist

Case SA-R4U8799 · Rough Sketch (Easy) · 4 witnesses

Somebody walked out of the harbour office with the lighthouse keeper’s telescope. Four witnesses saw the thief, and no two sketches agree. Each stamp says how many of the four features on that sketch are right: hat, eyes, mouth and collar. It never says which. Exactly one face fits every stamp. Find it.

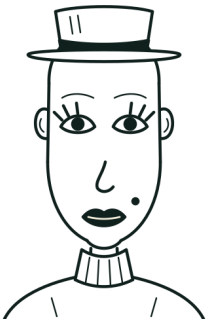
WITNESS SKETCHES



1 RIGHT

1. Nurse Abernathy

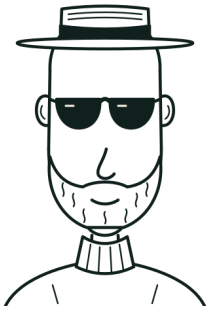
was running for the tram



2 RIGHT

2. The night porter

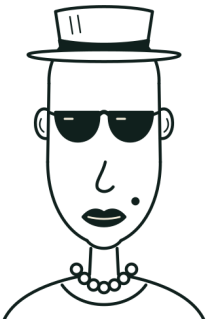
shared a bench with the thief



2 RIGHT

3. The organ grinder

had a fair look from across the street



NOTHING RIGHT

4. Young Dot

saw it all reflected in a spoon

FEATURES IN PLAY

Cross out each one you rule out.

HAT	☐  top hat	☐  flat cap	☐  straw boater
EYES	☐  round spectacles	☐  dark glasses	☐  long eyelashes
MOUTH	☐  walrus moustache	☐  full beard	☐  painted lips
COLLAR	☐  string of pearls	☐  fur collar	☐  roll-neck jumper

WANTED: Hat _____ Eyes _____ Mouth _____ Collar _____

The Interview Room

Case IR-C59Z72P · Constable · 4 guests

The prompt book vanished during the interval at the Lyceum Theatre. 4 guests each gave a short interview. None of them saw the theft — but between their statements, every movement of the evening can be reconstructed.

THE ONE TRUSTED FACT

The prompt book was taken by whoever was lingering in the Wardrobe Room.

INTERVIEW — Miss Gwen Barlow, the photographer

1. Percy never set foot in the Royal Box.

Ruling: This clears exactly one pairing — Percy and Royal Box — and says nothing about any other guest or any other room.

INTERVIEW — Miss Thea Norwood, the poet

2. Neither Horace nor Gwen went near the Royal Box.

Ruling: Clears exactly the two named guests of the one named room — nothing more, and nothing about anyone else.

3. Neither Percy nor Horace went near the Wardrobe Room.

Ruling: Clears exactly the two named guests of the one named room — nothing more, and nothing about anyone else.

INTERVIEW — Mr Percy Lockwood, the chess master

4. I slipped away at half past seven exactly.

Ruling: Settled fact. Exactly one guest matches each time, so this fixes a whole row: mark the match and cross out the rest of its row and column.

INTERVIEW — Mr Horace Quimby, the mapmaker

5. Whoever slipped away at nine o’clock, it certainly wasn’t me.

Ruling: This clears exactly one pairing — Horace and nine o’clock — and says nothing about any other guest or any other time.

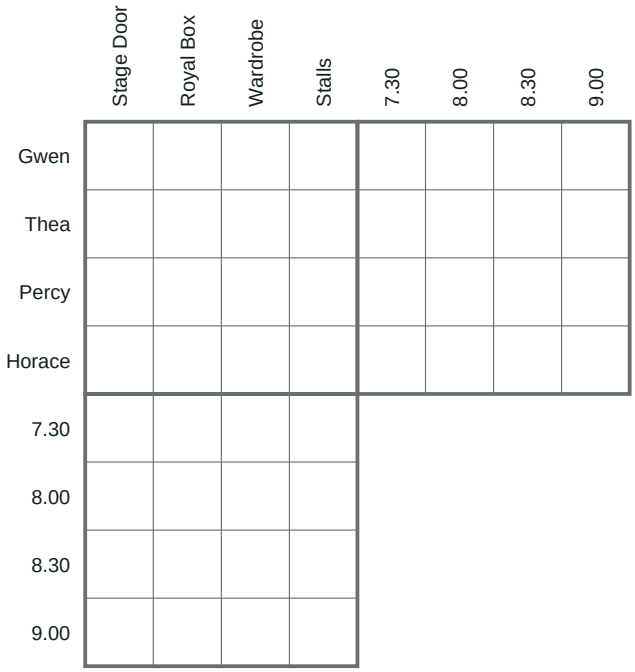
FROM THE CASE FILE

6. The guest in the Royal Box slipped away before the guest in the Stalls Corridor.

Ruling: “Before” is strict: no two guests slipped away at the same moment, and the two people described are different guests. Trim the late end of one and the early end of the other as the field narrows.

The deduction grid

Cross × what is impossible; dot • what is certain. Every row and column of a block holds exactly one dot.



Two-Minute Cases

Read the case. Tick the suspect you accuse, and say why.

CASE 01 · OBSERVATION

The Missing Sponge

The Little Wickham fête, two o’clock. Mrs Finch’s Victoria sponge sat in the judging tent, whole and uncut, with a first-prize rosette beside it. By quarter past, there was only a plate and a few crumbs.

“Nobody has even tasted it!” said Mrs Finch. “And I told no one what I put in the middle. That was my secret.”

The constable asked three people where they had been.

- ☐ **Mr Pym — Bandmaster**
  “Conducting the band on the green. Two hundred people were watching me, and most of them were wincing.”
- ☐ **Mr Dobbs — Baker, second prize**
  “Nowhere near it. And who would want a sponge with lemon curd in the middle instead of jam?”
- ☐ **Miss Larch — Florist**
  “At my stall, wrestling with the dahlias. I never went near that tent.”

Who took the cake? I accuse _____

because _____

CASE 02 · LOGIC

The Three Bellringers

The ringers of St Oswin’s are famous for two things: ringing slightly out of time, and practical jokes. On Sunday morning the silver handbell was gone from its hook. In its place hung a note.

> **One of us took it.**
> **Only one of us will tell you the truth.**
> **Good luck!**
> — The Bellringers

Inspector Quill sighed, lined up the three ringers and asked each of them the same question: who took the bell?

She thought for about ten seconds. Then she held out her hand to one of them. “The bell, please.”

- ☐ **Ada — Treble bell**
  “Well, it wasn’t me.”
- ☐ **Bert — Tenor bell**
  “Clem took it.”
- ☐ **Clem — The new ringer**
  “I did not take it.”

Who took the bell? I accuse _____

because _____

CASE 03 · WORDPLAY

The Borrowed Cup

The Bowls Club’s silver cup had stood on the same shelf for forty years. On Monday morning there was a clean ring in the dust where it used to be, and a note in very neat handwriting.

> **Really, it only wanted a polish.**
> **Our cup will be back by Friday.**
> **Shining like new, I promise.**
> **All the best, a friend.**

“A polite sort of thief,” said the club secretary. “But signed ‘a friend’, which is no help at all.”

“Oh, they signed it properly,” said Inspector Quill. “You are reading it the wrong way.”

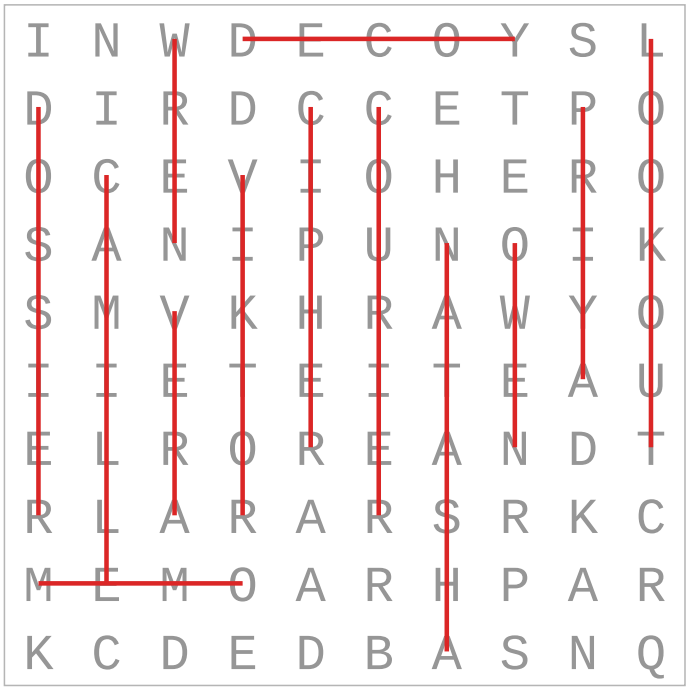
- [ ] **Nell Ormerod — Treasurer**
  Holds the only key to the trophy cabinet. Says she lost it in March.
- [ ] **Hugo Pask — Club captain**
  Has won the cup nine times. Writes like a spider that fell in the ink.
- [ ] **Rosa Tindall — Groundskeeper**
  Keeps the green like a billiard table. Cannot stand tarnish.
- [ ] **Dot Shaw — Runs the tea urn**
  Said only last week that the cup was looking dull.

Who borrowed the cup? I accuse _____

because _____

Detective Word Search: The Embassy Affair — Answer Key

Decoder A-001



WORD LIST

Camille
Courier
Dimitri
Lookout
Natasha
Priya
Viktor
Cipher
Decoy
Dossier
Memo
Owen
Vera
Wren

SOLUTION

The Double Agent: DIMITRI

The Meeting Point: INSIDE THE DARK CAR PARK

Coded word: CDEDBSNQ

The Target: DEFECTOR

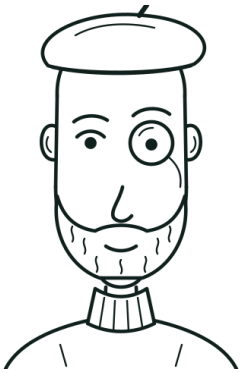
Detective Crosswords — Answer Key

Puzzle 1



It was Lena (missing: FUSE), in the PORT,
with the ROPE.

Answer key



“Polo” Phyllis Tuppence

Hat: beret

Eyes: monocle

Mouth: full beard

Collar: roll-neck jumper

THE DEDUCTIONS

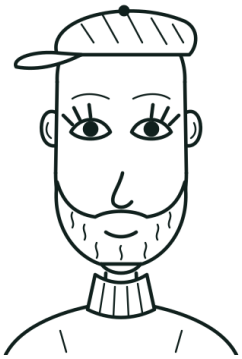
1. Sister Agnes got nothing right, so none of the features on sketch 1 belong to the thief. Cross out the bowler hat, the bushy eyebrows, the pencil moustache and the necktie.

2. The lamplighter got 2 right, and only 2 of the features on sketch 4 are still possible. So the full beard and the roll-neck jumper are right: cross out the toothy grin and the fur collar.

3. Dr Quill got 1 right, and 1 of the features on sketch 3 is already certain. The rest must be wrong: cross out the bobble hat.

4. The night porter got 1 right, and 1 of the features on sketch 2 is already certain. The rest must be wrong: cross out the round spectacles.

Answer key



“Whiskers” Wanda Gable

Hat: flat cap

Eyes: long eyelashes

Mouth: full beard

Collar: roll-neck jumper

THE DEDUCTIONS

1. Young Dot got nothing right, so none of the features on sketch 4 belong to the thief. Cross out the top hat, the dark glasses, the painted lips and the string of pearls.

2. The night porter got 2 right, and only 2 of the features on sketch 2 are still possible. So the long eyelashes and the roll-neck jumper are right: cross out the round spectacles and the fur collar.

3. Nurse Abernathy got 1 right, and only 1 of the features on sketch 1 is still possible. So the flat cap is right: cross out the straw boater.

4. The organ grinder got 2 right, and only 2 of the features on sketch 3 are still possible. So the full beard is right as well: cross out the walrus moustache.

Answer key

THE THIEF: Miss Gwen Barlow

Gwen Barlow — Wardrobe Room · nine o’clock (the thief)

Thea Norwood — Royal Box · eight o’clock

Percy Lockwood — Stage Door Lobby · half past seven

Horace Quimby — Stalls Corridor · half past eight

Miss Gwen Barlow — the photographer — went quiet when the grid closed. She had kept to the Wardrobe Room all evening and slipped away at nine o’clock, with the prompt book in hand.

One road through the deductions:

- Statement 4 pins Percy to half past seven.
- The grid itself pins Thea to Royal Box.
- The grid itself pins Gwen to Wardrobe Room.
- The grid itself pins Percy to Stage Door Lobby.
- The grid itself pins Horace to Stalls Corridor.
- The grid itself pins Gwen to nine o’clock.
- The grid itself pins Thea to eight o’clock.
- The grid itself pins Horace to half past eight.

Two-Minute Cases: Answers

Who did it, and the clue that gives them away.

Case 01. The Missing Sponge: Mr Dobbs

The cake was never cut, and Mrs Finch told no one about her secret filling. The only way to know about the lemon curd was to bite into the sponge. Mr Dobbs came second, and then he ate the evidence.

Case 02. The Three Bellringers: Ada

Bert says Clem took it. Clem says that is not so. Those two statements are opposites, so one of them is true and the other is false. The note allows only one truth, and that pair has used it up. So Ada is lying, and Ada said “It wasn’t me.”

Case 03. The Borrowed Cup: Rosa Tindall

Read the first letter of each line of the note, from top to bottom: R, O, S, A. Rosa Tindall signed her work after all. The cup came back on Friday, and it has never been shinier.