Ages 6–8 30–40 minutes · Made for 2 players, or 1 playing both parts

Mo's Missing Treat Bucket

Mo the monster put down his treat bucket for one second. Now it's gone! Two detectives follow tiny footprints to find it.

Two players team up as Detective 1 and Detective 2 and follow the trail through five stops: the porch, the pumpkin patch, the corn maze, the old oak tree and the barn. Each stop is a puzzle, and solving it earns a clue letter. Every stop gives both kids a job: one holds the code key while the other holds the secret note, each counts one side of the pumpkin patch, one traces the maze while the other draws. On page 8 the five letters spell out who took the bucket. Then each detective makes a badge, and they share a certificate. Silly, with a tiny mystery; the culprit is friendly.

Skills: picture code · counting and adding within 20 · mazes · logic (ruling out) · counting on by 2s · cutting curves · reading together and taking turns

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What you need

- Two pencils and some crayons
- Scissors (a grown-up can cut)
- Tape, to wear the badges (optional)
- Plain printer paper. Card stock makes sturdier badges.

Before you start

1. Print pages 2–10. Keep page 11 (the answers) for yourself. To save paper, print pages 4–8 two-sided; page 3 gets cut in half, and the badges on page 9 get names on the back.
2. Decide who is Detective 1 and who is Detective 2. They write their names on page 2. **Playing alone?** One detective does both jobs at every stop; skip cutting page 3.

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

How to play

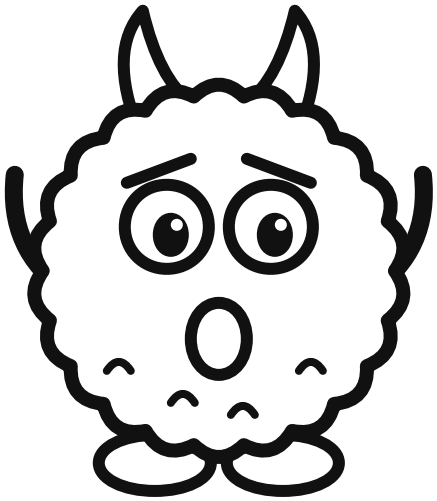
1. Read the story on page 2 together. Early readers can read the short lines; help with the rest.
2. Go stop by stop, in page order. Each puzzle gives a letter for that stop's box.
3. On page 3, cut the page in half first. Detective 1 keeps the code key, Detective 2 keeps the note, and they have to talk to crack it. No peeking at each other's half!
4. If they get stuck, read the puzzle aloud again and point to the pictures. The answers page has three hints for each stop, from a gentle nudge to almost the answer.
5. On page 8, copy each stop's letter into the box with that stop's picture.
6. Finish with the badges and the certificate.

In a classroom

Pair the class up and copy pages 2–10 once per pair. It fits a 40-minute period. 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.

Mo's Missing Treat Bucket



This is Mo. Mo is a monster, but a very nice one.

Mo put his treat bucket down on the porch to tie his shoe.

When he looked up... **the bucket was GONE!**

"Oh no!" said Mo. "Detectives, can you help me?"

MISSING!



Have you seen my bucket? It looks like a pumpkin. Love, Mo

Follow the trail:



1 porch → **2** pumpkins → **3** corn maze → **4** oak tree → **5** barn

Solve the puzzle at each stop. Write its letter in the box.

Write your names. You are the detectives!

Detective 1 _____ **Detective 2** _____

STOP 1

Mo's porch

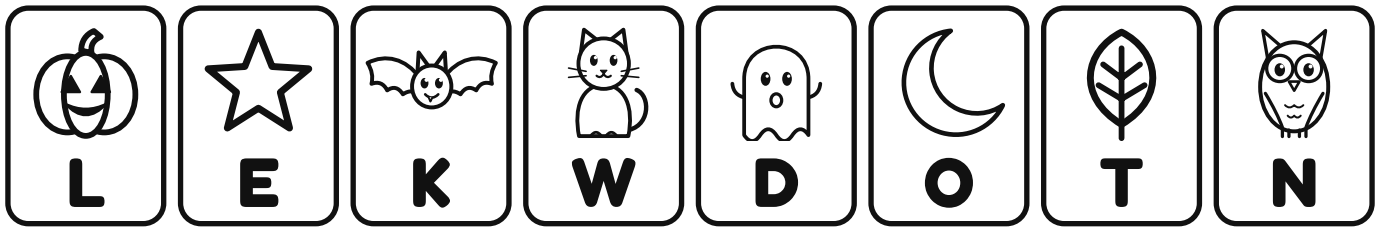
A note is stuck to the door. It's in picture code!

1 Cut on the dashed line. A grown-up can cut.

2 Detective 1 takes the code key. Detective 2 takes the note. No peeking!

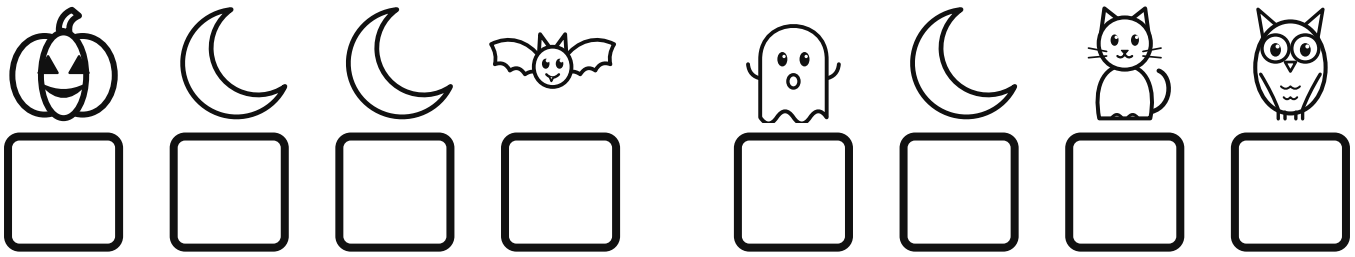
Detective 1: the code key

Tell Detective 2 the letters. Don't show your key!



Detective 2: the note

Ask Detective 1, "What letter is the bat?" Write each letter in the box.



Which letter did you write the most? Write it in the Stop 1 box.

Stop 1 ☐

You look. Tiny footprints! They run to the pumpkin patch →

STOP 2

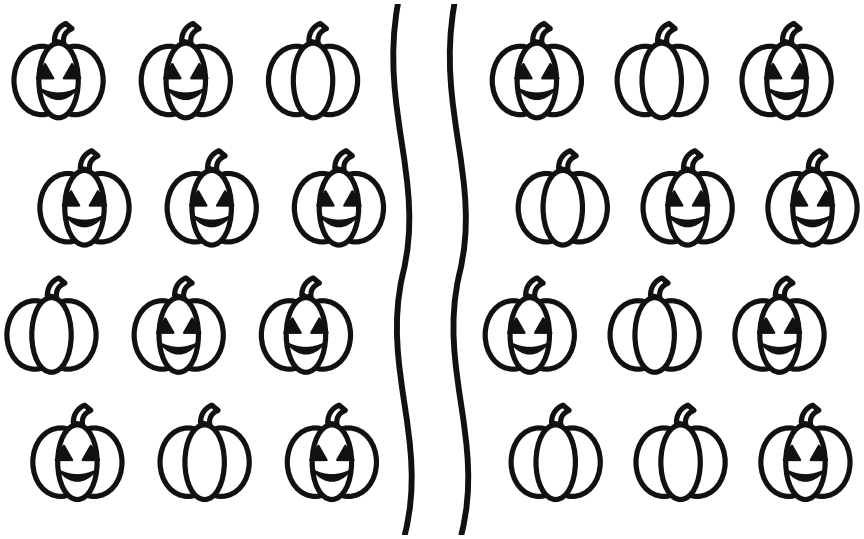
The pumpkin patch

The footprints run through the pumpkins. The gate has a number lock!

Count only the pumpkins with faces.

Detective 1 counts one side. Detective 2 counts the other side.

Detective 1 ↓ **Detective 2 ↓**



____ + ____ = ____

Detective 1 · Detective 2 · in all

15	16	17
A	S	T

Circle your number. Write the letter under it in the Stop 2 box.

Stop 2 ☐

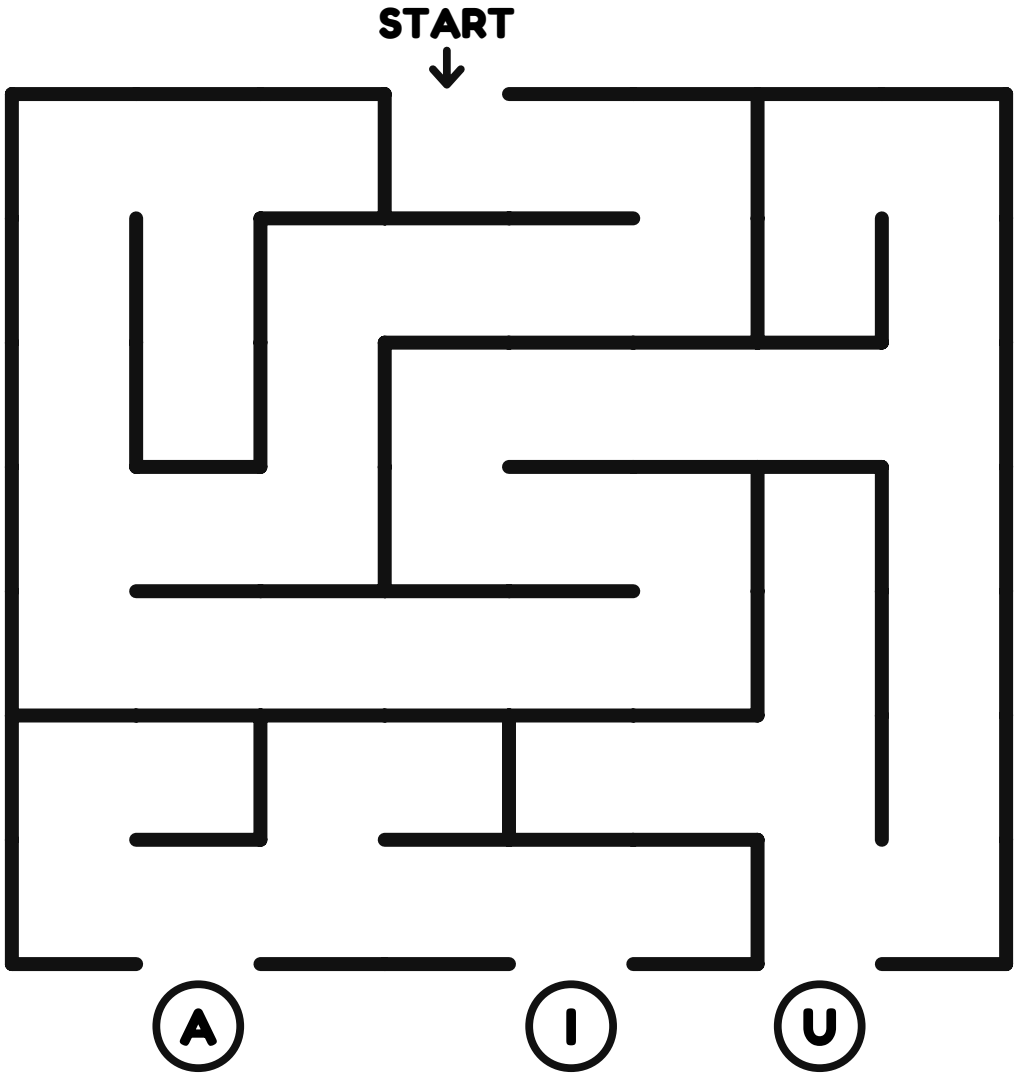
Click! Next stop: the corn maze →

STOP 3

The corn maze

The footprints go into the tall corn. Which way did they go?

Detective 2 finds the way with a finger. Detective 1 draws the line.



Write the letter where you come out in the Stop 3 box.

Stop 3

Out of the corn! Next stop: the old oak tree →

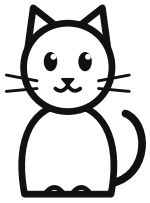
STOP 4

The old oak tree

Someone up in the tree wrote that note. But who?

Take turns reading a clue. After each clue, cross out everyone it doesn't fit.

1. I am an animal.
2. I can fly.
3. I have feathers.



cat
B



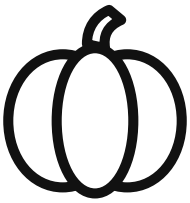
ghost
R



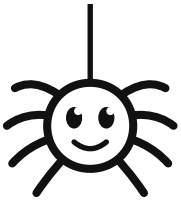
bat
N



owl
M



pumpkin
D



spider
H

Who is left? Write their letter in the Stop 4 box.

Stop 4

"HOO! I wrote the note! I saw tiny feet run to the barn."

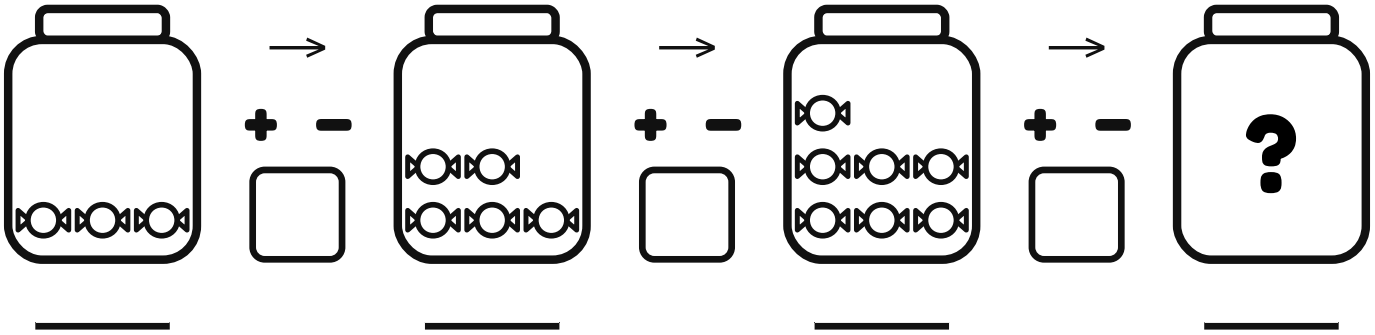
Next stop: the barn →

STOP 5

The big barn

The barn door is locked, and somebody is giggling inside! Four treat jars sit on a shelf by the lock. A teeny-tiny note hangs on the lock:

"Party guests only! My jars follow a secret rule. Figure out the rule, then follow the same rule to fill the last jar, and the door will open."



Detective 1: count each jar. Write the number under it.

Detective 2: at each arrow, circle + or − and write how many.

Together: use the rule to fill the last jar. Circle the number.

8	9	10
A	E	O

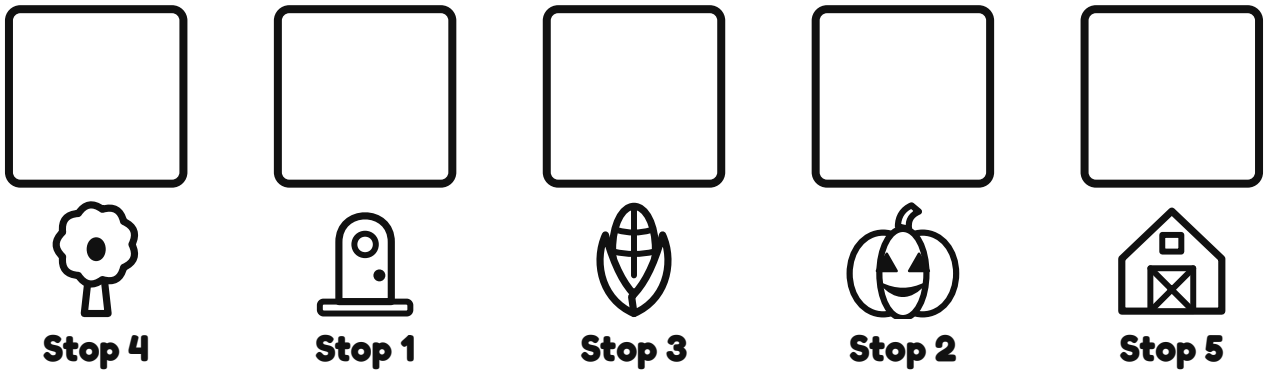
Write the letter under your number in the Stop 5 box.

Stop 5

Creeeak! The barn door opens. Turn the page!

Who took the bucket?

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



Behind a pile of hay sits a teeny-tiny someone, hugging Mo's bucket.

"I'm sorry!" she squeaks. "My family is having a Halloween party, and we didn't have any treats."



Mo smiles a big monster smile. "A party? Can I come? Treats are better when you share!"

So they did. Case solved!

Color Mo, the bucket and the tiny someone.

Your detective badges

1. Color your badge. Write your name on the back.
2. Cut around the outside circle. A grown-up can help.
3. Roll a piece of tape, sticky side out. Stick the badge on your shirt!



Detective 1



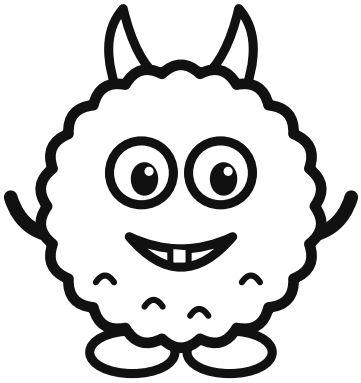
Detective 2

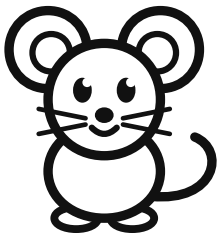
Bonus: what would YOU bring to the barn party? Draw it!

Draw it here

PUMPKIN PATCH DETECTIVES

Case Solved!





This certifies that

_____

and

_____

found Mo's treat bucket
and made a new friend.

Date: _____

Answers and hints, for grown-ups

Stop 1, the porch	The note says LOOK DOWN. O is written three times → **O**. Hints: (1) Detective 2, point to the first picture and ask about it. (2) The pumpkin is L. Find the moon on the key next. (3) Count how many times each letter appears in LOOK DOWN.
Stop 2, the pumpkin patch	9 faces on the left, 7 on the right: 9 + 7 = 16 → **S**. (Counting every pumpkin gives 12 and 11.) Hints: (1) Does every pumpkin have a face? (2) Put a dot on each pumpkin with a face as you count it. (3) Left side has 9; now count the right.
Stop 3, the corn maze	The only way through comes out at **U**. A and I are cut off. Hints: (1) Hit a wall? Back up to the last place you could turn. (2) Try starting at each letter and working up. (3) The path ends on the right.
Stop 4, the oak tree	Clue 1 crosses out the ghost and the pumpkin; clue 2 crosses out the cat and the spider; clue 3 crosses out the bat (bats have fur, not feathers). The owl → **M**. Hints: (1) Is a ghost an animal? Is a pumpkin? (2) Which ones have wings? (3) A bat is furry. Who is left?
Stop 5, the barn	3, 5, 7, then 9: two more each time, so each arrow is + 2 → **E**. Hints: (1) Read the tiny note again. What changes from one jar to the next? (2) Count each jar. How many more does the second jar have than the first? (3) Each jar has two more than the last.
Who took it?	Stops 4, 1, 3, 2, 5: M, O, U, S, E = **MOUSE**.

If they get stuck

- Read the puzzle out loud and point to each picture.
- Swap jobs if one detective is doing all the work, and let each one write a letter.
- Guessing the word early is part of the fun. Let them check it by finishing the stops.

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 the detectives answer. The answers and hints on page 11 are the same.

Stop 1, Mo's porch

Detective 1's code key, picture by picture: pumpkin L, star E, bat K, cat W, ghost D, moon O, leaf T, owl N. Detective 2's note: pumpkin, moon, moon, bat, then a gap, then ghost, moon, cat, owl. Read each detective only their own half, so they still have to ask each other.

Stop 2, the pumpkin patch

Each side of the path has four rows of three pumpkins. Read each row and let each detective count only the faces on their side.

- Detective 1's side, top to bottom: face, face, plain. Face, face, face. Plain, face, face. Face, plain, face.
- Detective 2's side, top to bottom: face, plain, face. Plain, face, face. Face, plain, face. Plain, plain, face.

The choices: 15 (A), 16 (S) or 17 (T).

Stop 3, the corn maze

A tracing maze doesn't read aloud. Trace it together, their finger under yours, or give them the letter from page 11.

Stop 4, the old oak tree

The clues and the names are words, so read them as they are: cat (B), ghost (R), bat (N), owl (M), pumpkin (D) and spider (H).

Stop 5, the big barn

Read each jar one candy at a time, and let Detective 1 count:

- First jar: candy, candy, candy.
- Second jar: candy, candy, candy, candy, candy.
- Third jar: candy, candy, candy, candy, candy, candy, candy.
- Last jar: empty, with a question mark.

The choices: 8 (A), 9 (E) or 10 (O).

The badges

Coloring, cutting and taping need no notes.