Ages 6–8 30–40 minutes · 1 child, a team, or a whole class

The Not-So-Haunted House

Something on Maple Hill goes HOOOOOO every night. Tonight, your Mystery Club finds out what.

Your Mystery Club makes five stops through the house, from the creaky gate up to the attic. At each stop something is in the way (a locked gate, a stuck door, a secret bookshelf), and solving the puzzle gets you past it and earns that stop's clue letter. On page 8 the five letters go into a new order and reveal what's making the noise. Then everyone makes a ghost bookmark and gets a Mystery Club certificate. Spooky enough for a little shiver; the answer is friendly.

Skills: patterns · adding within 20 · word search and early reading · rhyming · plant life cycle (sequencing) · cutting curves · folding and gluing

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What you need

- Pencils and crayons
- Scissors and a glue stick
- Plain printer paper. Card stock makes a sturdier bookmark.

How to play

1. Read the story on page 2 together. Early readers can read the short lines; help with the rest.
2. Go stop by stop, in page order. Each puzzle opens the way to the next stop and gives a letter for that stop's box.
3. Kids can team up. If someone gets stuck, read the puzzle aloud again and point to the pictures. If they still can't find something, like a word in the word search (one word is missing on purpose), encourage them to skip it, do the rest and come back.
4. On page 8, each box has a stop picture and number under it. Copy that stop's letter into the box; the boxes spell the answer.
5. Finish with the bookmark and the certificate.

Answers are on page 11. They aren't hidden, so keep that page to yourself until the end.

If a player can't easily see the pictures or uses a screen reader, page 12 tells you what to describe at each stop.

In a classroom

Copy pages 2–10 once per child, or once per team of two or three. It fits a 40-minute period, or split it: stops 1–3 on one day, stops 4–5 and the crafts on the next. Pages avoid big black areas, so they're easy on toner.

Free for home and school use. Please don't post it publicly or sell it.

The Not-So-Haunted House



Every night, the old house on Maple Hill goes **HOOOOOO!**

Nobody knows what makes the noise. Tonight, the Maple Hill Mystery Club is going inside to find out. That's you!

Your path through the house:

1 gate → **2** kitchen → **3** library → **4** hallway → **5** attic

- At each stop, something is in the way. Solve the puzzle to get past!
- Write the stop's letter in its box.
- Color the house while you plan your search!

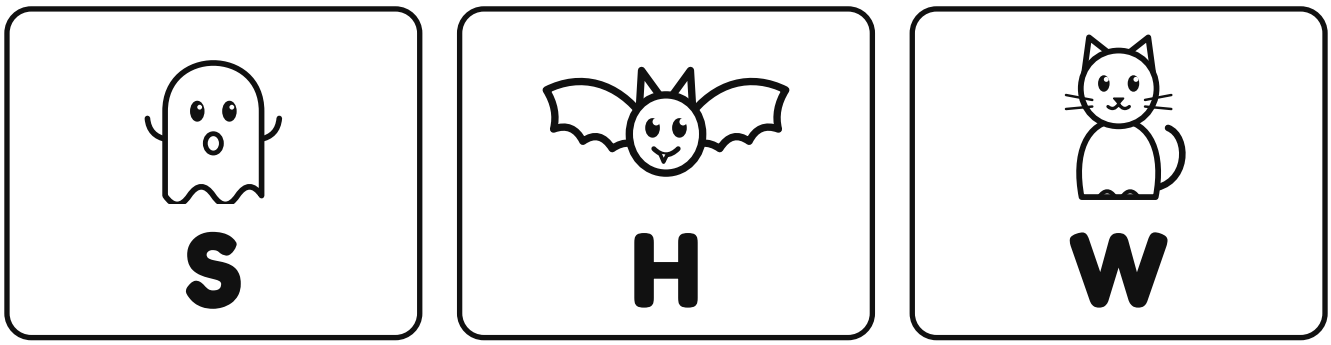
STOP 1

The creaky gate

The gate is locked with a picture lock. Creeeak!

What comes next? Circle it.



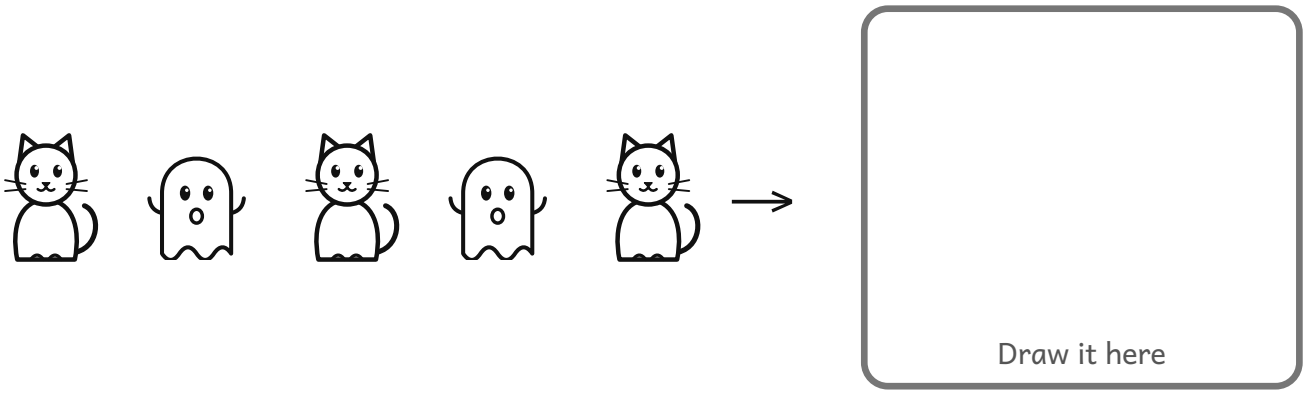


Write the letter under your answer in the Stop 1 box.



Click! The gate swings open. Stepping stones lead up to the door.

What is on the next stone? Draw it in the big box.



The front door creaks open. Next stop: the kitchen →

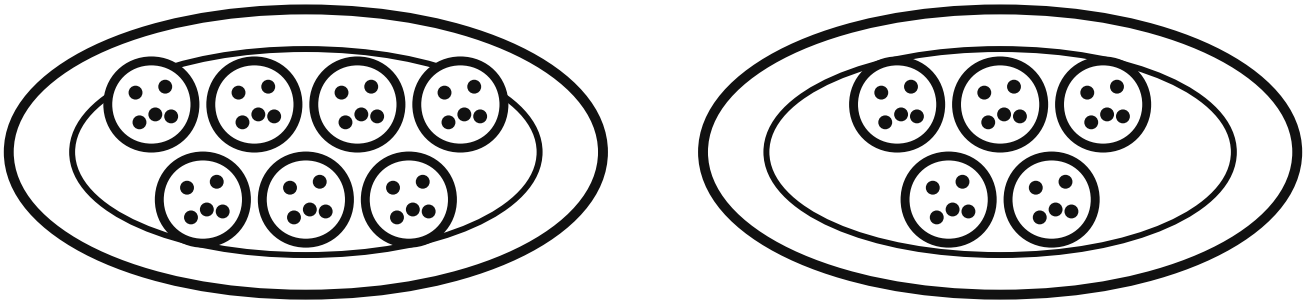
STOP 2

The dusty kitchen

Someone left cookies on the table. Who? Hmm.

The door out of the kitchen has a number lock!

Count the cookies on each plate. How many in all?



____ + ____ = ____

Circle the number of cookies in all.

11	12	13
N	O	A

Write the letter under your answer in the Stop 2 box.

Stop 2 ☐

Beep! The lock clicks open. Next stop: the library →

STOP 3

The library

A bookshelf blocks the way. It's a secret door!

Find the words. They go across → or down ↓.

Cross out each picture when you find its word.

Can't find one? Skip it and come back!

B	A	T	U	M	K
C	P	R	S	O	Y
A	G	Z	F	O	J
T	D	V	K	N	P
R	W	E	B	S	U
G	Z	O	W	L	F



BAT
R



CAT
P



HAT
I



MOON
K



WEB
D



OWL
M

Five words are hiding. Which one is NOT? It opens the door!

Write the letter under that word in the Stop 3 box.

Stop 3

The bookshelf swings open! Next stop: the long hallway →

STOP 4

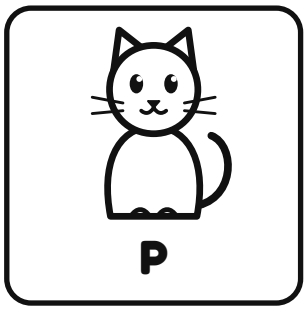
The long, dark hallway

Three pictures hang on the wall. Their riddles are on little signs.

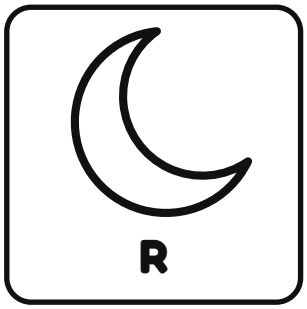
The attic door is stuck. Match the riddles to open it!

Draw a line from each riddle to its picture.

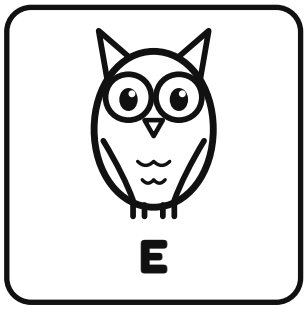
I'm round and bright.
I shine all night.
I rhyme with **SPOON**.



★ I sit in a tree.
I say "HOO" to you.
I rhyme with **GROWL**.



I say "MEOW."
I nap on a mat.
I rhyme with **HAT**.



★ marks the special riddle. Write the letter under its picture in the Stop 4 box.

Stop 4

Creak! The attic door opens. Next stop: the attic →

STOP 5

The attic

Old pictures cover the floor. They show how a pumpkin grows!

1 Cut off the picture strip at the bottom of the page.

2 Cut out the four pictures.

3 Glue them in order, from first to last.

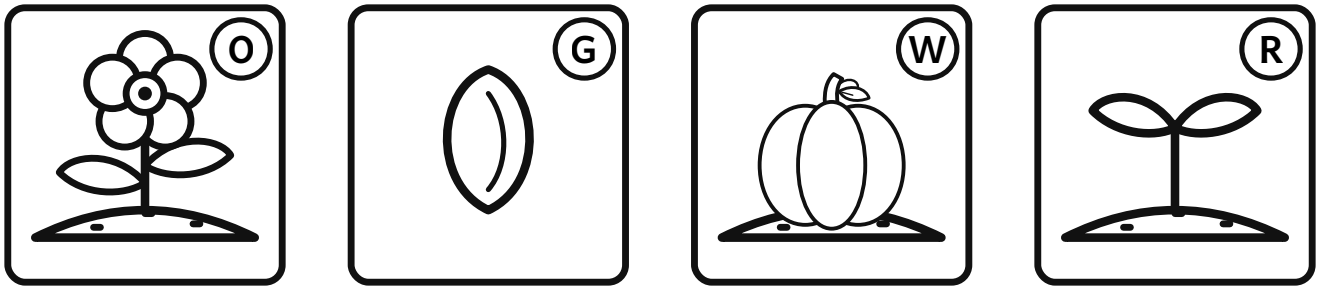
1st	2nd	3rd	4th

Read the letters from 1st to 4th.
Did they spell a word? Then you got it right!

Write the letter on the LAST picture in the Stop 5 box.

Stop 5 ☐

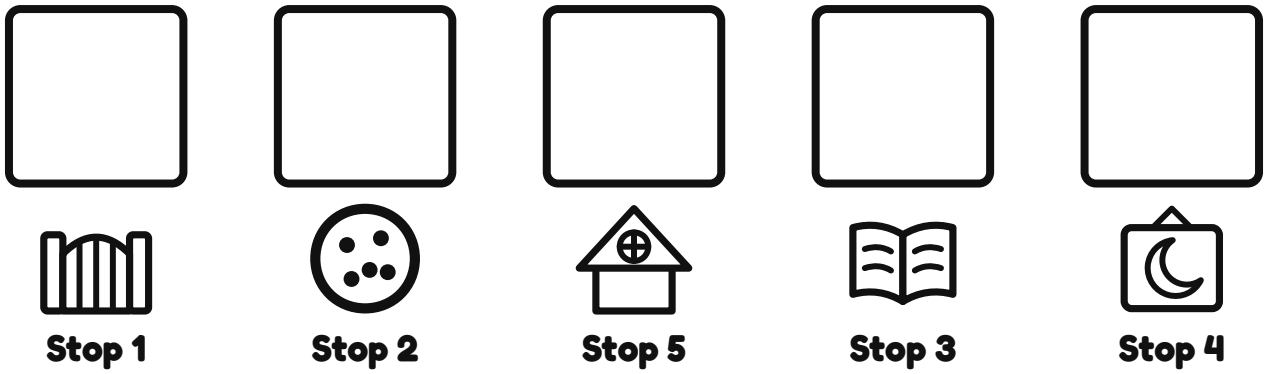
Something is moving behind the curtain. Turn the page!



Mystery solved?

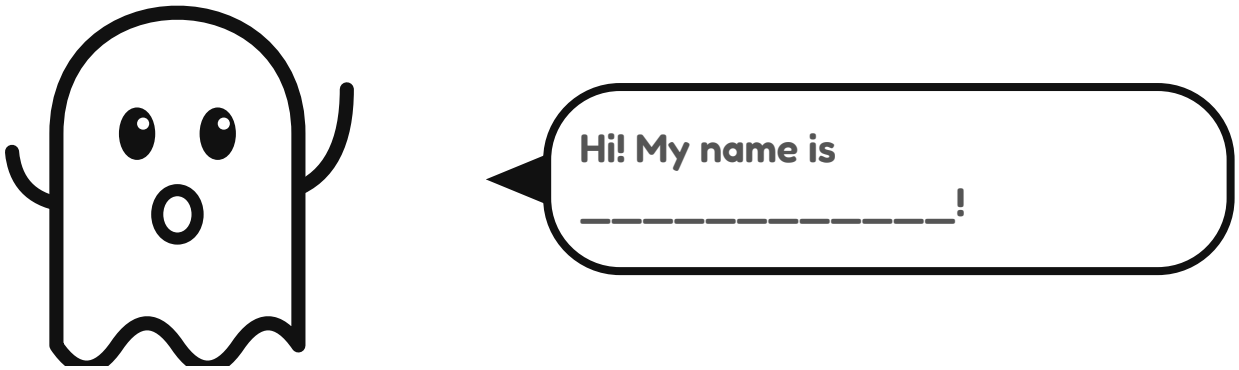
Now unscramble your letters!

Under each box is a stop. Write that stop's letter in the box.



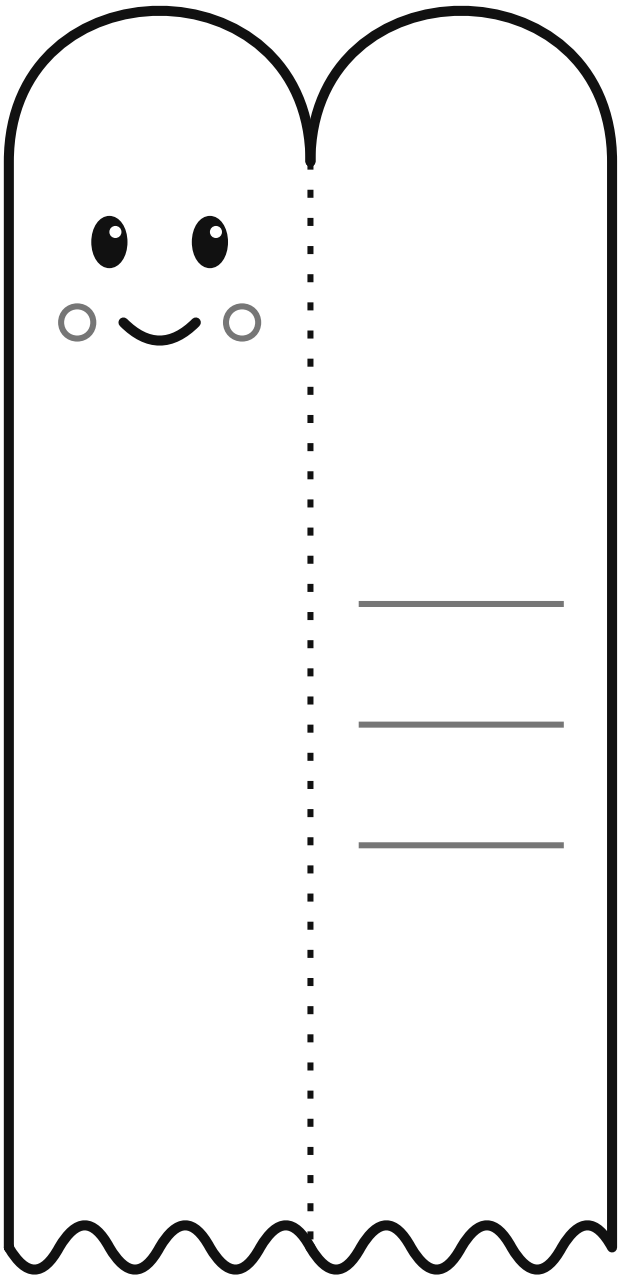
Look! It's a little ghost, hiding behind the curtain.

Every night it tried to tell you its name. But it was SO shy that it only came out as **HOOOOOO**.



The ghost wants a friend. Turn the page to make one.

Make a ghost friend



1. Cut around the outside of both ghosts. Keep them joined!
2. Fold on the dotted line.
3. Glue the two sides together.
4. Write your name on the back. Color the cheeks!

Now your ghost friend can keep your place in a good book.

MAPLE HILL MYSTERY CLUB

Case Solved!



This certifies that

_____

solved the mystery of the Not-So-Haunted House and made a new friend.

Date: _____

Answers, for grown-ups

Stop 1, the gate	Bat → **H**. The pattern is pumpkin, pumpkin, bat. Stepping stones: a ghost comes next (any ghost drawing counts).
Stop 2, the kitchen	7 + 5 = 12 → **O**. If the count is off, count each plate again, touching each cookie.
Stop 3, the library	HAT is missing → **I**. BAT runs across the top row; CAT runs down the left side; MOON runs down the fifth column; WEB is across the fifth row; OWL is across the bottom row.
Stop 4, the hallway	Moon, owl (★), cat. The owl → **E**.
Stop 5, the attic	Seed, sprout, flower, pumpkin. The letters spell GROW. The last picture → **W**.
The ghost's name	The final boxes take stops 1, 2, 5, 3, 4: H, O, W, I, E = **HOWIE**. The noise was a shy little ghost trying to say its name.

If they get stuck

- Read the puzzle out loud and point to each picture.
- For the word search, one word is not in the grid on purpose. If they can't find a word, have them skip it, find the others and come back; the word left over is the answer. Covering the grid with a sheet of paper and sliding it down one row at a time also helps.
- For the riddles, say the rhyme word and let them guess what rhymes with it.

Grown-ups get a kit too

Our free escape-room kit for teens and adults, *The Clockmaker's Study*, is on the same page you got this one from. New kits for this age are added there too. Kinundrum makes personalized puzzle countdowns for families and group chats.

Credits

Illustrations: original art made for this kit. Fonts: Andika (SIL International), SIL Open Font License 1.1; Fredoka (Milena Brandão and Hafontia), SIL Open Font License 1.1; Noto Sans Symbols 2 (The Noto Project Authors), SIL Open Font License 1.1.

Reading the pictures aloud

For a player who can't easily see the pictures or uses a screen reader. Read each stop's part aloud, then let your child answer. The answers on page 11 are the same.

Stop 1, the creaky gate

Read the picture lock in order, with a little pause at the question mark: pumpkin, pumpkin, bat, pumpkin, pumpkin, bat, pumpkin, pumpkin, and then what? The choices: a ghost (S), a bat (H) or a cat (W).

The stepping stones: cat, ghost, cat, ghost, cat, and then the big box to draw in.

Stop 2, the dusty kitchen

Read each plate one cookie at a time, and let your child count. Fingers or coins help.

- First plate. Top row: cookie, cookie, cookie, cookie. Bottom row: cookie, cookie, cookie.
- Second plate. Top row: cookie, cookie, cookie. Bottom row: cookie, cookie.

The choices: 11 (N), 12 (O) or 13 (A).

Stop 3, the library

Read the six words to find: bat, cat, hat, moon, web and owl. Then read the grid one row at a time, letter by letter, so your child can listen for a word going across. Read it again one column at a time, top to bottom, for the words going down. Six rows of six:

- B A T U M K
- C P R S O Y
- A G Z F O J
- T D V K N P
- R W E B S U
- G Z O W L F

Stop 4, the long, dark hallway

The riddles are words, so read them as they are. The pictures, top to bottom: a cat (P), a moon (R) and an owl (E).

Stop 5, the attic

The four cards, as they sit on the strip: a vine with a flower (O), a seed (G), a pumpkin (W) and a sprout (R). Name each card as your child picks it up, and let them tell you which comes first. Help with the scissors and glue as much as they like.

The bookmark

Cutting, folding and gluing need no notes.