Solve-It Mystery: The Missing Sun Sign

Name: _____

How this mystery works

Read one chapter at a time. Each chapter has a clue.

Answer the questions. For "how do I know?" questions, find the sentence that proves it and copy it.

Do NOT open the solution envelope until the last chapter is done. Grown-ups: the envelope is the last page. Cut it out, fold it in thirds with the print inside, and tape the edges shut.

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Chapter 1: The Empty Hook

Read to spot the first clue about a missing sign.

Mina and Eli made a round sun sign for the school picnic.
They painted yellow rays around its smiling face.
Before lunch, they hung it by a blue ribbon near the art room.
After lunch, the hook was empty.
A short piece of damp blue ribbon still hung there.
Mina touched it and felt a drop of water.
Eli pointed to something shiny on the table below.

Words to know: rays = lines that spread out from the sun; damp = a little wet

1. What did Mina and Eli make?

( ) A round sun sign ( ) A paper boat ( ) A picnic basket

2. When did they see the empty hook?

( ) Before breakfast ( ) After lunch ( ) At bedtime

3. Might water have touched the sign? Point to the clue and tell why.

Copy the clue sentence:

Why:

Copy a line: "After lunch, the hook was empty." (Use a short sentence to show a change.)

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Chapter 2: Water on the Table

Read to learn what may have made the ribbon wet.

The shiny spot was a puddle under the empty hook.
A flower jar lay on its side in the water.
Mina saw yellow paint in the puddle.
Their sun sign had been painted yellow that morning.
Eli thought water from the jar might have splashed the sign.
They needed to find out who had cleaned the table.
Just then, a helper walked past with a towel.

Words to know: puddle = a small pool of water; splashed = sent drops of water onto something

1. What lay on its side?

( ) A paint box ( ) A flower jar ( ) A lunch bag

2. What color was the paint in the puddle?

( ) Green ( ) Red ( ) Yellow

3. Why does Eli think the sun sign got wet? Point to the clue and tell why.

Copy the clue sentence:

Why:

Copy a line: "Mina saw yellow paint in the puddle." (Name a color to make a clue easy to picture.)

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Chapter 3: The Helper with a Towel

Read to find out what the helper knows.

The helper was Ben, who had started wiping up the spilled water.
He had found the sign hanging by one wet piece of ribbon.
He had put the sign flat on the dry end of the table.
Then he had gone to get another towel.
When he came back, the sign was gone.
Ben had seen the art teacher carrying a wide, flat tray toward her room.
Mina and Eli went to ask what was on that tray.

Words to know: tray = a flat thing used to carry items; flat = lying level instead of standing up

1. Who wiped up the water?

( ) Eli ( ) Mina ( ) Ben

2. Where did Ben put the sign?

( ) On the dry end of the table ( ) Inside a tall box ( ) Under the picnic bench

3. Why might the art teacher know where the sign went? Point to the clue and tell why.

Copy the clue sentence:

Why:

Copy a line: "Then he had gone to get another towel." (Start with Then to show what happened next.)

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Chapter 4: A Place to Dry

Read to find a place where a wet sign could dry.

The art teacher, Ms. Lane, was helping a child wash a brush.
She asked Mina and Eli to wait by the drying rack.
The rack had wire shelves for wet paintings.
Thin papers hung from blue clips beside it.
A card on the rack said that thick paper should lie flat to dry.
Mina remembered that their sun sign was made of thick paper.
Eli bent down to look along the lowest shelf.

Words to know: rack = a frame with places to hold things; clips = small things that grip and hold items

1. What was the teacher helping a child wash?

( ) A brush ( ) A plate ( ) A shirt

2. Where did thin papers hang?

( ) From red strings ( ) From blue clips ( ) From green hooks

3. Why should the children look on the shelves for their sign? Point to the clue and tell why.

Copy the clue sentence:

Why:

Copy a line: "The rack had wire shelves for wet paintings." (Tell what a thing is used for.)

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Chapter 5: Yellow Points

Read to decide whether the children have found their sign.

The lowest shelf held three green leaf paintings.
On the middle shelf, a white towel lay under something round.
Yellow points showed all around its edge.
A loose blue ribbon rested beside the towel.
Their sun had yellow rays and a blue ribbon, too.
Mina reached out, but Eli remembered that wet paint could smear.
They called Ms. Lane over to help them turn the round paper.

Words to know: edge = the outside line of something; smear = spread into a messy mark

1. What was on the lowest shelf?

( ) A round sign ( ) Two blue cups ( ) Three green leaf paintings

2. What rested beside the towel?

( ) A loose blue ribbon ( ) A yellow brush ( ) A red paper star

3. Why might the round paper be the missing sign? Point to the clue and tell why.

Copy the clue sentence:

Why:

Copy a line: "Yellow points showed all around its edge." (Describe one small part before showing the whole thing.)

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Chapter 6: The Sun Comes Back

Read to see how the clues solve the mystery.

Ms. Lane turned the paper and showed the smiling sun.
She said the jar had tipped over and soaked the sign.
After Ben put it on the table, she had carried it away on her tray.
The towel and flat shelf had helped the thick paper dry.
Mina and Eli matched the yellow rays and blue ribbon to their clues.
They hung the dry sign at the picnic with a new ribbon.
Then a note came from the garden: six plant tags needed their help.

Words to know: soaked = made very wet; matched = checked that things were the same

1. Who carried the sign to the art room?

( ) Ben ( ) Ms. Lane ( ) Eli

2. What did the children do with the dry sign?

( ) Put it in a box ( ) Paint it green ( ) Hung it at the picnic

3. Why did Ms. Lane move the sign? Point to the clue and tell why.

Copy the clue sentence:

Why:

Copy a line: "Ms. Lane turned the paper and showed the smiling sun." (Let an action reveal the answer to a puzzle.)

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Keep going in the app

This mystery comes from Center Ring Reading, Grade 2.

In the app, kids choose to read on their own, listen along, or read with a grown-up. They pick the clue sentence, explain how it supports their answer, then write their own.

Grades 1 and 2 are free, including this whole mystery. Grades 3 to 12 unlock once for $7.99, or all three apps for $14.99.

Scan to open the app

www.learningcircusstudios.com/center-ring-reading/

No account. No ads. Works offline.

One purchase works on 2 devices.

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SOLUTION ENVELOPE: fold and tape shut

Open only after Chapter 6. For grown-ups: other clue sentences can be right too if the child can explain them.

Chapter 1: The damp blue ribbon is the first clue that water may be part of the mystery; it does not yet tell where the sign went.

What did Mina and Eli make? A round sun sign

When did they see the empty hook? After lunch

Might water have touched the sign? Point to the clue and tell why. Clue sentence: "A short piece of damp blue ribbon still hung there." The wet ribbon suggests that water may also have reached the sign, but it does not prove that yet.

Chapter 2: The tipped jar and yellow paint suggest that spilled water reached the sun sign; they do not yet show who moved it.

What lay on its side? A flower jar

What color was the paint in the puddle? Yellow

Why does Eli think the sun sign got wet? Point to the clue and tell why. Clue sentence: "Mina saw yellow paint in the puddle." The paint matches the yellow sun sign, and the puddle is below its hook, so water may have washed paint off the sign.

Chapter 3: Ben moved the sign onto a dry part of the table; the art teacher and her tray are the next lead, not proof that anyone did something wrong.

Who wiped up the water? Ben

Where did Ben put the sign? On the dry end of the table

Why might the art teacher know where the sign went? Point to the clue and tell why. Clue sentence: "Ben had seen the art teacher carrying a wide, flat tray toward her room." A flat tray could hold the sign, so the art teacher may have carried it to her room.

Chapter 4: The rack is a likely place for the sign because its thick paper needs to dry flat; the blue clips are for thin papers.

What was the teacher helping a child wash? A brush

Where did thin papers hang? From blue clips

Why should the children look on the shelves for their sign? Point to the clue and tell why. Clue sentence: "A card on the rack said that thick paper should lie flat to dry." Their sign is thick paper, so someone drying it would likely put it flat on a shelf.

Chapter 5: The round paper is likely the sun sign because its yellow points and nearby blue ribbon match, but the children still need to see its face.

What was on the lowest shelf? Three green leaf paintings

What rested beside the towel? A loose blue ribbon

Why might the round paper be the missing sign? Point to the clue and tell why. Clue sentence: "Yellow points showed all around its edge." The points could be the sun rays, and the round shape and blue ribbon also match their sign.

Chapter 6: The tipped flower jar soaked the sun sign, leaving damp ribbon and yellow paint in the puddle. Ben laid the sign on the dry end of the table. Ms. Lane carried it on her flat tray to a towel on the drying rack. The yellow rays, round shape, and blue ribbon helped Mina and Eli find it; the smiling face confirmed it was their sign.

Who carried the sign to the art room? Ms. Lane

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What did the children do with the dry sign? Hung it at the picnic

Why did Ms. Lane move the sign? Point to the clue and tell why. Clue sentence: "The towel and flat shelf had helped the thick paper dry." She moved the wet sign to a place where it could dry and be used again.

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