

**MURDER IN THE BLACKBERG MANOR: Gamified  
literature teaching material package for 9th grade EFL  
students**

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Tiivistelmä - Abstract	
<p>Aktiivisella omaehtoisella kirjallisuuden lukemisella on todettu olevan paljon myönteisiä vaikutuksia elinikäisen kielenoppimisen sekä luetunymmärtämisen kannalta (Leino et al. 2017). Hyödyistään huolimatta nuorten lukuinto kirjallisuutta kohtaan on hiipunut viime vuosien sisällä (Hanifi et al. 2021). Lukutaidon lasku nuorten keskuudessa onkin herättänyt keskustelua kirjallisuuden ja lukemisen roolista perusopetuksessa.</p> <p>Lukutaidolla on huomattavasti painoarvoa perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteissa (POPS). Monilukutaidot sekä lukemiseen innostaminen ovat arvoja, jotka näkyvät erityisesti äidinkielen opetuksessa. Vieraiden kielten opetuksessa nämä arvot ovat jääneet kuitenkin taka-alalle. Vieraiden kielten opetus POPS:ssa keskittyy tiiviimmin kielioppirakenteiden sekä sanaston opettamiseen. Käytännössä tämä ilmenee vähäisenä kirjallisuuden käyttönä vieraiden kielten luokkahuoneissa (Luukka 2019). Tämä materiaalipaketti pyrkii lisäämään kirjallisuuden näkyvyyttä englannin kielen opetuksessa pelillistetyn monialaisen oppimiskokonaisuuden keinoin.</p> <p>Materiaalipaketin keskeisenä tavoitteena on kasvattaa oppilaiden lukuintoa vieraskielistä kirjallisuutta kohtaan. Materiaalit pyrkivät myös tarjoamaan vieraiden kielten opettajille helposti käytettäviä ja innovatiivisia kirjallisuuteen liittyviä oppimateriaaleja. Materiaalipaketti hyödyntää keinoja ja käytänteitä laajan lukemisen (Bamford &amp; Day 2002) sekä merkityksellisen pelillistämisen (Nicholson 2014) teorioista. Materiaalien yhdistävänä tekijänä toimii Ryan ja Decin (2017) itseohjautuvuusteoria, jossa oppilaiden kyvykkyys, yhteisöllisyys sekä autonomia ovat keskeisessä roolissa.</p> <p>Materiaalipaketin ensisijainen kohderyhmä on yhdeksäsluokkalaiset, mutta materiaaleja voi myös soveltaa hyvin osana lukion ENA3 moduulia. Materiaalipaketti koostuu kahdesta kokonaisuudesta: lukemiseen kannustavista tehtävistä sekä pelillistetyistä materiaaleista. Paketti sisältää monipuolisia lukutehtäviä viidelle oppitunnille. Lukutehtäviä suorittamalla oppilaat keräävät itselleen pisteitä, joita he voivat hyödyntää pelillistetyssä pakopeliympäristössä. Viiden oppitunnin aikana oppilaiden tehtävänä on selvittää murhamysteeri. Keräämällä todistusaineistoa ja kuulustelemalla hahmoja, oppilaiden kommunikaatio-, ryhmätyö-, kieli-, sekä lukutaidot kehittyvät aktiivisen lukemisen välityksellä.</p>	
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## 1 INTRODUCTION

Reading and literacy within the Finnish educational discourse is a hotly debated issue. Especially, in recent years, the declining PISA reading and literacy results have flamed up heated conversation on how literature should be incorporated into education (Ministry of Education and Culture 2023). Students from grades 7-9 report an overall lack of interest towards reading (Lähteelä et al. 2019). Additionally, students report finding little to no value in reading, and it is instead perceived as a waste of time.

The Finnish Ministry of Education (n.d. -b) places significant value on integrating literature and various texts into teaching. Teachers are explicitly encouraged to increase students' pleasure towards reading during their teaching. However, the main emphasis of literature education is mainly relegated to first language education in the Finnish core curriculum (Perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelman perusteet 2014, here on referred as POPS 2014). EFL education conversely has a lesser emphasis on literature teaching, placing larger focus on communicative and language related goals (POPS 2014). This is reflected in how literature is used in practice in EFL education. EFL teachers report low usages of literature in their teaching, often explained by the teachers' lack of time or lack of confidence in using literature in language teaching (Luukka 2023).

Voluntary and intrinsically motivated reading has been observed to have significant effects towards foreign language learning (Schiefele et al. 2012; Leino et al. 2017; Kaowiwattanakul 2021). Therefore, an increased attention towards how literature is implemented into EFL teaching in Finland is warranted. Especially in the form of easily adaptable materials, which encourage students to engage in autonomous reading. In the present graduate thesis, I will present a material package, which creates an interdisciplinary learning module (monialainen

oppimiskokonaisuus) for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. This material package combines literature and EFL teaching through gamified means. Gamification has seen a steady rise in interest within the academic field, especially in regards to increasing student motivation. Central to the present material package is to encourage students to value reading as a pleasurable act in of itself. Additionally, this material package aims to help teachers in the field to easily incorporate literature teaching in meaningful and engaging ways into their teaching.

This material package builds its theoretical framework around Ryan & Deci's (2017) *self-determination theory*. The theory proposes that voluntary engagement with an action is increased by catering to three motivational needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. Because the material package intends to increase students' engagement with literature, self-determination theory was deemed a suitable starting point for the materials. Inspired by self-determination theory, literature related aspects of the material package were designed with the goals of *extensive reading* in mind. Extensive reading is a literature teaching method, where the central goal is to increase students' motivation towards independent reading (Bamford & Day 2002). In order to increase students' intrinsic motivation further, gamification was blended into the materials. Practical examples of extensive reading methods being combined with gamification are not common. This material package aims to provide teachers with an easily adaptable and robust gamified literature teaching methods. All of the aforementioned frameworks are further explored in their designated chapters.

The material package begins with an introduction to research on how literature is used in education. In chapter three, gamification and its relation to Ryan and Deci's (2017) self-determination theory will be discussed. Chapters three and four detail the goals of the material package, the design philosophy behind the materials and why specific choices were made with the materials. Chapter six follows with a description of the materials' limitations, which teachers have to take into account before using the material package.

## **2 LITERATURE AND FOREIGN LANGUAGE LEARNING**

This section begins with a short introduction to the benefits and challenges literature use can have in foreign language education. In chapter 2.2, advantages of increasing pleasurable reading will be discussed alongside a brief introduction to Ryan and Deci's (2017) self-determination theory. Section 2.3 will highlight how literature can be best used in practice. In the final section, I will detail how literature can be seen in the Finnish core curriculum, how Finnish foreign language teachers use literature in their teaching and how student reading habits have changed.

### **2.1 Literature in foreign language teaching**

According to research (see Schiefele et al. 2012; Sun 2023a; Leino et al. 2017), many aspects inherent to literature can be used to great benefit in foreign language learning. However, in addition to the benefits literature brings, alongside it come significant challenges to both foreign language students and teachers alike. In the present section I will introduce some benefits literature can have on foreign language learning. Additionally, I will also highlight some of the challenges associated with literature as a teaching material.

One of the apparent benefits of using literature in foreign language teaching is its complex and varied language. As noted by Carter (2007), engagement with a text depends on understanding its linguistic content. When making deductions about the author's intent, the reader is simultaneously engaging with varied language. However, the linguistic complexity of literature can also pose a challenge for less proficient students. According to Hu and

Nation (2000, 423), 98% of the vocabulary within the text has to be familiar to the reader, in order for good comprehension of the text to be possible. In Kremmel et al.'s (2023) recreation of Hu and Nation's (2000) study, they failed to recreate the 98% vocabulary limit presented in the original study. However, they were able to corroborate how an increase in unknown lexical items resulted in lessened reading comprehension (Kremmel et al. 2023). Due to the challenges posed by the linguistic complexity of literature, teachers have to place focus on what materials will be chosen for teaching. Moreover, providing students easy access to dictionaries and other linguistic resources can help with the reading experience.

However, as mentioned by Carter (2007, 8), literature is not solely just written text on a paper, but is tied to a larger cultural context. Thus, in addition to learning about language, literature presents a great possibility for learning cultural competence. As defined by Kramsch (2013), cultural competence can be understood as "dialogue between self and others". According to Heggernes (2021, 10), the use of varied texts allows the students to consider their own cultural conceptions by exposing them to differing ways of viewing the world. Through fictive narratives, students are able to explore their own ideas and attitudes towards challenging real world topics, such as war, sexism, racism or economic inequality (Fazzi 2023, 260). Exploration of varied perspectives also helps students to learn empathy towards others (Sun 2023a). However, exploration of cultural aspects of literature can prove challenging, as it often requires the students to know information outside of the texts. The lack of background information can hinder how the student is able to relate or understand the events in the text (Brumfit 1981, 244). Furthermore, finding literary pieces which challenge the students' views on culture and allow them to explore their identities can be an arduous task. As noted by Calafato (2023, 92) teachers often do not choose literary pieces which relate to students' personal lives. Furthermore, having a limited selection of available literary texts does not provide students with enough differing cultural viewpoints. This can be counteracted by choosing varied types of texts from writers with differing backgrounds. Moreover, choosing texts, which directly tackle topics relevant to students, such as young adult novels can encourage them to relate and engage more with the texts (Sun 2022).

In relation to cultural knowledge, critical thinking skills have also been found to improve when using literature in language education. Close reading of a text and textual analysis requires the student to formulate arguments based on the evidence they find in the text. This was for example observed by Kaowiwattanakul (2021), who noted how students develop evidence-based argumentative skills when discussing texts with others. Similar findings were

made by Sun (2023a), who studied the effect of narratives and graphic novels on Chinese high school students' historical thinking skills. According to Sun (2023a), when forming opinions about a text, students are often encouraged to exemplify their views through evidence from the text. Thus, by interacting and discussing literature, students are able to develop their critical argumentative skills.

## **2.2 Extensive reading and self-determination theory**

However, for the purposes of the present material package, a significant benefit of using literature in EFL is its ability to be pleasurable for the reader. In addition to being simply enjoyable, pleasure in reading can result in considerable academic success in the reader's future (Schiefele et al. 2012; Leino et al. 2017). Reading as an enjoyable act can greatly contribute towards lifelong learning. This value is also reflected by the Finnish National Agency for Education (n.d. -b) who emphasize the importance of increasing students' interest and enjoyment towards reading. Therefore, finding the best methods towards increasing students' motivation towards reading should take high priority in any literature classroom.

In the field of literature teaching, reading for pleasure is especially important within extensive reading. Extensive reading is a pedagogical approach for literature teaching, in which reading as much as possible voluntarily plays a key part (Jacobs & Farrel 2010, 2). Additionally, in extensive reading, the aim is not to achieve a complete linguistic understanding of a text (Bamford & Day 2002). Instead, the students' experience and their increased pleasure are at the front and center in extensive reading education (Bamford & Day 2002). This is achieved by framing the teacher less as an instructor, but more as a guide and mentor, allowing students plentiful time to read and autonomous choice in what they want to read (Bamford & Day 2002). Research on extensive reading points towards positive results especially in reading comprehension skills. In Nakanishi's (2015) meta-analysis of 34 studies students engaged in extensive reading classrooms consistently outperformed other students in reading comprehension skills. Similarly, in Ito's (2024) study on 91 6 to 16-year-old EFL students living in Japan, extensive reading methods, especially tied to sharing reading experiences, indicated positive results in increasing enjoyment and motivation towards reading. Ito's (2024) study's data was gathered in two cycles, second of which divided the participants into two groups ( $n=48$  and  $n=43$ ). In the first group, the teacher's role in reading texts out loud and providing literature recommendations resulted in 63% of the 48 participants mentioning

higher interest in reading (Ito 2024, 10). In short, extensive reading methods mainly aim to increase students' voluntary reading by appealing to their *intrinsic motivation*. In this view, extensive reading is highly related to Ryan and Deci's (2017) *self-determination theory*.

Intrinsic motivation is defined by Ryan & Deci (2017, 14), as the individual's motivation to engage with an activity autonomously mainly due to the pleasure it provides. In Schiefele et al.'s (2012) review on studies on reading comprehension and motivation from 1990 to 2010, intrinsically motivated reading is tied to the amount of reading an individual does. People who find pleasure and a sense of achievement in literature gravitate more towards reading. Similar findings were made in Bergen et al.'s (2018, 1211) study on 11,559 7-year-old twins' reading ability, where a link between reading ability, enjoyment and reading was noted. According to Bergen et al. (2018) reading enjoyment is built by the reader's reading ability and senses of accomplishments it brings. The sense of accomplishment then results in further reading. However, as the student reads more, the more their reading abilities develop, which then results in further reading (Bergen et al. 2018). This idea is also highlighted by Leino et al. (2017, 27), who noted the correlation between high reading and literacy skills among those who read more literature. If students are to be encouraged to read more literature, appealing to their intrinsic motivational needs provides a good solution. The methods used in extensive reading education could yield good benefits in this aim.

According to self-determination theory, intrinsic motivation is created by fulfilling three motivational needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness (Ryan & Deci 2017, 10-11). *Autonomy* is defined as the voluntariness of the actions the person takes (Ryan & Deci 2017, 10). In other words, the student should have a level of choice and agency in how and why they want to engage with an activity. In extensive reading, student autonomy is accounted for by allowing them free choice with their readings (Bamford & Day 2002; Jacobs & Farrel 2010, 16). *Competence* on the other hand is defined as the sense of mastery the student gets from engaging with the activity (Ryan & Deci 2018, 11). By having challenges that match the students' current level of competence, the student is able to perceive their development and progression, which can lead to a feeling of prowess. This can be achieved by exposing students to reading materials close to their current language proficiency (Bamford & Day & 2002). Finally, *relatedness* is characterized by how the student perceives their position within a social context (Ryan & Deci 2017, 11). In other words, students' sense of relatedness is increased by a feeling of inclusion within a social group. In extensive reading classrooms, students engage in reading independently, but afterwards are encouraged to share their

interpretations with the teacher and other students (Bamford & Day 2002). By appealing to all of the aforementioned motivational needs, teaching can become more intrinsically rewarding for students. By building literature education around these core principles, students' interest towards reading voluntarily in their spare time could be increased.

In opposition to intrinsic motivation is *extrinsic motivation*, which engages actions through external rewards and punishments (Ryan & Deci 2017, 14). A problem with extrinsic motivation is it does not uphold sustained long term engagement with an activity (Ryan & Deci 2017, 127). As engagement becomes solely motivated by the resulting rewards, and once those have been attained, the motivation to engage with the activity stops (Ryan & Deci 2017, 127). According to Schiefele et al. (2012), this applies to sustained long term reading as well. Children who report being more extrinsically motivated are less likely to read in their spare time and report less reading overall, than those who are intrinsically motivated towards reading (Schiefele et al. 2012, 458). Furthermore, extrinsic motivation can have a nonexistent or negative effect on reading competence (Schiefele et al. 2012, 458). Overall, in order to encourage long term attachment towards reading, teaching should rely less on rewards and/or punishments. Instead, more focus should be placed on how students could find intrinsic pleasure in reading. According to Bamford and Day (2002), extensive reading aims to shift the focus of reading to be "its own reward".

### **2.3 Using literature in EFL teaching**

Choosing the right teaching methods for literature teaching can be a great challenge for many foreign language teachers. The goal of the present section is to showcase practical methods teachers can use when integrating literature into their teaching. Alongside the aims and goals of extensive reading, these methods should build on increasing student motivation towards reading.

One significant consideration is how literary works are chosen for teaching. In extensive reading, a high emphasis is placed on the students themselves choosing their readings (Bamford & Day 2002). According to Bahmani and Farvardin (2017) having the students themselves choose what literature they want to read can increase their sense of attachment towards reading. In a study by Cremin and Swann (2016, 284) on secondary-school extracurricular reading groups in the United Kingdom, the inclusion of student choice into

readings increased students' feelings of autonomy and pleasure towards reading. However, as noted in Sun's (2022, 5-6) interview study on Chinese 14 to 15-year-old EFL students, simply shifting the responsibility of choosing the literature onto the students does not necessarily lead to optimal results. For example, students' lack of knowledge of what kinds of texts to choose or a lack of motivation towards reading can hinder the students from selecting suitable reading materials (Sun 2022, 9). This in turn can lead to a challenging or unpleasurable reading experience (Sun 2022, 9). Instead, Sun (2022, 6) recommends the teacher offering assistance in choosing their readings to those who find difficulties with reading. This is reflected in Ito's (2024) study, in which the teacher's "indirect support" in choosing and recommending literature was deemed most effective in increasing student motivation. In order to build a pleasurable reading experience, the teacher should allow the students to bring in their own readings, but allow guidance through reading recommendations or lists, to those who might not be initially engaged towards reading (Sun 2022; Cremin & Swann 2016). In relation to self-determination theory, allowing free choice increases students' sense of autonomy, while scaffolding through teachers' help can increase the student's sense of competence.

Shaping the reading environment also has a significant impact on how reading is experienced by students. Cremin and Swann (2016, 287) prioritize the creation of a nonhierarchical and stress free reading environment. This is mainly done to encourage free and open discourse among students, which results in a pleasurable reading experience (Cremin & Swann 2016). Non-hierarchical environment can for example be achieved by allowing more autonomous seating options, where students can freely organize themselves in order to best interact with each other (Cremin & Swann 2016, 289-290). Additionally, the teacher's role in the classroom plays a big part in creating a less hierarchical reading environment. For instance, instead of positioning the teacher as an instructor, who tells the students what to think of a given text, the teacher is instead positioned as a *co-reader* (Cremin & Swann 2016; Kucirkova & Cremin 2018; Sun 2023a; Sun 2022). Positioning the teacher as a co-reader, allows the students to form their own readings of the text independently, with the occasional help from the teacher (Sun 2022, 18). Furthermore, the teacher can help the students to see alternative ways of understanding the text, by giving their own readings of a text.

In addition to a nonhierarchical classroom structure, various classroom activities can be utilized to elicit student interaction with readings. According to Fazzi (2023, 264), students find discussions about their interpretations of texts pleasurable. Sun (2022, 8), also notes how



students are often highly oriented towards discursive forms of engaging with texts. Encouraging critical interpretations of a text also shifts the students from passive receivers of knowledge, to those who are actively building their own understandings of a text through evidence (Kaowiwattanakul 2021, 76). Critical examinations also require the exposure towards alternate readings of a text. In addition to the teacher's co-reader role, giving students different roles when reading the text with others can highlight new outlooks on a given text (Sun 2023a). The benefits of nonhierarchical teaching are not only limited to literature teaching, but indicate significant benefits in language teaching overall (see Benson 2007; Ushioda 2014; Yildiz 2020). It is therefore important to encourage teachers to engage students into more independent ways of learning and information processing.

Furthermore, the development of a personal reading can be heightened by the use of pre- and post-reading tasks, such as scaffolding materials, journals and visualization. Scaffolding the reading activities can engage students of differing skills levels to the reading (Paran 2008, 490). Scaffolding materials can for example include contextualizing readings or varied interpretations of a text (Sun 2022, 17). Post reading activities through journaling can also aid students in making connections between what they have read and what they have learned (Sun 2023b, 156). Students can for example write down their own interpretations of the text or new linguistic items they encountered during their reading (Sun 2023b, 156). Most importantly, the reading tasks should be varied and encourage students to express their own readings of a text through creative means (Ahvenjärvi & Kirstinä 2013; Aerila & Kauppinen 2019). For instance, students could express their interpretations of a text by rewriting or adapting their readings into other genres and/or text types (Ahvenjärvi & Kirstinä 2013, 97). Continuing a story and adding in more detail about the characters, settings and events can also challenge students to better articulate their readings of a text (Ahvenjärvi & Kirstinä 2013, 99). The key to creating engaging reading tasks is to have varied ways for students to express their opinions on a text (Aerila & Kauppinen 2019).

Engagement can also be increased by personalizing the reading experience. For example, by showcasing students to various multimodal adaptations of the text, such as films, audiobooks or comics, students are able to find alternative ways of engaging with readings (Kucirkova & Cremin 2018, 575; Sun 2022, 17). Additionally, personalization can lead to more robust reading comprehension as students are more closely engaged with reading (Kucirkova & Cremin 2018). For example, by annotating texts or drawing while reading can engage the students to interact with the text more closely (Kucirkova & Cremin 2018, 528; Sun 2022, 6).

Drawings based on readings especially help students to focus deeply on the text, while visualizing their interpretations of their readings (Kaowiwattanakul 2021, 77; Sun 2022, 18). Visual aids and other text types in conjunction with reading can also heighten reading comprehension. In Majidi's (2016) study on 96 15 to 16-year-old Iranian EFL students, visual aids positively affected students' reading comprehension. Huang (2019) also note the positive effects of visual aids on reading comprehension in their study on 26 Chinese as a foreign language students. Overall, using varied and multimodal approaches towards reading can help students be engaged in reading and allowing them to see varied outlooks on a text.

## **2.4 Literature in Finnish EFL teaching**

In this chapter I will outline how literature education can be seen in Finnish EFL educational contexts. I will begin by introducing how the Finnish core curriculum approaches literature teaching in first language and EFL teaching. Next, I will discuss how EFL teachers approach literature use in their teaching. Finally, I will discuss outline young students' reading habits and perceptions on literature. The following chapters aim to highlight how literature is currently viewed in Finnish educational contexts and what benefits present material package can offer it.

### **2.4.1 Literature in the National Core Curriculum**

The current version of the National Core Curriculum (NCC) was adapted into use in 2016. Overall, the NCC places high priority on local decision making. Thus, many of the guidelines are kept open to interpretation in order to encourage regional decision making (POPS 2014, 9). The main aim of the NCC is to provide Finnish municipalities with an unified framework from which to build their own more detailed curriculum from. Thus, it is difficult to say accurately if there are any regional differences in how literature is valued in EFL education.

Literature has a very limited role in EFL education according to the NCC. The sections covering the learning goals and assessment criteria for EFL and foreign language learning very rarely explicitly mention the use of literature in education. Instead, the NCC emphasizes the use of varied texts and multiliteracy skills (POPS 2014, 349). However, the loose definition of what is meant by "varied texts" opens the possibilities for the teachers to use many kinds of texts and exclude others. Based on such open guidelines, teachers with limited experience with literature might be tempted to sideline fiction literature in favor of other text

types, such as excerpts from textbooks, news articles and/or websites (Luukka 2023). Effect on vocabulary and grammar learning, student preferences and relevance for working life are also mentioned as an important aspect for choosing texts for classrooms (POPS 2014, 350). Perhaps literature's limited clear effect on working life skills could lead to teachers omitting literature from teaching. Overt mentions to encouraging pleasure reading or lifelong reading are never mentioned in the NCC's section on EFL education. Generally, the NCC places more emphasis on other language skills. For example interpersonal communication, vocabulary, grammar and meta-learning skills are prioritized over text comprehension and reading skills (POPS 2014, 348-351).

Unlike the sections on foreign language learning, segments on first language learning highly emphasize the use of literature in teaching. Reading and literature are highlighted as central aspects of first language learning. Fiction texts are explicitly mentioned and emphasized as sources of finding pleasure in reading (POPS 2014, 292). Furthermore, a central goal of first language learning in the NCC is to encourage students to engage with literature voluntarily (POPS 2014, 292). Students are encouraged to discuss, analyze and compare a variety of literary works and text types (POPS 2014, 292-294). Compared to assessment and learning goals of EFL education, Finnish teaching more explicitly mentions what types of texts and literary works should be incorporated into classrooms. In Finnish education, the promotion of literature as a pleasurable activity has been mainly relegated to first language teaching, whereas other language skills are more valued in foreign language education.

However, it is important to note how the NCC encourages the cultivation of transversal competences (POPS 2014, 281). One of the key transversal competences highlighted in the NCC is multiliteracy (POPS 2014, 283). According to the NCC, reading and varied use of textual materials are vital in encouraging multiliteracy. Additionally, this goal is not limited only to a singular school subject, but should be present in every subject within Finnish schools. Though fiction literature is not highlighted in the context of multiliteracy, its inclusion can be justified within teaching by encouraging multilateral competence. Furthermore, the NCC learning goals explicitly encourage the incorporation of different subjects into EFL teaching (POPS 2014, 348). Therefore it can be argued that even though reading and literature are more emphasized within Finnish language teaching, these elements can also be adapted into EFL education as well.

### 2.4.2 Teachers' perceptions on literature

How literature is used within Finnish EFL teaching is still a very little researched topic. One of the more robust studies on literature use in language teaching was conducted by Luukka et al. (2008), who studied the differences between literature use in first and foreign language education. According to Luukka et al. (2008, 215-220), Finnish language teachers are avid readers, both due to their professional and personal interests. Furthermore, as Luukka (2023) points out, literature is seen as beneficial tool in enhancing students' cultural and linguistic competences. It is therefore valuable to investigate how and why literature is used in Finnish EFL teaching.

According to Luukka et al. (2008, 94), foreign language teachers often utilize literature less than first language teachers. Instead, foreign language teachers relied heavily on premade textbooks as the primary reading materials in classrooms (Luukka et al. 2008, 97). Overall, foreign language teachers report using very little literature in their teaching. In the study, 53% of the foreign language teachers responded to using literature only some times and 28% reported never using literature at all (Luukka et al. 2008, 94). Similar findings were made by Harjanne et al. (2015, 918; see also Harjanne et al. 2017), who noted how Finnish foreign language teachers tend to prefer textbooks over "authentic materials". Furthermore, in a report made for the *Lukuklaani*-research project, by Aaltonen (2020), subject teachers overall report low rates of literature use in classroom education, instead preferring non-fiction writing (*tietokirjallisuus*). According to Aaltonen (2020, 48), 42,3% of the respondents replied not using prose literature (*kaunokirjallisuus*) in their classroom teaching. The limited use of literature in EFL teaching is also reflected in Luukka's (2019, 203) study, where they noted that out of the 21 participants, only 2 participants mentioned using literature often, with the majority using it only rarely. Even though significant changes into Finnish education and the NCC have taken place since Luukka et al.'s (2008) study, the use of literature in education is still very limited.

At this point, it is worthy to mention how Finnish EFL textbooks are often heavily text based and emphasize reading. Textbooks are designed with the principles of the NCC in mind and often contain within them a variety of text types, including excerpts from literature. However, the emphasis of the reading is not placed on encouraging students to cultivate lifelong pleasurable reading, but rather on increasing students' linguistic competences. Moreover, by strictly utilizing textbooks, students are stripped of the opportunity to independently made

choices on their preferred readings. In other words, the lack of reader autonomy and emphasis on linguistic competence could result in decreased intrinsic motivation towards reading literature.

In addition to observing how much literature is used in EFL education, it is also important to explore why teachers make the choices they make when using literature. According to Luukka et al. (2008, 151), the reliance on textbooks and avoidance of literature can be explained by the goals set by the NCC. As highlighted in section 2.4.1, literature is relatively less stressed in EFL education compared to first language education. The lack of emphasis on literature given to EFL in the NCC, leads to it being less visible in EFL teaching in practice. This notion is supported by Luukka (2023, 24), who noted how curricular demands can leave little time for EFL teachers to incorporate literature into their teaching.

The EFL teachers in Luukka's (2023, 23) interview based study, mention how the complexity and breadth of available literature can pose a challenge to teachers looking into using literature in their teaching. EFL teachers report having little time available to search for appropriate reading materials and design engaging materials for students (Luukka 2023, 23). Similarly, as Luukka et al. (2008, 205) report, when designing teaching, only 18% of foreign language teachers search for materials amongst literature. As Luukka et al. (2008, 205) point out, other text types such as websites and/or newspapers are more widely used when designing teaching materials.

Additionally, EFL teachers report finding the use of literature challenging due to the perceived lack of literary competence on the students' part (Luukka 2023, 23). According to the respondents, the students' lack of motivation and interest towards reading, in conjunction with the students' limited awareness of background knowledge and lessened attention spans, can form a serious challenge when incorporating literature use into teaching (Luukka 2023, 24). The preference towards using ready-made materials in textbooks, as reported by Harjanne et al. (2015), could then be understood as a result of teachers having limited time to design their own materials. Some teachers also reported avoiding using literature, due to their own lack of confidence in using literature in EFL education (Luukka 2023, 24-25). Even though literature was thought as important, the sense of having no formal knowledge or expertise in using it was seen as a challenge by the teachers. These findings are similarly reflected in the 2016 international study on Finnish children's literary competence (Leino et

al. 2017). In the study, teachers report having limited academic education on how to use and implement literature into their teaching (Leino et al. 2017, 46).

A lack of time and a perceived lack of knowledge on how to interact with literature, both on the students' and teachers' parts, form a clear challenge into incorporating literature meaningfully into EFL teaching. These findings are not exclusive only to the Finnish context, but reflect findings in global contexts as well, where a lack of time and a lack of formal competence hinder the integration of literature into language education (Calafato 2023; Cremin et al. 2008; Kucirkova & Cremin 2018 ; Sun 2023). As mentioned by Luukka (2023), the teachers' sense of lacking skills in using literature is a systemic problem, which should be addressed with an increased emphasis on literature training in academic teacher training. However, as a large majority of teachers rely on pre-made teaching materials, an increased need for ready to use engaging teaching materials is created. The present material package thus aims to answer the needs reported by foreign language teachers, by creating engaging and motivating literature teaching in an EFL context.

### **2.4.3 Students' perceptions on literature**

In Finland, young people's literacy rates have resulted in a heated discussion. The significant decrease in literacy skill according to the PISA literacy skills results has raised high concern for the reading abilities of young students (Ministry of Education and Culture 2023). Furthermore, the discussion has also centered around how educational institutions in Finland should respond to the decreasing literacy skills. Thus, it is valuable to inspect how and what young people read, in order to best appeal to young people's current reading sensibilities.

Literature and reading are still widely popular and appreciated in Finland. According to Hanifi et al. (2021, 134), young people are still avid readers, with over 75% mentioning having read a book within the last six months. Hanifi et al. (2021, 134) also highlight how reading is at its most popular amongst 10-14-year olds, but gradually decreases with age. Similar findings were made by Lähteelä et al. (2019, 35), who noted how reading enthusiasm decreases with age. In Lähteelä et al.'s (2019, 38) study, only 48% out of 79 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> grade students report reading regularly. Overall, very few students report to reading books every day, with only 15% of girls and 0% of boys mentioning reading daily (Lähteelä et al. 2019). This finding is also reflected by Hanifi et al. (2021, 141-143), who points to the decrease in very active readers. Even though reading is still common and valued, the reading of longer texts actively has decreased.

It is worth examining how and why reading rates drop with age. Lähteelä et al. (2019, 38), mention how 80% of upper comprehensive level students consider reading as a valuable activity, despite the mixed reading rates. Reading is especially attributed to providing academic and linguistic skills, like increased vocabulary and reading efficiency (Lähteelä et al. 2019, 39-43). In Lähteelä et al.'s (2019, 39-40), study, reading is not once mentioned being motivated by it being a pleasurable activity. A lack of time and interest are given as reasons for not reading, by those who do not engage in regular reading (Lähteelä et al 2019, 40). In relation to self-determination theory, students have an instrumental view of reading. Students engage with reading due to its perceived benefits, but not due to it being pleasurable in of itself. Perhaps, the lack of intrinsic motivation towards reading could explain the decrease in attachment towards reading as students grow older. In La Rosa's (2022, 10) study, social media and mobile phones are mentioned as the most significant reason for lessened reading rates, by the 91 out of 136 8<sup>th</sup> grader participants. As students grow older, the prevalence of social media and technology increasingly competes with literature reading as a pleasurable past time activity. Furthermore, Finnish students struggle to find meaningful engagement in literature teaching (Leino et al. 2017, 30). According to Leino et al. (2017, 30), one fourth of students report not being motivated or interested by the literature teaching provided in school. It is therefore imperative, to place additional focus on increasing students' intrinsic motivation towards reading and literature, in order to better engage them into lifelong reading and learning.

In order to best engage students into reading, taking their reading preferences into account is highly important. According to Hanifi et al. (2021, 135), young people mainly read detective, fantasy and sci-fi stories. Young adult novels are also widely popular among young readers (Hanifi et al. 2021, 135). Similar findings were made by Lähteelä et al. (2019, 44), who noted young readers' interest towards sci-fi, fantasy and horror stories. These findings also coincide with findings outside of Finland, where young readers mainly prefer reading fantasy and detective stories (Fazzi 2023, 258).

Reading skills and appreciation are still relatively high in Finland, but have seen some decreases in young people's attitudes and attachments towards reading. Even though the PISA results are high in comparison to other countries, the decreasing literacy rates can raise some concern over how reading and literature are incorporated into education. Especially, as many students report not being engaged by literature teaching in education, a higher emphasis should be placed on motivating students towards finding intrinsic enjoyment in reading

(Leino et al. 2017, 30). Moreover, in order to properly engage students into autonomous reading, subjects outside of first language education, should incorporate more literature into their curriculums. This material package aims to increase student motivation towards reading, by blending aspects of literature teaching into one of the more popular leisure time activities young people partake in – gaming.



## **3 GAMIFICATION**

In the following chapter, I will discuss the features commonly associated with gamification and what benefits it might have towards using literature in EFL. I will begin by briefly introducing gamification as a concept and how it has been utilized in educational settings in section 3.1. This is followed by a detailed examination of meaningful gamification, as described by Nicholson (2014) in sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.6. Finally, a practical example of meaningful gamification will be examined in the form of educational escape rooms in section 3.2. In the following sections, those who interact with the gamified activities will be referred to as “players”. Additionally, collections of gamified activities and game mechanics will also be referred to as “game systems”.

### **3.1 Features of gamification**

Gamification is a rather new concept within the field of pedagogical research. Landers (2014, 754) defines gamification as the process of including game-elements into non-game activities, in order to encourage certain behaviors. In a classroom context, classroom activities and materials could be enhanced by the inclusion of game-elements, such as rewards, objectives or narrative-elements. However, as Landers (2014, 760) states, gamification by itself does not teach anything, but only aims to enhance the learning experience. The effectiveness of gamification thus depends highly on the quality of the activities, materials and learning goals.

As noted, when discussing gamification, the idea of *game-elements* quickly becomes apparent. Game-elements are described as a collection of features used in games, which promote certain types of behavior (Figuroa Flores 2015, 38). As mentioned by Figuroa Flores (2014, 39), game-elements include for example points, badges, leaderboards, progress bars, quests, levels, avatars, social elements and rewards. It is important to note how not every game-element has to be included into teaching, in order for it to be gamified. As pointed out by Landers (2014, 754), gamification often only utilizes *some* game-elements, in order to maximize the learning outcomes. Furthermore, this exclusion of some game-elements separates gamification from serious games, which tend to use all game-elements.

The research regarding gamification already points towards positive results in relation to increasing student motivation. In their meta-analysis of 14 studies relating to gamification in education, Manzano-León et al. (2021, 10) discovered gamification yielding positive results for student motivation. Similar findings were reported by Huang et al. (2020, 1894) in their meta-study of 30 studies, where gamification was deemed to have positive effects in educational settings. However, additionally, it was noted how gamified experiences mainly rely on rewards, points and badges (Manzano-León et al. 2021, 12). Huang et al. (2020, 1887) also highlight how the majority of studies on gamification rely on the use of points ( $k=24$ ), badges ( $k=22$ ) and leaderboards ( $k=23$ ).

Out of all game-elements, rewards have the most significant presence in gamified teaching. However, as Nicholson (2014, 1) mentions, rewards are often used to manipulate engagement. This ties in with Ryan and Deci's (2017) self-determination theory, where excessive reliance on rewards can lead to diminishment of intrinsic motivation. In other words, the activity is not done for its inherent enjoyment, but due to the extrinsic reward one gets at the end. In addition, motivation towards an activity can decrease as the players become more habituated to getting rewards, as mentioned in Rahayu et al.'s (2022, 13) study on gamification's effects on 22 Indonesian university students. The same study also highlights, how students with fewer points than their peers can quickly lose their motivation in the activity (Rahayu et al., 2022, 11-12). The use of rewards has to be taken into careful consideration when designing gamified materials, especially if the aim is to increase intrinsic motivation.

Instead of using reward-centric gamification, Nicholson (2014) recommends the use of *meaningful gamification*. Whereas many instances of gamification rely on extrinsically

motivating factors, meaningful gamification aims to create a more player oriented and intrinsically motivating game-experience (Nicholson 2014). This is done by relying less on rewards and points, and instead shifting attention to other game-elements such as narratives, goals, player-progression and social-interaction (Nicholson 2014, 4). Furthermore, Nicholson (2014, 5) defines gamification as having six elements, in what he calls the RECIPE for meaningful gamification, which contribute to creating intrinsic motivation in players. These elements include: play, exposition, choice, information, engagement and reflection. It is important to note that even though all of these elements are presented separately, they often intersect and overlap each other. All six of these elements will be further discussed in the following subsections.

### **3.1.1 Play**

Play is defined by Nicholson (2014, 7-8) as the ways in which players interact with the game-elements and mechanics. As mentioned by Dickey (2005, 77) games tend to have a central goal, which the players aim to achieve in an environment dictated by rules and boundaries. Moreover, according to Rueckert et al. (2020, 696) the inclusion of defined goals and interactive means to attain those goals encourage students to repeat tasks and self-correct their performance. If a player does not meet the win-conditions of a gamified activity, they are forced to reconsider their interaction with the game's mechanics and repeat it with new strategies. A central goal supported by clear rules and boundaries, can have significant benefits in promoting student autonomy and competence, as described by Ryan & Deci (2017), within a gamified classroom activities.

Additionally, the player needs to have autonomous choice in what tasks they want to engage in and how (Nicholson 2014, 7) The rules used in play can and should be negotiated throughout gameplay amongst the players This encourages students to find their own fun beyond rewards, by experimenting with the game-system's rules and boundaries (Nicholson 2014, 6). In other words, the gamified activity should have enough flexibility in its rules, in order to accommodate personalization on the behalf of players and their needs. Gamified materials should also enable varied modes of play, in order to engage different players' needs (Nicholson 2014, 6-7). In their study, Rueckert et al. (2020, 698) found that allowing students to interact with the gamified elements of school activities at their own pace, increased the sense of autonomy for the participants, which led to feelings of empowerment and attachment to schoolwork.

### 3.1.2 Exposition

Exposition relates to how narrative elements are tied into gamified activities. As stated by Dickey (2005, 73), introducing narratives into gamified activities can contextualize and give reasons for engaging with the activity. Additionally, narrative can provide the players a goal they are motivated to achieve, which results with closer engagement with the activity (Manzano-León et al. 2021, 10). However, incorporating exposition into gamification is an incredibly complex task. Exposition within gamified activities contains two elements: how a narrative is created and how that narrative is told to the player (Nicholson 2014, 8).

The first element of exposition is how a narrative is created for the player. This can take various forms, for example by having the player as a passive receiver of exposition or giving the player a more active role in uncovering or creating the narrative. As noted by Dickey (2005, 73) narratives tend to be linear experiences with a beginning, middle and end. However, gamified systems incorporate into them the element of player choice. Incorporating choice into the narratives can heighten the feeling of agency in the player (Dickey 2005, 76-77). For example, escape rooms have been noted having positive effects in engaging students into learning, by placing them into an interactive narrative environment, where their choices shape the outcome of the game (Nicholson 2018, 49).

However, how the narrative is told to the player can vary. For example, as stated by Dickey (2005), a narrative can be told to the player by either cutscenes or by creating a backstory for the game. A backstory provides the game with context and reason, in the form of an introductory exposition text, where important characters and events are outlined (Dickey 2005, 73). Central goals of the game-experience can also be shown during an expository backstory. Cutscenes on the other hand take place in the middle of the game-experience and indicate player progression, throughout the narrative (Dickey 2005, 73). Other game-elements such as non-playable characters, gameplay elements and environmental aesthetics can also be used to convey a narrative and its progression to the player (Dickey 2005, 74). Together, all of these elements form a *narrative space* the players can explore and interact in.

Prior research seems to point to positive effects of incorporating narrative elements into teaching. For example, in their study about incorporating gamification to an extensive reading group, Aura et al. (2021) noted how the inclusion of storification helped students engage better with school work and feel empowered in their abilities. More importantly, students reported finding more enjoyment out of texts read in the classroom, within a storified context

(Aura et al. 2021, 7). Benefits of narratives were also noted by Manzano-León et al. (2021, 10), who concluded that the inclusion of interesting contextualizing narratives can benefit student engagement with activities.

Gamification and game-narratives also entail aesthetic considerations. The visual aesthetics of the materials can help students immerse themselves into the game-world. As mentioned by Manzano-León et al. (2021, 10), aesthetically appealing gamified activities, with varied gameplay and narrative elements, have a positive impact on the player's intrinsic motivation. Aura et al. (2021, 8) also highlight how dedication to immersive decorations and props can "transport" students into the narrativized learning experience, which results in higher rates of attachment towards the learning. Therefore, gamified materials should also place high value in the ways they intend to transport the students' into a fictional narrative.

### **3.1.3 Choice**

Another important component of gamification is giving players the freedom to make meaningful choices. As stated by Dickey (2005, 77) a key aspect to creating engaging gameplay is to incorporate a sense of decision making, in either the narrative or how the player decides to use the resources they have during gameplay. It is important to note how choice, exposition and play are inseparably interlinked. For example, the decisions made during gameplay can have immediate consequences for the game-narrative. In their study on gamifying EFL classrooms with quests, Philpott & Son (2022b, 295) mention how allowing the players to choose which objectives they want to pursue increased the players' feelings of autonomy. Players are also better able to choose tasks which appeal to their interests and which are more suitable for their current level of competence (Philpott & Son 2022b, 296). This in turn can increase the player's feelings of enjoyment and intrinsic motivation. However, students can be easily overwhelmed by the wealth of choices (Nicholson 2014, 9-10). Restricting and streamlining player choice is also important, when designing the branching gameplay and narrative paths for students.

Another way of approaching decision making within gamification is how the players are able to personalize their game-experiences. For example, the use of customizable player avatars can be a means for the player to attach themselves to the game-experience (Dickey 2005, 76). Avatars are defined by Figueroa Flores (2015) as the "visual representations of the player" within the game world. As stated, by Dickey (2005, 76), it is important to have avatars the player finds interesting, in order for them to voluntarily choose to experience the game

through that avatar. In addition to the initial appeal of the avatars, they should change and develop throughout the game-experience as the player overcomes challenges (Sailer & Homner 2020, 107). The change in the player avatar can reflect the player's progress throughout the game, which increases intrinsic motivation and engagement with the activity (Sailer & Homner 2020, 107).

### **3.1.4 Information**

Information in gamification refers providing info to the player (Nicholson 2014, 12). Information helps the player see the value in the activity they are engaged in. A steady flow of information contributes to the player's sense of mastery and competence (Ryan & Deci 2017, 11). In Rueckert et al.'s (2020, 6) study, 12 of 21 18 to 22-year-old students highlighted how feedback helped them critically examine and improve their learning in a gamified environment. According to Nicholson (2014, 18), the use of rewards can be used to inform the player of their progress. However, emphasis should not be placed solely on the reward. Instead, receiving the reward should lead the player towards furthering their progress in the game and narrative (Nicholson 2014, 19).

As mentioned in sections 3.1.1 and 3.1.2, both play and exposition can contribute to the sense of progression the player feels. In other words, game mechanics and how the narrative are tied to the game-experience, inform the player if they are interacting with the game-system in the desired ways. For example, player's progress towards the desired goal can be indicated through dialogue with non-playable character (Nicholson 2014, 11). Additionally, climactic and dramatic moments within the narrative can indicate how the player is progressing throughout the game. Interaction with the game also provides the player with immediate feedback for the player. If the player cannot overcome a certain challenge, they have to alter their strategies accordingly. Additionally, changes to the player's avatar can indicate progress for the player. It is worth noting that information should be conveyed to the player in various different ways (Nicholson 2014, 12). The effectiveness of providing varied and responsive feedback was noted by Huang et al. (2020, 1894), in their meta-analysis of gamification's effects on learning outcomes.

### **3.1.5 Engagement**

Engagement within gamification can be separated into two categories: the player's engagement with gameplay and the player's engagement with the social aspects of the

activity (Nicholson 2014, 13). These two modes of engagement are heavily tied to Ryan & Deci's (2017) conceptions of capability and relatedness.

In order to create an engaging experience for the player through gameplay, the game-experience has to be tailored to their current level of competence (Nicholson 2014, 13). Challenges that the player can overcome can increase the player's intrinsic motivation, as they are able to overcome struggles and simultaneously learn new information (Philpott & Son 2022b, 296). The activities should not be initially too challenging for the player, but should gradually increase in difficulty as the player gains more experience with the game-system. The gradual progression of difficulty increases the student's feeling of mastery and keeps the game-experience engaging (Nicholson 2014, 13; Justin & Joy 2024, 15). The initial low difficulty can also build player confidence in interacting with the game-system. It is thus important to allow the player a chance to experiment with the game mechanics, for example through brief tutorials, in order for them to gain initial understanding of the game's rules and systems.

The second type of engagement relates to how the player is engaged into social interaction with other players. One way of encouraging social interaction within a game-system is through competition. This can be achieved through the use of leaderboards and challenges which encourage comparisons of skill. However, as Ryan & Deci (2017, 11), social comparisons to others can quickly diminish intrinsic motivation. Such findings have been reported by Sailer & Homner (2020, 103) in their meta-analysis of 38 studies on gamification, found that the introduction of competition into activities yielded negative results in student motivation. Similar findings were made by Huang et al. (2020, 1894), who noted the adverse effects of utilizing competition and leaderboards in gamification. Furthermore, Philpott and Son (2022a, 11), found that the effects of competitive leaderboards tend to result in similar results as excessive use of rewards: once good ranking within the leaderboard has been achieved, the motivation to engage with the activity ends.

In opposition to competition, cooperation can encourage players to become more invested in an activity. Cooperation with other players supports the feeling of relatedness with others and reinforces or creates interpersonal relationships (Philpott & Son 2022b, 297). Thus, the introduction of cooperation can foster feelings of enjoyment, but also increase the players' intrinsic motivation. Similar findings about the effectiveness of cooperation were made by

Huang et al (2020, 1895). According to Huang et al. (2020, 1895) the common goals and clear learning goals yielded best learning results out of a variety of game-elements.

Competition and cooperation can also be mixed together. For example, the players can compete against each other in small groups, where group members have to work together in order to achieve their goals. By incorporating aspects of cooperation and competition, the benefits of both can be achieved simultaneously. The students are engaged in meaningful interaction with each other, while also being driven by the healthy competition brought by competitiveness. As noted by Sailer & Homner (2020, 103-104), “competitive-collaborative” approaches to gamification yield the best results in motivating students to engage with activities.

### **3.1.6 Reflection**

The final aspect of gamification defined by Nicholson (2014) is reflection, which relates to how the players apply the knowledge and skills they have gained throughout the game-experience to the real world. Reflection is especially important within educational contexts, where the goals and aims of the gamified activity have to be made explicitly clear for the students. As Nicholson (2014, 16) mentions, a lack of time allowed for student reflection can render the educational potential of the activity meaningless.

When designing a gamified activity, considering how reflection is integrated can have a significant effect on how the learning goals will be met. Nicholson (2014, 16) recommends using a three step model for creating a reflection component to a game-system. During the first step, the player *describes* the events that took place during the game-experience. In the second phase, the players *analyze* their actions and seek to connect those experiences to the real-world. In the final step, the players *apply* the knowledge they gained into real-world action. By following Nicholson’s (2014) three step model, the players are able to consider how their own actions relate to their own lives and those around them.

How to tie reflection into other elements of meaningful gamification could also be considered when designing a reflection component. For example, how the reflection is done within the game-system relates to play, exposition and engagement. Instead of having a separate out of game session dedicated to reflection, players could be engaged to reflect on their actions within the game’s narrative. For example, students could be encouraged to write quest journals or detective diaries on their progress. Allowing the players to share their own



experiences additionally allows for different players to be exposed to multiple perspectives on the game experience (Nicholson 2014, 15).

### **3.2 Escape rooms**

As the previous sections have demonstrated, gamification can have significant benefits towards increasing intrinsic motivation, by engaging players' sense of autonomy, relatedness and competence. As explained in section 2.2, extensive reading aims to increase student motivation through similar processes. Mixing these two approaches together, could yield positive outcomes towards increasing student motivation towards reading. As mentioned by Aerila and Kauppinen (2019), *escape rooms* could be a good practical method of blending literature teaching with gamification.

Escape rooms are commonly defined as game experiences, where players have to reach a common goal by solving puzzles, deciphering clues and interacting with their environment. (Nicholson 2018, 45; Aerila & Kauppinen 2019, 146). Escape rooms are highly goal oriented, and actively encourage players to engage in cooperation and task management with other players (Zhang et al. 2018). A significant appeal with escape rooms is how they immerse players into the game's narrative-space. Expository introductions are often employed to not only introduce players to the rules of the game, but also to engross them into the game's narrative (Taraldsen et al. 2022, 174). Introductory exposition can also be given by the game-master. Game-master is a person who oversees the game's progress, by giving players guidance and additional information if needed (Nicholson 2015, 22). The game-master can also increase immersion by playing a character in the game-narrative (Wargo & Garcia 2023). Many escape rooms also foster narrative immersion, by using set decorations, atmospheric soundscapes and role-play elements (Nicholson 2015, Nicholson 2018; Wargo & Garcia 2023). Many commercial tabletop escape rooms, such as EXIT, UNDO and UNLOCK, use picture cards and expository texts to immerse players into the game world. As Nicholson (2018, 49) states, placing emphasis on the immersive narrative elements of escape rooms, teachers could create more engaging and motivating learning experiences for students.

Even though research on education escape games has begun only recently, the results point towards positive benefits in learning. In Zhang et al.'s (2018) case study on escape rooms for medical professionals in Philadelphia, escape rooms were noted to engage players into active

communication and role management. Similar positive results were made by Taraldsen (2022, 176), in their literature review of 70 articles on education escape rooms. According to the study, complex puzzle designs and time limits force students to cooperate and communicate with each other (Taraldsen 2022, 176). In her case study on using escape rooms in nursing education, Garwood (2020) 81.1% of 22 students reported relying on communication and cooperation with peers, when faced with puzzles and challenges. In other words, escape rooms could increase the students' sense of *relatedness*, as they cooperate and interact with puzzles in groups.

Escape rooms can also have positive impacts on students' feelings of *competence* and *autonomy*. A sense of competence is built by including suitably challenging tasks and puzzles for the students to complete. More importantly, the diversity of tasks available in an escape room experience can increase individual students' sense of mastery over the game. In a case study by Zhang et al. (2018, 4), medical professionals (n=10) reported delegating tasks based on individual participant's specific skills and/or prior knowledge. Escape rooms also provide players with moment to moment feedback through game mechanics (Zhang et al. 2018, 5). If students get stuck on a puzzle, or cannot progress in the escape room, they have to change tactics and try alternative possibilities. Allowing students to choose which puzzles, tasks and/or interactions they want to engage in should be prioritized, as it could increase the students' sense of choice and autonomy when engaging with the gamified experience (Nicholson 2015, 25). As noted in section 3.1.3, providing players with meaningful choices during gameplay can greatly increase intrinsic motivation.

As Nicholson (2018) emphasizes, escape rooms yield best results when tied to an exciting narrative. The narrative not only helps students immerse themselves into the game narrative, but also sets the central goal, students aim to achieve (Aerila & Kauppinen 2019, 150). In Chen et al.'s (2022) study on role-play gamification's effects on 100 Chinese primary school students, significant improvements towards student motivation and affect to learning were reported. By creating experiences, where students are emotionally invested and in control of the narrative and character progression, students become more engaged and attached to learning (Chen et al. 2022, 10). By integrating a sense of narrative attachment through player roles and narrative choices, students could become more emotionally invested in the learning experience.

In conclusion, escape rooms could have the potential in increasing students' intrinsic motivation towards reading literature, by being immersive narrative experiences in of themselves. Research on escape rooms' benefits towards literature learning are limited, yet the benefits found in other contexts could indicate beneficial results in literature learning as well. Both literature learning and escape rooms facilitate communication between students, critical thinking and creativity. More importantly, both approaches aim to increase students' intrinsic motivation towards learning, by appealing to students' sense of autonomy, relatedness and competence.

Nevertheless, as noted by Aura et al. (2021) gamification requires immense amount of time and consideration. As reported by Manzano-León (2021, 10), more training for teachers in using gamification is needed, if meaningful and successful gamified experiences are to be included within teaching. As noted in section 3.1, gamification requires the simultaneous awareness of multiple factors and elements. Compounded with the fact that teachers often report a lack of time in using literature in language education, it could be argued that teachers do not have time to design robust gamified systems into their teaching (Harjanne et al. 2015; Luukka 2023). Therefore it is of great importance to have good ready-made materials, which can be easily altered and used in different contexts and with different learning groups. This material package aims to fill in that gap and provide teachers with ready-made, easily adaptable and modifiable gamified materials. The aim is to provide teachers with a holistic gamified experience, with immersive narrative elements and varied modes of interaction for students. Care is also placed on making the materials easy to use and setup for any classroom and student group.

## **4 AIMS OF THE MATERIAL PACKAGE**

Most of literature teaching in Finland has been relegated to first language teaching (POPS 2014). Contrarily to first language teaching, foreign language teaching places more emphasis on using a variety of different text types in teaching (POPS 2014). This is then reflected in teaching practices, which often seem to sideline literature in preference to other text types (Luukka et al. 2008, 94-105). Literature is also often perceived as a challenge for teachers, due to time constraints and a perceived lack of confidence with using literature (Luukka 2023). Instead, EFL teachers prefer using pre-made materials from the course textbook (Harjanne et al. 2015). Additionally, students report not finding reading valuable or not having time to read (Lähteelä et al. 2019, 35). Therefore, the present material package aims to reach the following goals:

- 1) Increase students' motivation towards reading for pleasure.
- 2) Providing students with new ways of understanding and reading literature.
- 3) Creating easy to use and adaptable materials for teachers.

The central aim of the material package is to encourage students to find enjoyment in reading. Pleasure in reading is an aspect of literature education that has been neglected within foreign language teaching. Instead, emphasis seems to be mainly placed on literature's linguistic elements (Luukka 2019, 205-208). Furthermore, students themselves report to engage with literature mainly due to its linguistic benefits (Lähteelä et al. 2019, 38). Literature is viewed more as an instrument in attaining academic success and additional vocabulary. Rarely do students report to read due to it being an enjoyable activity (Lähteelä et al. 2019). However, in order to promote lifelong learning of language, establishing an interest towards reading in

school is imperative. According to Leino et al. (2017), academic success and enhanced linguistic skills are tied more to those who find pleasure in reading. Similar findings were reported by Schiefele et al. (2012), who found that intrinsic motivation towards reading results in more reading.

The second aim of the material package is to provide students with new ways of engaging with texts. A significant challenge with engaging students with reading, is the decreased interest in reading (Hanifi et al. 2014). Thus, more emphasis should be placed on providing students with resources on how to understand different kinds of longer-form texts. The material package aims to provide students with ways to contextualize texts and means to engage with texts critically. Students are encouraged to engage in discursive meaning making through varied teaching materials and activities.

The third aim of the material package is to provide teachers with easily adaptable materials for literature teaching in EFL education. A significant obstacle between EFL teachers and literature use is a lack of time and a perceived lack of expertise in using literature in teaching (Luukka 2023). The present material package aims to not only engage students, but to encourage teachers to see literature as materials with the capability to engage students in creative and enjoyable ways. The present material package also aims to be easily adaptable to different contexts and texts. This is to help teachers overcome time constraints and provide them with easy to use tools and resources on how to use literature in their teaching. Therefore, special care will be placed on creating a material package, which will appeal to teachers who might not feel confident with their literary skills. In addition to the resources for the students, additional attention will be paid to the materials provided for teachers, in order to encourage the incorporation of literature into EFL education.

The present material package aims to achieve the aforementioned goals through five lessons. The material package was designed as an interdisciplinary learning module (monialainen oppimiskokonaisuus) for 9<sup>th</sup> grade Finnish students, where literature learning goals from first language learning are mixed with EFL teaching. Due to the complexity of the material package, it could also be easily adapted for the high school learning module ENA3. 9<sup>th</sup> graders were chosen, since the primary education in Finland ends in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade. For some students, their final year in primary education could be the last time for them to engage with literature in a formal setting. Additionally, as mentioned by Lähteelä et al. (2019, 35), the value in reading decreases with age. Steady flow of literature teaching could lessen the

decrease in reading enthusiasm among students. Lastly, the vast majority of literature on literature teaching in education is limited to the university or upper secondary levels. When incorporating literature into EFL education, upper-comprehensive school levels have been largely neglected. Therefore, more materials and expertise in this area is greatly needed.

## **5 MATERIALS AND ACTIVITIES**

The present material package aims to increase students' intrinsic motivation towards reading literature, through gamified education. In order to maximize the effectiveness of gamified materials on intrinsic motivation, the package will follow Nicholson's (2014) RECIPE model for creating meaningful gamification. In practice, this will be done by incorporating elements of escape rooms and role-playing games into foreign language literature teaching. The game narrative will place the students in a gothic fantasy murder mystery. The students will take the roles of detectives, who gather clues, overcome obstacles and solve mysteries while engaging with fantasy/horror literature. In the following sections, materials and the rationale behind their design will be discussed.

The material package consists of two elements: the gamified materials and the reading tasks (case files). The main benefit of having the gamified materials and learning tasks separate is their modularity. One of the goals of the material package is to provide teachers with easy to use and modifiable teaching materials. By increasing modularity of the materials, teachers have more opportunities to edit each element without disrupting the flow of the other materials. For example, teachers are free to completely re-edit the reading tasks without having to alter the gamified materials and vice versa. Teachers can easily add in more options for students or remove some elements from the materials.

I will begin by discussing the gamified elements and the design philosophy behind them. The basic mechanics, gameplay loops and narrative design will be explained in section 5.1. Section 5.2 will describe how literary texts were chosen for the material package. This is

followed by a description of the reading related tasks called case files. Finally, the material package's assessment criteria and their relation to the NCC will be detailed in section 5.4.

## **5.1 The gamified escape room**

This chapter details the design philosophy of the gamified materials. A large portion of the gamification design was mainly based on the goals set by Nicholson's (2014) RECIPE for meaningful gamification. However, as Landers (2014, 760) states, gamification should enhance teaching and not replace it. Therefore, tying the gamified elements closely to the learning goals of the material package was important to remember while designing the experience. As the material package is also based on the goals set by extensive reading education, these had to be taken into consideration as well. After taking all of these aspects into account in the design process, various sub-goals for the design process were defined. These were as follows:

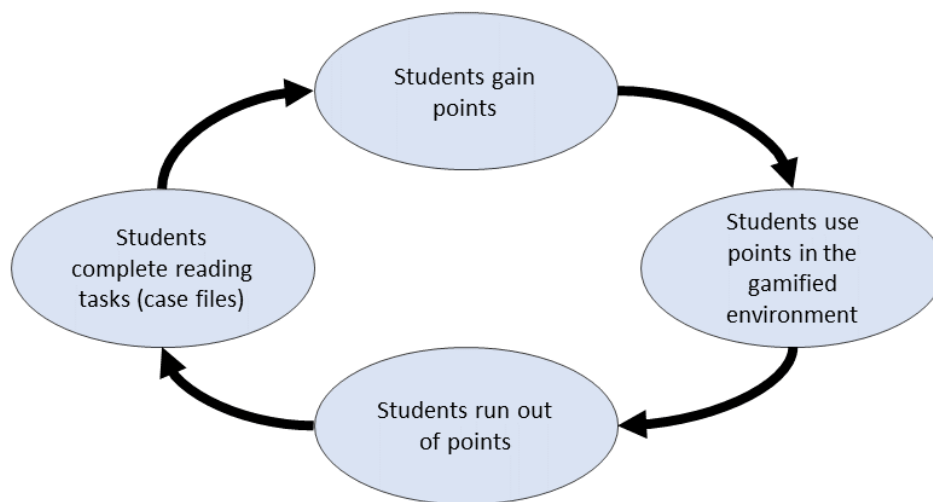
- 1) How to enhance the students' reading for pleasure and reading skills through gamified materials?
- 2) How to increase intrinsic motivation with the RECIPE for meaningful gamification?
- 3) How to transport an immersive narrativized escape room experience to any classroom?

### **5.1.1 Game mechanics**

The initial aim of the materials was to create a robust gamified escape room experience, which could be adapted for any classroom and/or student group. This proved to be a considerable challenge, due to the complexity of escape rooms. As mentioned by Nicholson (2018), escape rooms build student engagement by creating immersive narrative experiences for students, by incorporating props, decorations and soundscapes. Unfortunately, providing teachers with elaborate decorations and physical items was beyond the scope of the present thesis. Instead, influence was drawn from commercial tabletop escape rooms such as UNDO and UNLOCK, where game-mechanics and narrative are communicated through cards. Cards allow any teacher to simply print out the materials, cut them into smaller pieces, after which the materials are ready to use. How the cards were to be utilized in gameplay was at the center of the design process.



The main goal for the students is to solve a murder mystery. This is achieved by having the students collect evidence cards, clue cards and interview answers from suspects. Suspects are represented by eight character cards. Students will explore different rooms of a manor, which are represented by five room cards. The room cards indicate every action students can take in the game-world. Students gain evidence cards by completing puzzles or by interviewing characters. Each card contains a short piece of text, which gives the students information about the game world. Based on these cards, students have to deduce and construct a sequence of events, which reveals the murderer. In order for students to perform any of the aforementioned actions, they need to use points (brain power) they gain from completing literature reading tasks (case files). In other words, the gamified system follows a simple gameplay loop, illustrated in figure 1.



*Figure 1: Gameplay loop of the gamified materials*

An initial point of concern with the core design of the gameplay loop was its reliance on rewards. Over reliance on rewards can lead to feelings of frustration and disengagement in education, as mentioned by Rahayu et al.'s (2022). More worryingly, overemphasis on rewards can increase students' extrinsic motivation and decrease intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci 2017; Nicholson 2014). However, the role of rewards in the present material package differs greatly from other gamified educational systems. Instead of only receiving points and rewards, students actively use those points to further the storyline in the game. Instead of focusing on the rewards, emphasis is placed more on narrative progression. Reading and

uncovering the mystery is the actual reward. This is in line with Nicholson's (2014) conceptions on rewards. Rewards, should not be the sole focus of the activity, but should indicate student progress and help them become more engaged in the game world. This stance on shifting student attention away from the points towards reading and enjoying a narrative also tie into the goals of extensive reading, in which reading as an enjoyable activity should be the main priority (Bamford and Day 2002). Additionally, by altering the amount of points students gain from case files, teachers can change how long the gamified experience will last. The material package is designed for five lessons, but by lessening the amount of points students gain from each task can lengthen the gamified experience. Hence, the point system also provides additional flexibility to the materials.

A central aspect of design was allowing students varied modes of play and interaction with the gamified materials. Students have complete freedom on what actions they want to perform in the game system, as long as they follow the rules set by the game. For example, students can choose not to interact with any of the characters and focus more on collecting clues and solving puzzles. Additionally, priority was placed on creating a variety of different types of interactions students can perform with the gamified system. Students are allowed to pick clue cards from a clue card pile, solve puzzles, interrogate characters and explore rooms. According to Nicholson (2015) allowing students various modes of interaction and the freedom to make meaningful choices, can increase the students' engagement towards the gamified experience. The freedom to choose also appeals to students' sense of autonomy, which can result in increased intrinsic motivation (Ryan & Deci 2017). Additionally, because students have limited resources they gain from the reading tasks, each choice has more meaning to them. This can increase students' engagement with the gamified system as they strategically choose which actions to take, before the lessons end.

The more autonomous position students have within the classroom also reorients the teacher's role. When using the gamified materials, the teacher has to take the role of game - master. Game-master monitors the rules and progress of the game (Nicholson 2015). With the present materials, the teacher is tasked in providing students with the necessary game pieces they gain by completing actions. For example, if students complete a puzzle, the teacher is responsible in giving the students the corresponding reward card. The teacher can also provide students with additional guidance if needed. This can lessen students' feelings of frustration and increase their engagement with the materials.

A great benefit to using escape rooms in education is how they encourage student sense of relatedness through communication (Zhang et al. 2018). The materials were designed mainly to be used in small groups. However, the materials could be easily adapted to be used with individual students. However, even if used with smaller student groups, the communicative elements of the materials should be taken into consideration as well. Group work is encouraged due to the complexity of the mystery. Students will encounter conflicting information throughout the lessons. The students have to form and reason their arguments based on the available evidence. Through open communication, students are able to share and develop their interpretations of the game-narrative. Additionally, according to Zhang et al. (2018), players often partake in role delegation when engaging with escape room experiences. The puzzles are designed to be challenging and appeal to students' differing skill sets. For example, some puzzles might test students' visual deduction skills, whereas some might challenge their logical reasoning. Students are encouraged to work as a team in order to solve each puzzle they encounter.

The final central concern with the materials was increasing students' sense of competence. This is achieved mainly by creating suitably challenging tasks corresponding the students' skill level (Ryan & Deci 2017). However, the tasks students encounter throughout the experience should increase in difficulty as they gain more experience with the game-system, in order to maintain engagement (Justin & Joy 2024). The students begin the game in a same room, represented by the library room card. The library functions as a tutorial for the students, where each central mechanic is introduced. The library contains only one character card, six clue cards, four puzzles and one exit out of the room. The character card, inspector, was designed to respond to every clue and evidence students find in the library. This helps students understand how the interview action functions. The puzzles also provide additional challenge to the students. By completing a puzzle, students gain an important piece of evidence they might need in solving the mystery. The library's purpose is to allow students to get accustomed to the game-mechanics in a simple environment, thus creating initial engagement to the experience. Because the students have the freedom to progress in the game in any way they deem best, creating a linear ramp in difficulty was challenging. Instead of creating more challenging individual tasks, solving the central mystery becomes more challenging. After exiting the library, students are introduced to more characters, more rooms and more conflicting clues and evidence. Here the challenge comes from choosing the relevant evidence and creating a sound argument based on that evidence.

### 5.1.2 Narrative and aesthetics

As Nicholson (2018) encourages, escape room experiences should immerse students into a fictional setting. Not only does a framing narrative provide students with a central goal, but they also become more emotionally invested in the learning experience. Therefore, considerable care was placed on creating a complex narrative for students to unravel throughout the five lessons.

The choice of narrative should align with the lessons' intended learning goals (Aerila & Kauppinen 2019). The main aim of the material package is to encourage students towards pleasurable reading and improve their literature reading skills. Therefore, the narrative was designed to mimic prose fiction students might be interested in. Even when interacting with the game narrative, the students are actively reading and conducting literary analysis in the same way they would with a short story or a novel. However, instead of reading a linear narrative, students are tasked in reconstructing the story through separate clues and evidence.

The initial design choice was to base the escape room around a specific book or a story. However, the choice to write a completely original narrative allowed more control over how the materials could be designed. Because young readers tend to gravitate towards fantasy, murder mystery, horror and sci-fi literature, the choice for the theme was easy to make (Hanifi et al. 2021, 135; Lähteelä et al. 2019, 44). The escape room is themed around a murder mystery, highly influenced by gothic horror and fantasy fiction. In addition to being within students general interests, murder mysteries work as a great narrative frame, as they have a clear central goal students have to achieve – catching a murderer. As mentioned in section 3.1.1, clear central goals in gamified experiences help students become more attached and engaged in the learning experience (Dickey 2005; Rueckert et al. 2020). The central mystery is emphasized with a special “victim card”, which provides students context for the story and clear goals for the five lessons. Narrativization was incorporated into all aspects of the gamified experience. Students inhabit the roles of detectives and instead of reading tasks, students complete case files. Inspiration for the narrative was drawn from Edgar Allan Poe's *The Fall of House of Usher*, Agatha Christie's *Lord Edgeware Dies*, Gaston Leroux's *The Phantom of the Opera* and H.P. Lovecraft's *The Case of Charles Dexter Ward* and *Shadow Over Innsmouth*.

Considerable care was also placed on the visual aesthetics of the gamified materials. Focus on the visual elements of the materials have a dual purpose. First, they help the students

immerse themselves into the game world, which results in greater engagement with learning (Manzano-León et al. 2021). Secondly, using visual aids in conjunction with reading materials can help students better comprehend their readings (Majidi 2016; Huang 2019). All of the aesthetic elements are designed and hand drawn by the author of the package. The images on the room cards were also made by the author using the *Blender* 3D-modeling software. Similarly to the narrative, choosing to design every visual element by hand allowed more control over the project. More importantly, the visual elements are all unified by the same art style, thus increasing students' immersion to the game-world. Creating all of the visual aspects in black and white also provides a practical advantage for teachers. Because the materials are designed to be printed, opting to create every element in black and white reduces the amount of ink needed for the materials.

### 5.1.3 Playtest

The functionality of the gamified materials was tested on 22<sup>nd</sup> of March, 2024. The testers were a group of five students from the University of Jyväskylä majoring in English. During the playtest, I took the role of a game-master and observer. While administering the materials and providing guidance, I took also notes on the participants' behavior and comments throughout the playtest. Due to the limitations of this thesis, a larger scale playtest was not possible. The test was mainly conducted in order to see if there were any logical errors, incomprehensible clues or evidence in the gamified materials. Additionally, the test aimed to gauge how much time the gamified materials might take in practical use. The reading related tasks (case files) were not tested during this session, in order to save time. Instead of gaining points from the reading tasks, the points were administered to the testers by me.

Before performing the test, all necessary gamified materials were printed out on paper. The preparation of the materials took an estimated time of one hour. This included printing and cutting out the individual pieces. If the game pieces were to be reinforced, for example by laminating them, the preparation process could take even longer. The materials require considerable preparation time, which the teacher has to consider before using the present materials. However, once the materials have been prepared, they can be easily reused for future use. Storing the individual pieces into separate containers is recommended to keep the different game-pieces organized.

The test began with a brief introduction to the setting and the aims of the materials. The participants were told their main aim was to solve a mystery, by collecting clues, evidence

and interview answers from suspects. The point system was also introduced to the participants. Overall, the initial setup alongside the introduction to the game rules took approximately 10 minutes. After the introduction, the participants were given free choice to interact with the game materials.

Initially, the participants seemed overwhelmed by the various options they could take. The participants took considerable amount of time in pondering and negotiating their initial actions in the gamified system. This is reflective of Nicholson's (2014, 9-10) notions of too many choices leading to player anxiety. To alleviate the participants' initial struggles with the materials, additional guidance and hints were provided for the participants, in order for them to engage them with the gamified system. For example, participants were given more information about what types of rewards each action provides for the players. In practice, teachers should provide the students with constant guidance and feedback while interacting with the gamified materials. The teacher is also highly recommended to constantly monitor student progress and provide assistance when needed. If the players are hesitant in making a decision, the teacher is recommended to encourage students to make one of the decisions.

Once the participants were rewarded with their initial clues, evidence and interview answers, communicative aspects of escape rooms became immediately evident. The participants' behavior was highly reflective of the findings reported by Zhang et al. (2018). After gaining more experience with the gamified system, the participants began to delegate roles for each other. For example, one participant read the materials out loud for the other players, one made executive decisions on how the points were allocated and one was responsible for solving the more complicated puzzles. Moreover, the participants eagerly discussed their interpretations and theories with each other. Each new clue, evidence and interview answer the participants gained, resulted in intensive theorizing and meaning making with others. All throughout the social interactions, participants constantly reread the texts they encountered throughout the game. In other words, the present gamified materials actively engage players to interact with readings in a social context, where interpretations and theories are negotiated with others.

The various modes of interaction with the materials were not equally popular among the participants. Out of all the interactions, the participants spent the most amount of actions interrogating suspects. The participants were interested in comparing the different answers each of the suspect characters provided them. In addition, the mention of the suspects being untrustworthy engaged the participants to create theories on which of the characters actually

told the truth. Instead of simply trusting every character, the participants had to substantiate their narratives with further clues and evidence. Clues and puzzles were interacted with mainly when the participants encountered a dead-end with the interview answers. The puzzles received very limited amounts of interaction from the participants. Because only single copies of the puzzles were printed out, the participants commented on finding the completion of puzzles slightly frustrating. Only one participant at a time was able to read the rules and contents of each puzzle. This led to the other group members becoming more passive towards the puzzles and only one of the participants taking main responsibility in deciphering the puzzles. In order to counteract this, teachers are recommended to print out multiple copies of the puzzle pieces. This allows multiple group members to read and make interpretations of the puzzles at the same time. Additionally, the puzzles were deemed challenging, which led to the participants to prefer the easier methods of gaining clues and evidence.

As the test progressed, the participants uncovered more information about the game narrative. The complexity of the narrative was commented to be somewhat overwhelming. The players are required to build a coherent narrative from various separate pieces of evidence. The amount of content participants were required to manage and understand was commented on being taxing. The narrative complexity could also have led to some of the participants being more passive throughout the playtest. However, by providing guiding questions and pointing them towards relevant information, the participants were able to focus more concentratedly on the relevant information. Therefore, when using the materials, the teacher has to have a very active role in assisting students who might struggle with the materials. In order to combat passivity, the teacher has to actively monitor student progress and ask challenging questions about their progress. Much like with literature related tasks, the teacher should provide students with space to decipher their readings, while simultaneously providing them with further questions and alternative interpretations as a co-reader (Cremin & Swann 2016; Kucirkova & Cremin 2018; Sun 2023a; Sun 2022).

After approximately two hours of interacting with the gamified materials, the participants were able to successfully solve the central mystery. The participants mentioned wanting to solve the mystery with their available evidence, even though they had only collected a fraction of the available clues, evidence and interview answers. The design worked as intended, as students are not required to collect every piece of evidence to solve the mystery. A quick debriefing followed the playtest. The participants' thoughts and feelings towards the experience were inquired. The participants mentioned the experience being a fun and an

enjoyable experience. However, the present playtest is still inconclusive in gauging how effective the present materials are in practice with the intended audience. The materials were tested only on a small group of participants. Additionally, all of the participants were university level students majoring in English. The choice of participants does not reflect the intended audience of 9<sup>th</sup> grade students. Despite these concerns, based on the playtest, the gamified experience succeeds in engaging players into reading, textual analysis and cooperation with others. More importantly, the design of the gamified materials functions as intended.

## **5.2 Reading recommendations**

Before exploring the reading related tasks, introduction to the chosen readings has to be made. When choosing the texts for the material package, a few considerations have to be taken into account. Firstly, how the materials will be chosen can significantly affect how students attach themselves to the materials. According to the literature, allowing the students themselves to choose their own readings yields good results in helping the students to be motivated towards reading (Bahmani & Farvadin 2017, Cremin & Swann 2016, Luukka 2019, Lähteelä et al. 2019). However, as Sun (2022, 5-6) points out, many students often do not know what books to choose or where to find literature that interests them. Instead of placing the burden of choosing the texts solely on the student, the material package includes a reading recommendation list. A significant benefit of a separate reading list is its flexibility. Teachers are able to add in and/ remove materials as they see fit. The recommendations in the material package are only suggestions for potential texts and the teacher should consider editing it for their student group's individual needs. Additionally, students are encouraged to bring in their own materials if they want.

When constructing a reading recommendation list, differing student competences have to be considered. For example, the complexity of the language has to be taken into an account when choosing the materials. As noted by Hu and Nation (2002) and Kremmel et al. (2023), the lack of linguistic competence can completely prevent the reader from comprehending the text. Therefore, careful consideration has to be taken towards the linguistic complexity of the texts chosen for the material package. In a study conducted by Too (2006), out of 61 17 to 19-year-old Malaysian students, 52 mentioned finding young adult novels (YA-novels) enjoyable to read. The participants of the study especially highlighted the comprehensible



language used in YA-novels as a significant contributor to their enjoyment. Moreover, as mentioned by Sun (2022, 19), approachable language of YA-novels, in tandem with teacher scaffolding, can help students gain a deeper understanding of the text's contents and cultural aspects.

It is also worth noting the affective and cultural elements of the chosen texts. As Brumfit (1981, 244) mentions, in addition to the linguistic elements of the text, the cultural elements can also hinder the comprehension of a text. The reader can be left confused by the intentional breaking of literary conventions or unfamiliar cultural aspects of the text (Brumfit 1981, 244). The cultural contents have to be familiar and relatable enough for the students to engage with. Sun (2022, 19), mentions that relatable cultural aspects of texts can encourage students to sustain their reading for longer periods of time.

As with the linguistic aspects of literature, YA-novels encourage students to consider themes that are easily relatable to their own lives. In Too's (2006, 47-48) study, in addition to comprehensible language, 41 of the participants mentioned the relatable themes being a significant factor contributing to their enjoyment of YA-novels. Additionally, many of the participants mentioned enjoying YA-novels due to the young main characters being relatable. Comparable findings were made Fazzi's (2023, 260-261) questionnaire study on 115 Austrian, Hungarian and Italian students, where the participants mentioned finding novels with relatable characters and themes as interesting. Additionally, the handling of challenging and taboo subject matter in YA-novels helps students to reflect on their own identities and cultural conceptions (Fazzi 2023, 260).

The length of the chosen texts has to be considered as well. As noted by Luukka (2023), literature is often left out of foreign language teaching due to time limitations both on the teachers' and the students' part. Furthermore, teachers can be apprehensive in demanding students to read as homework, due to the already extensive workload students endure (Luukka 2023, 23-25). Therefore, the materials have to be short enough that they can be easily utilized during the lessons and outside of them. Additionally, the time constraints of the five lessons, do not encourage extensive readings of long novels. Excerpts of novels will not be used either, as they lack the meaningful context and completeness of other literary works. Instead, short stories will be preferred, as they represent the authors complete vision, without simplifying or erasing surrounding context. For this material package, reading materials are limited to only 15 to 25 pages.

The texts have to be simple linguistically and affective for the students to be motivated to read them. The length of the texts also has to be concise to be easily used in the classroom setting. As highlighted by Too (2006, 47-48) YA-novels tend to be both linguistically approachable and emotionally affective for young students. The texts have to be relatable to young readers and make them encounter challenging or taboo subjects (Fazzi 2023, 260). Additionally, when inspecting students reading interests, young students tend to prefer fantasy, sci-fi, murder mystery and horror books (Hanifi et al. 2021, 135; Lähteelä et al. 2019, 44). Therefore, in order to best appeal to students' sensibilities and teachers' time constraints, fantasy, horror, sci-fi and murder mystery short stories will be chosen for the reading list. Each story chosen for the list is 15-25 pages long, deal with challenging topics (social ostracization, relationship towards technology, growing up, unselfishness, etc.) and contain relatively easy language. Some of the reading recommendations cannot be categorized as young-adult stories, but their themes and subject matter could appeal to the age demographic. Teachers using this material package are highly recommended to edit the reading list to suit their preferences.

### **5.3 Case files**

One of the central aims of the material package is to increase students' intrinsic motivation towards reading fiction literature. Thus, emphasizing reading and literary analysis during lessons was a main priority when designing the lesson structures and gamified elements. In order to further increase immersion in the gamified narrative, the reading tasks are called *case files*. As explained in section 4.1.1, the reading tasks provide students with points they can use to progress in the game environment. Learning goals and principles were mainly taken from extensive reading, which aims to increase students' pleasure in reading (Bamford & Day 2002; Jacobs & Farrel 2010). Similarly to the gamified materials, the design of the reading materials also followed the basic principles of increasing intrinsic motivation mentioned by Ryan and Deci (2017), in their self-determination theory. The present section specifies how the reading tasks were created.

The material package is divided into five lessons, each with a specific theme tied to literature. The themes include characters, setting, plot, narrative mode and themes. Every lesson contains five case files unique to that lesson's topic. One of each lessons' tasks is tied specifically to the gamified materials. This serves to work both as an introduction to the

topic, and as an opportunity for students to reflect on the similarities present in the gamified materials and their readings. This ties to one aspect of Nicholson's (2014) RECIPE for meaningful gamification; reflection. The tasks also contain one reading task. Because the reading materials are based on extensive reading, encouraging students to read during the lessons is prioritized (Bamford & Day 2002). Furthermore, by incorporating the reading into the lessons, students are not expected to do their reading on their spare time, where they might have limited time to do so (Lähteelä et al 2019). However, if needed, the reading can be done outside of the classroom, by simply adjusting the case files. The final three tasks are literature analysis tasks, which encourage students to articulate their interpretations of their chosen text, through creative means. For example, students draw, write and/or perform their own conceptions of the readings. By allowing varied methods of expression, students are able to choose the ways of learning that suit them the best (Aerila & Kauppinen 2019). Due to the time constraints of the lessons, students are not expected to finish every task available to them. Instead, they will most likely have time to focus on only a few during a single lesson.

Much like in the gamified materials, providing autonomous choice for students was a top priority in designing the materials. Instead of a strict lesson plan that moves from one task to the next, students can instead choose from a pool of available reading tasks. This was done to increase students' feeling of autonomy and to create a less hierarchical reading environment. Instead of the teacher dictating how the readings should be approached, students have more agency in the ways they wish to interact with the texts. A more relaxed reading environment could encourage students to more openly share their interpretations of a text (Cremin & Swann 2016). Allowing students to choose from the materials, they are able to choose the methods they deem best for them.

Engagement is not only fostered with autonomous choice, but through an increasing level of challenge for the students. The themes begin with concrete topics such as characters, setting and plot. In order to appeal to students' sense of competence, tasks should be initially easier for the students (Ryan & Deci 2017). By having the initial lessons draw students' attention towards less abstract aspects of a narrative, students are expected to become more attached to their readings. After the first three lessons, the topics become more abstract, by focusing on narrative point of view and themes. Similarly to gamified experiences, by increasing the complexity of the tasks as the lessons progress, intrinsic motivation and a sense of mastery should be heightened (Justin & Joy 2024). It is especially important for the teacher to provide assistance and guidance for students, during the final lessons. However, the teacher should

also allow the students enough space for their own personal interpretations of a text (Sun 2022).

In addition to increasing a sense of autonomy and competence, the case files were designed to increase student communication and team work skills. Similarly to the gamified tasks, the case files are primarily designed for group work. However, with adjustments from the teacher, the case files could be used with smaller class sizes as well. According to prior research, students find pleasure in sharing their own interpretations of a text with others (Sun 2022; Fazzi 2023). The case files allow students to discuss and argue their own interpretations with their peers. This can help students see varied outlooks on the texts they are currently engaged in (Sun 2023a). Students are encouraged to compare and contrast differing outlooks on literature. Students with lower proficiency can also be assisted by the other members in the group. Moreover, by allowing students to choose which tasks they wish to complete, the groups have to discuss and examine what the members in their group prefer. Students are made to reason and form reasoned arguments with others, as they engage with the case files.

As this chapter has highlighted, the case files designed for this material package aimed to increase intrinsic motivation, by appealing to three motivational needs: autonomy, competence and relatedness. However, the case files presented here should not be seen as the definitive tasks students should engage in. Instead, teachers are encouraged to edit, remove and/or add in their own case files. For example, if the estimated times the tasks should take are too low or too high, teachers can simply edit these to suit their preferences. Because the gamified materials are separate from the case files, altering the case files independently is quite easy for teachers. This allows for great flexibility with how the present material package could be used in EFL education.

## **5.4 Assessment**

The assessment of the lessons is mainly based on the learning goals highlighted in the NCC. The assessment criteria for English teaching in the NCC is primarily based on the Common European Framework of Reference for Language skills (CEFR). For a student to get a grade of 8 (good) in English, the student has to be at B1.1 language proficiency level (POPS 2014, 350). Additionally, as the materials are designed for an interdisciplinary learning module,

assessment criteria will be taken from both first language literature teaching and English language teaching. This makes the assessment more robust in regards to the literary analysis related aspects of the materials.

Student assessment when using the material package can be challenging, as the materials aim to increase students' attachment towards literature. It is impossible for the teacher to evaluate the level of attachment, or interest students have towards literature. Furthermore, assessment of students' literary preferences could be counterintuitive towards the aims of the material package. Instead of encouraging reading through intrinsic factors, overly focusing on grading in this aspect could lead the students to be more extrinsically motivated towards reading. Instead, assessment should focus on other aspects of the materials, such as student participation, reading comprehension and meta-learning skills.

A large portion of the lesson interactions revolve around the students' active participation with the gamified materials, case-files and other group work. The students are encouraged to actively participate in verbal communication with other students, based on their readings. Therefore, how student participation has a significant impact on assessment (40%). Student participation can be assessed by utilizing the learning goals highlighted in the NCC, and the assessment criteria in CEFR. In the NCC, the learning goals for English learning are separated into 10 goals (POPS 2014, 349). When assessing student's communicative skills, learning goals T7-T8, should be focused on. According to these goals, students should be able to share information briefly, clearly and politely. Assessment in first language learning also prioritizes flexible communicative skills, with learning goals T1-T4 (POPS 2014, 165).

The second significant aspect of assessment is reading comprehension (40%). According to CEFR, at B1.1 students should be able to comprehend simple, few pages long texts, which relate to their interests (Finnish National Agency for Education n.d. -a). According to learning T9, in the NCC, students should be able to recognize the basic plot elements and words from a text, without any preparation (POPS 2014, 352). Students should also be able to talk and write about topics within their interests, according to the learning goal T10 (POPS 2014, 352). In relation to the materials, students should be able to report and discuss on short literary texts, which interest them. According to the first language learning goals T5-T8, students should be able to understand a variety of different text types, recognize textual features and share their interpretations of age-appropriate texts (POPS 2014, 165). Literature learning goals also overlap with communicative goals in T13-T15, where students are

expected to share their findings on their readings clearly, while referring back to their readings.

Finally, assessment should focus on the students' meta-learning skills (20%). For example, the students' skill to independently search for resources (vocabularies, grammar guides, background information), which help them understand their readings contribute positively to both their enjoyment in reading and lifelong language learning. According to the English learning goal T6, students should be able to analyze their language learning skills and search for resources, which could help their language learning.

## **6 LIMITATIONS OF THE MATERIAL PACKAGE**

While the material package expanded in scope, many previously planned elements had to be left out. One important aspect not emphasized in the material package is reflection. According to Nicholson (2014), reflection helps students attach their experiences in the gamified experience to the real world. Originally, the aim was to allow students to journal their ideas after each lesson. Reflection is now mainly done by having the students compare the gamified materials to their chosen stories by interacting with the case files. For future improvements, adding in more ways for students to connect the gamified experience to their readings could be beneficial in helping students perceive the insight they gain by engaging with the game materials.

Another limitation to the materials is a lack of scaffolding. As the material package's central goal was to increase students' intrinsic motivation towards reading, little attention was paid to providing explicit language learning related tasks. Also, as the scope of the materials grew larger, the inclusion of scaffolding materials was left out for the sake of time constraints. The main modes of scaffolding are short explanations given to the more difficult aspects of literature, at the beginning of the case files. Due to the complexity of the language present in the game materials, including additional scaffolding materials and/or tasks could greatly benefit in increasing less proficient students' enjoyment in reading. Scaffolding tasks could potentially be included by altering the case files to have more explicit language teaching tasks. Providing guidance for students on how to independently search for unknown words in a dictionary could also help students with their readings.

Gamification requires intensive amounts of planning and design work, which teachers often do not have (Luukka 2023). Instead of the aforementioned elements, emphasis was mainly placed on the aspects often neglected in educational gamification: complexity of game-mechanics and a strong supporting narrative. Focus was also placed in creating a flexible, easily editable material package. Therefore, the present material package should be seen as a starting point for teachers who want to incorporate more robust literature education and gamification into their teaching.



## 7 CONCLUSION

EFL teaching materials often neglect the use of fiction literature, in preference for a more language oriented approach. This is understandable, as the NCC emphasizes language acquisition, over explicit literature teaching in EFL education (POPS 2014). Instead, literature teaching has been mainly relegated to first language learning (POPS 2014). Additionally, EFL teachers often report a lack of time and/or skill on how to use literature in teaching (Luukka 2023). However, increased reading rates and more intrinsically motivated attitude towards reading can contribute greatly to lifelong language learning (Bergen et al. 2018; Leino et al. 2017). Therefore, an increased focus should be placed on creating engaging and intrinsically motivating teaching materials. This material package aimed to address this lack of literature teaching materials in EFL classrooms. The main aims for the present material package were to increase 9<sup>th</sup> grade EFL students' intrinsic motivation towards reading, provide students with new ways of understanding literature and to provide teachers with easy to use and modifiable materials for their teaching.

Because the materials were centered around increasing student intrinsic motivation towards reading, Ryan and Deci's (2017) *self-determination* theory functioned as a base framework for the material package. Therefore, an important goal for the materials and activities was to appeal to three core motivational needs: autonomy, relatedness and competence. In order to achieve these goals, a choice to blend *extensive reading* methods with *meaningful gamification* was made. Extensive reading methods focused the materials on allowing students to independently choose their readings and share their interpretations with others, with the intention of shifting the focus of teaching explicitly towards increasing students' enjoyment in reading. Meaningful gamification allowed the materials to enhance students'

attachment towards learning, by creating a central, goal-oriented narrative students have to solve. Providing students with varied modes of interaction with the reading tasks and gamified materials was also a central concern.

Unfortunately, the materials have not been field tested with the target group. The limitations of the thesis only allowed for a playtest of the gamified materials, with university level students. It is imperative for the teachers choosing to use the materials, to edit and tailor them to their student groups' individual needs. One of the significant benefits of this material package is its flexibility and easy modifiability. Teachers are able to easily add in more reading related tasks by altering the case files. The length of the experience can be modified by changing the amount of points students receive from the case files. The gamified materials can also be adapted to other uses as well. Simply changing the case files, the materials can easily gamify more traditional language teaching tasks, such as vocabulary and grammar teaching as well. For teachers interested in incorporating more literature teaching or gamification, the present material package introduces an easily adaptable and usable option. For future research, more robust field testing of the materials could be beneficial in gauging how effective the materials are in increasing student motivation towards reading.

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## APPENDIX

MURDER IN THE  
**BLACKBERG  
MANOR**

**Gamified literature teaching material package for 9th grade EFL  
students**

Designed, illustrated and written

by

Valtter Kolehmainen

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## 1 Introduction

### Aims of the material package

The present package aims to provide teachers with tools and guidance on how to introduce literature teaching into EFL education. The package aims to increase voluntary pleasurable reading experiences through gamification and storification. Through collaborative reading students will also improve their group communication, language and literary analysis skills. Furthermore, students' critical thinking, analytic and reading comprehension skills are challenged by the gamified elements. Students are tasked in arguing their opinions, by referring to evidence within their readings. The central goal is to make reading a fun and rewarding activity. Simultaneously, students immerse themselves in the target language, and improve their language skills through reading and social interaction.

### Target audience

The present material package is primarily designed for 9<sup>th</sup> grade students, as an interdisciplinary learning module (*monialainen oppimiskokonaisuus*). The package aims to bridge the gap between literature teaching, provided in first language teaching, and foreign language learning.

Due to the demanding nature of the materials, the package could be easily adapted for upper secondary school's English module ENA3. Many of the package's goals are reflected in the learning goals of ENA3 module.

### Why use these materials?

This material package provides teachers with a robust and holistic gamified framework for language learning. The gamified elements are designed primarily to encourage students' sense of autonomy, relatedness and competence, in accordance with Ryan & Deci's (2017) self-determination

theory. Students are free to choose which tasks and readings they want to partake in (with certain limitations). Furthermore, the gamified elements create a deep sense of student agency in the classroom, as students make meaningful choices within the escape room narrative. The progression within the gamified narrative, builds motivation and attachment towards learning and reading.

### How to use the material package?

The material package consists of two parts; the **gamified murder mystery escape room** and the **literature reading tasks**. Both elements can be altered freely to suit students' individual needs. For example, further reading tasks can be easily incorporated, without having to alter the contents of the gamified elements.

Further instructions for the teacher on how to use each material and game piece are highlighted with a yellow background and can be found prior to each material. Guides for students are highlighted with blue backgrounds. Detailed instruction on the individual lessons can be found in section 2 *Lessons*. Information on assessment can be found in section 2.4 *Assessment*. Robust guides on how to operate the gamified materials can be found in section 3 *Escape room rules*. The rules also highlight which materials have to be printed out for the students. Reading the escape room rules is recommended before interacting with other parts of the materials.

## 2 Lessons

### 2.1 Case files

#### Teacher guide: Case files

Case files are reading exercises, which aim to increase students' involvement towards literature reading. By completing case files, students gain brain power (points) they can use to perform actions in the game (further information in section 4.1 *Room cards*). At the beginning of each lesson, the teacher provides each student/student group a sheet with every case file tied to that lesson. Each lesson has new case files for the students to complete. The case files are themed around five central aspects of literature (characters, setting, plot, narration and themes). Case files for each of the lessons can be found after each lesson plan.

Case files can be administered to students in two ways; either by allowing the students to choose which cases they want to tackle or by having the tasks be done in sequence. It is up to the teacher to decide which method works best for their students. In both instances, **CASE #1: Humble beginnings**, is mandatory for all students to complete! The game cannot progress without the completion of this case file.

Case files are not directly tied to the events in the game. Therefore, the teacher is more freely able to add or remove tasks as they please. For example, teacher can freely add case files not strictly tied to literature or reading. This allows the teacher to easily gamify any topic or task by altering the case files.

## 2.2 Lesson plans

### 2.2.1 Lesson 1: Characters

#### Lesson 1: Characters (75min)

Aim of the first lesson is to introduce the students to the rules and world of the game-system. Furthermore, the first lesson aims to introduce students to their chosen readings and get them to consider how characters are defined and built in literary works.

#### Learning goals:

- Introducing the contents of next 5 lessons
- Introducing students to the gamified materials
- Students will learn about how characters are described and used in literary works.

#### Task 1: Introducing the escape room/setting up (10min)

The teacher introduces students to the game, by showcasing the rules presentation slide. Alternatively, the teacher can hand out the game rules as a print out (section 3.2 *Student guide*).

While explaining, the teacher also sets up the initial game scene (information on setting up in section 3.1 *Teacher guide* and 4.1 *Room cards*). While setting the game, the teacher can introduce students to the basic game pieces the escape room consists of. After setting up, the teacher introduces the students to the case files sheets (printed out for each group). The teacher hands out the first lesson's case files for each group.

#### Task 2: Forming detective agencies (10min)

After setting up, direct students' attention to the first case file in the case files sheet.

Once the students have finished the task, the teacher provides the students

with the corresponding reward indicated in the case file (*2x brain power*). The amount of brain power students have can be indicated with dice, pebbles or other small objects.

**Task 3: Interacting with the game (55min)**

The students begin interacting with the game, by freely using the brain power they gained from completing the first case. When students run out of resources, they complete more case files. NOTE: some of the cases require the students to complete other cases first.

## CASE FILES

### LESSON 1: CHARACTERS

#### **CASE #1: Humble beginnings** (10min) - Reward: 5x Brain power

- 1) Form a group of 3-5.
- 2) Come up with a name for your detective agency
- 3) Among your group members, choose one story you want to read first.  
The story can be from the list provided by the teacher, or something you know yourself.

#### **CASE #2: Background research** (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power

- 1) Read 5 pages of the story your group chose.
- 2) While reading take notes on the characters you encounter. What are they like? What do they look like? What do they do/say?
- 3) If you have finished reading, while others in your group haven't, write down more notes on your findings!
- 4) After finishing your reading, quickly share your findings with your group. How do your findings differ from each other?
- 5) When finished, inform your teacher and they will give you an award.

#### **CASE #2: New faces** (15min) - Reward: 5x Brain power

- 1) Choose one of the character cards.
- 2) Interact with your chosen character, by interviewing them twice.
- 3) Discuss with your group:
  - What is your chosen character like? What do you learn about them?
  - How does character make you feel? Do you like them or not? Do you trust what they say? Explain why?
- 3) Write down 3 words about your character. Use a dictionary if needed.
- 4) Present your notes to the teacher. Keep your notes for future use!

**CASE #3: Sketching the suspects (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #2 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Each member of your group chooses one character from the story.
- 3) One at a time, begin drawing your chosen character. The others try to guess which character is being drawn. When you guess correctly, next one in your group begins to draw. Repeat the process until everyone has drawn a character/you run out of characters.
- 4) Present your drawings to the teacher.

**CASE #4: Cross referencing suspects (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #2 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Each member in your group chooses one character from the text.  
Group members can pick the same character.
- 3) Each member begins to create their own character by writing. Your character should be the **opposite of the character you chose**. Think of the following when writing about your character:
  - What do they look like? What do they do? What are they like?
  - Who do they interact with?
- 4) If you have time, you can also draw your character.
- 5) Present your creations to the teacher.



**CASE #5: Social media posts(20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #2 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Choose 2-4 characters from your chosen story.
- 3) Go to zeob.com (<https://zeob.com/>) or another website where you can create fake social media posts.
- 4) Choose one of the social media post generators.
- 5) Create a social media post/profile for your chosen characters, based on your readings. Create separate posts/profiles for your characters.  
Consider the following when creating the post/profile:
  - What does your character look like? Choose a profile picture by googling or draw a picture yourself.
  - What is your character posting about? Where are they? What are they doing?
- 6) What is your character like? What would he like? How do they speak?
- 7) Add comments to your posts/profiles from other characters in the story. Consider the following:
  - Which characters would be likely to interact with each other?
  - What would the characters say to each other? Why?
  - How kinds of things would the characters say to each other?
  - Save your posts/profiles. Present your creation to the teacher.

### 2.2.2 Lesson 2: Setting

#### **Lesson 2: Setting (75min)**

During the second lesson, students will further engross themselves into their chosen literature and the game-world. During this lesson, students will focus on how settings in literature are described and how they affect the reader. Atmosphere and mood are also discussed during the lesson.

#### **Main objectives:**

- Students recognize how are settings described and how they create atmosphere in literature.
- Students are able to recognize words, which build and visualize the story's setting.

#### **Task 1: Resetting the board (5min)**

Reset the board by placing all of the game pieces students have gained on the table. Administer the new case files to students. While resetting the board, you can briefly introduce the lesson's topic for students.

#### **Task 3: Interacting with the game (70min)**

The students continue interacting with the game, by freely using the resources they have. When students run out of resources, they complete more case files. NOTE: some of the cases require the students to complete other cases first.

## CASE FILES

### LESSON 2: SETTING

Setting is where the story takes place. For example, settings can be normal homes, alien spaceships or medieval kingdoms. A story can have multiple settings, depending on the scene. Settings also build **mood** by highlighting their features. A dark, old castle is a lot scarier than a warm cozy kitchen.

#### **CASE #6: Room inspection** (15min) - Reward: 5x Brain power

- 1) Choose one of the room cards. Read the room's description.
- 2) Quickly discuss:
  - a) What is the room like? What can you see/hear/smell? How does the room make you feel?
- 3) Choose a dictionary to use. Each member in your group chooses one word at random from the dictionary.
- 4) Use the chosen words to continue the room's description. Write short sentences to expand how the room looks, smells and/or sounds. What time of day is it? How is the weather?
- 5) Present your sentences to your teacher.

#### **CASE #7: Background research** (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power

- 1) Read 5 pages of the story your group chose.
- 2) While reading take notes on your story's settings. What are they like? What do they look like? How do they make you feel (scared, happy, relaxed, something else)? Why?
- 3) If you have finished reading, while others in your group haven't, write down more notes on your findings!
- 4) After finishing your reading, quickly share your findings with your group. How do your findings differ from each other?
- 5) When finished, inform your teacher and they will give you an award.

**CASE #8: (30min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #7 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Choose one of the settings in your story. Preferably one, that is the most described.
- 3) Create an advertisement poster for your chosen setting. Write the following information on your poster:
  - a) Where is your chosen setting?
  - b) What can you do in your chosen setting? What can you see?
  - c) What is the place like?
  - d) Why would someone want to go that specific place?
  - e) Add a picture of your setting to the poster. You can google one, or if you have time, draw a picture.
- 1) Present your poster to the teacher.

**CASE #9: Searching for crime scenes (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) Go to a picture archive or google images. Good image archives include:
  - a) [Pexels](#)
  - b) [Pixabay](#)
  - c) [Wikimedia commons](#)
- 2) Search for 5 pictures, that remind you of the settings in your story. The pictures depict the concrete place your story is set in, or the mood the setting creates. Use words that relate to your story's setting (e.g. scary, rainy, dark, warm, light, house, room, castle, something else). Use a dictionary if needed.
- 3) Save your five pictures and attach them to a docs file. Write short explanations on how the images relate to your setting. You can use the search words in your sentences.
- 4) Show your pictures to the teacher.

**CASE #10: Recreating the crime scene(30min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #7 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*

1) Choose 1-3 settings in your story.

2) Quickly discuss:

a) What are the settings like? Where is the story set?

b) What can you feel, see, hear, touch and smell in your chosen settings?

3) Based on your brief discussion. Pantomime a still picture for each of your chosen settings. It is important you film a video of your performance. One of you operates the camera, while others create the still image by posing. For example, one of you can be a tree, a bench, a window or a horrible smell coming from the attic. Be creative!

4) While posing for the camera, create a soundscape that matches the mood of your setting,. For example, you can add in howling wind, creaking floorboards or the rustling of leaves. You can make the voices with your mouths.

5) One of you films the others perform one setting. When you are finished with one setting, switch camera operators and create a new still image for one setting.

6) Show your still images to the teacher. Explain your choices to the teacher.

**2.2.3 Lesson 3: Plot****Lesson 3: Plot (75min)**

The third lesson focuses on plot and narrative progression. Students will construct narrative connections and learn to condense stories into shorter form.

**Main objectives:**

- Students understand and are able to name the most important plot points in the story.
- Students are able to summarize and retell a story's plot.

**Task 1: Resetting the board (5min)**

Reset the board by placing all of the game pieces students have gained on the table. Administer the new case files to students. While resetting the board, you can briefly introduce the lesson's topic for students.

**Task 3: Interacting with the game (70min)**

The students continue interacting with the game, by freely using the resources they have. When students run out of resources, they complete more case files. NOTE: some of the cases require the students to complete other cases first.

## CASE FILES

### LESSON 3: PLOT

Plot refers to the sequence of events, that take place in the story. Stories begin with something happening. More events take place during the story, until it ends. All the events form the plot of the story. When summarizing a story's plot, think which events are the most important for the story. This can be more difficult than it seems at first!

#### **CASE #11: Constructing a narrative (15min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) Choose 3-5 clues/evidence/interview answers, you think connect/relate to each other in some way.
- 2) Discuss with your group how and why your chosen items relate to each other. Based on your items, write a short sequence of events. For example: A knife has gone missing in the kitchen. The Lord has been stabbed with a knife. Someone has stabbed the Lord with the missing knife.
- 3) Present your narrative to the teacher.

#### **CASE #12: Background research (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) Read 5 pages of the story your group chose.
- 2) While reading take notes on your story's plot. What events have taken place in the story? Which events are important and which are less important? How did the story begin? What happened next? What is happening right now in the story?
- 3) If you have finished reading, while others in your group haven't, write down more notes on your findings!
- 4) After finishing your reading, quickly share your findings with your group. How do your findings differ from each other?
- 5) When finished, inform your teacher and they will give you an award.

**CASE #13: The sequence of events (30min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

2) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #12 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*

3) Draw four panels. Example below.

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4) In the four panels, create a comic adaptation of your chosen story. If you have not finished your story, draw based on what you have already read. Each group member can draw a single panel.

5) Think of the following:

- How does your story begin? How does it end?
- What happens in the middle? Can you cut something out? What are the most important events in the story?

6) Do not be afraid to leave something out! Your task is to convey the main idea of the story.

7) Present you comic to your teacher.

**CASE #14: What happen next? (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #12 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*

2) In your group, briefly discuss:

- a) If you have finished your chosen story, how would the story continue after the ending? What will happen next?
- b) If you have NOT finished your chosen story, imagine how your story will continue from this point? What will happen next?

3) Write a short text based on your discussion. Each member of your group can write one sentence for your story.

4) Present your text to the teacher.



**CASE #15: The film adaptation (30min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #12 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Film a short vide (max. 3min), adapting your chosen story. You can write a short script/plan before filming the video.
- 3) Your film should have the most important events in the story. If you have not finished your story, you can adapt what you have read so far.
- 4) Consider the following when creating your video:
  - a) How does your story begin? How does it end?
  - b) What happens in the middle? Can you cut something out? What are the most important events in the story?
- 5) Show your video to your teacher.

## 2.2.4 Lesson 4: Narrative mode

### Lesson 4: Narrative mode (75min)

The fourth lesson focuses on narrative mode, and mainly narrative point of view. Other aspects of narrative mode will not be taken into consideration here, due to time limitations.

#### Main objectives:

- Students are able to name different narrative points of view and their effect on the reader/story.
- Students recognize why different points of view might be used.

#### Task 1: Resetting the board (5min)

Reset the board by placing all of the game pieces students have gained on the table. Administer the new case files to students. While resetting the board, you can briefly introduce the lesson's topic for students.

#### Task 3: Interacting with the game (70min)

The students continue interacting with the game, by freely using the resources they have. When students run out of resources, they complete more case files. NOTE: some of the cases require the students to complete other cases first.

## CASE FILES

### LESSON 4: NARRATIVE MODE

The narrative point of view describes who is telling the story. The narrative can be told from first, second or third point of view. Easy way to identify the point of view is to see which pronouns are often used. For example, if the pronoun "I" is used, the story is told from a first person point of view.

**Narrator** is the one who is telling the story to the reader. The narrator can be a concrete character or an abstract all-knowing narrator.

#### **CASE #16: Different perspectives (10min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) Identify two narrative points of view in the materials (character cards, room cards, clue cards, evidence cards interview answers and/or puzzles).
- 2) Write down why you think these narrative points of views are used. What is their effect on you as a reader?
- 3) Present your thoughts to the teacher.

#### **CASE #17: Background research (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 6) Read 5 pages of the story your group chose.
- 7) While reading take notes on your story's point of view. What point of view is being used? Why do you think this point of view is used? Who is the narrator? What can the narrator see? What does the narrator know about the events of the story? Is there something they do not know?
- 8) If you have finished reading, while others in your group haven't, write down more notes on your findings!
- 9) After finishing your reading, quickly share your findings with your group. How do your findings differ from each other?
- 8) When finished, inform your teacher and they will give you an award.

**CASE #18: New points of view (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #17 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Choose one section of your story.
- 3) Identify, which narrative point of view is being used (1<sup>st</sup> person, 2<sup>nd</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup> person).
- 4) Rewrite your chosen section in another narrative point of view. Each member in your group can write a different part of the story. The parts have to form a cohesive whole.
- 5) For example, if the story is told in a 3<sup>rd</sup> person point of view, you can switch it to a 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view. You can also switch a 1<sup>st</sup> person point of view to another character's point of view.
- 6) Briefly discuss how the story changed. What was the effect of changing the narrative point of view? Did your narrator know more or less about the events?
- 7) Present your writings to the teacher.

**CASE #19: Through different eyes (30min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #17 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Each member in your group, chooses one moment/event in your chosen story.
- 3) Identify, which narrative point of view is being used (1<sup>st</sup> person, 2<sup>nd</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup> person).
- 4) What does the narrator see in your chosen moment? Draw what is being seen, from the narrator's perspective. You can also add speech/thought bubbles. Keep in mind that some narrators are not able to read minds.
- 5) Briefly discuss how your drawings differ from each other?
- 6) Present your drawings to the teacher.

**CASE #20: Comparing evidence (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #17 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) For this task, find another group who is also intending to complete this case. They should have a different story from your group.
- 3) In your own group, briefly list out what features your story's narration has. Write down the following:
  - a) What is your story about? Do not go into too much detail!
  - b) What narrative point of view (1<sup>st</sup> person, 2<sup>nd</sup> person, 3<sup>rd</sup> person) does your story have?
  - c) Who is your narrator? Are they a character or something else?
  - d) What does your narrator know? Can they read minds? Is there something they do not know? Why?
- 4) After writing your list, explain to the other group what the narration in your story is like. Discuss with the other group:
  - a) Do your stories have any differences or similarities?
  - b) Why do you think writers use different perspectives in their stories? Is it by accident?

### 2.2.5 Lesson 5: Themes

#### Lesson 5: Themes (75min)

During the final lesson, students are expected to finish their chosen stories and discuss the themes they find in their readings. Themes can be a challenging concept for students to understand at first. Thus, more guidance from the teacher can be of great benefit. Here, themes and lessons of literature are mainly explored by examining how the characters change and learn things throughout a story. This can help ground themes into something more concrete for students. The teacher should make the connection between lessons, messages and themes clear to students. When a student identifies something they have learned from the text, the teacher should highlight how that could be a potential theme in the story. The teacher should also actively ask the students challenging questions about the themes in their readings. In addition to discussing themes, the escape room experience is concluded during the final lesson.

#### **Main objectives:**

- Students are able to name a few themes in a literary work.
- Students recognize how literature can transfer messages and ideas through themes.

**Task 1: Resetting the board (5min)**

Reset the board by placing all of the game pieces students have gained on the table. Administer the new case files to students. While resetting the board, you can briefly introduce the lesson's topic for students.

**Task 3: Interacting with the game (60min)**

The students continue interacting with the game, by freely using the resources they have. When students run out of brain power, they complete more case files. NOTE: some of the cases require the students to complete other cases first.

**Task 4: Concluding the escape room (10min)**

The teacher concludes the escape room experience, by first asking the students to explain who the killer is, what their motive was and how the murderer did it. Students have to explain their reasoning by using evidence they have gathered. Students do not need to have all of the evidence to solve the crime.

The teacher can also ask additional questions about the narrative (e.g. what was the doctor experimenting on, what was the victim like, what can you tell about the curse, what can you tell about the will). After students have given their answers, the teacher can reveal the answers to the mystery's central questions. The teacher can read the real answers given in section **4.6 The story**.

## CASE FILES

### LESSON 5: THEMES

Themes are **the message, the writer aims to transfer to the reader** through a text. Themes can be, for example love, friendship, dangers of technology and/or vegetarianism. A theme can be as simple as “*do not trust strangers*”. A story can have more than one theme! Themes can be challenging to find, but by closely examining different aspects of a story (characters, setting, plot, etc.), themes can become clear to you. Think of what you learn/gain by reading the story. What does the story say about the real world?

#### **CASE #21: Intro (15min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) Choose one of the character cards.
- 2) Based on the available clues, evidence and interview answers, explain to your group members what the character was doing in the manor.
  - a) What was their reason for being there?
  - b) Did they kill the Lord? Why? Why not?
  - c) Did they do anything with the other characters?
  - d) Do you like the characters/do you find them trustworthy?
  - e) Can you learn something from the characters and/or how they act? Would you act like they act? Would you like to be like them? Why? Why not?**
- 3) Based on your discussion, think of what the author wants to convey to the reader through your chosen character. Should the reader be like the character or not? What is it the author wants the reader to be like? Do you agree with the author? Try to form themes (e.g. stealing is bad, being greedy leads to bad outcomes, ) based on your discussion.
- 4) On paper notes, write down at least three sentences summarizing your discussion. One of these has to be a theme.
- 5) Present the notes to your teacher.



**CASE #22: Background research (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) Read 5 pages of the story your group chose.
- 2) While reading take notes on your story's themes. How do the characters in your story change? Did they learn anything or not? What happens in the story? How do you relate to the events in the story? Would you like to do the things done in the story yourself? Why? Why not? What did you learn from the story?
- 3) If you have finished reading, while others in your group haven't, write down more notes on your findings!
- 4) After finishing your reading, quickly share your findings with your group. How do your findings differ from each other?
- 5) When finished, inform your teacher and they will give you an award.

**CASE #23: Timeline of events (20min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #22 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Choose a character, you think is the most important, from your story.
- 3) Draw a line on paper. At the beginning of the line, draw/write how your character was at the beginning of the story. At the end of the line, draw/write how they had changed at the end of the story. Consider the following: What did they do? What were they like? Did they change at all? Why?
- 4) Fill in your line with at least 2 events, you think changed the character the most during your story. Did another character do/say something to them? Who? Did something else happen to them? What?
- 5) Underneath your line, write down what you learned from the character. What do you think the author wanted to say, by writing the character like this? What theme does the character convey?
- 6) Present your creation to your teacher.

**CASE #24: Connecting the dots (30min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #22 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Take a A3 sheet of paper. Write down the most important events and characters from your story, onto the paper. Events can be something saying or happening to a character. Write at least 3 events and 3 characters. If there are less than 3 characters, add in more events.
- 3) After you have finished, connect characters and events, that relate to each other, with lines. Consider the following:
  - a) How do the events relate to the characters? How did the event change the character in your story?
  - b) How do the characters relate to each other? How do they change each other?
- 4) After connecting the characters and events, briefly discuss:
  - a) How did the characters change throughout your story? Did they change at all? Did something make the characters change or prevent them from changing? If the characters did not learn anything, what could they do differently to learn something?
  - b) What can you learn from the characters? Should you do what they did or avoid doing it? Why?
- 5) Write down what you think the writer wanted you to learn from the characters. This will be one of the themes of the novel.
- 6) Present your characters and events to the teacher.

**CASE #25: Arguing the case (30min) - Reward: 5x Brain power**

- 1) *YOU HAVE TO FINISH CASE #22 BEFORE CHOOSING THIS CASE!*
- 2) Briefly discuss what happened in your story. This will help you in finding a theme in your story:
  - a) What events took place?
  - b) Did the characters change/learn anything? Was the change good in your opinion?
  - c) What did you learn from the story? Did you relate with anything in particular? What does the author want to say in your opinion?
- 3) Identify at least two themes in your story. Write them down.
- 4) Separate into two groups. Divide the two themes among the groups.
- 5) Have a debate, which theme is more important. You will have to defend your chosen theme. Give examples from your story, when arguing your opinion.
- 6) Remember to listen to the other group and give everyone space to make their voice heard.
- 7) When you are finished, inform your teacher, which themes you found in your text.

## 2.3 Reading lists

### Teacher guide: Choosing texts

The present material package is centered around increasing students' reading for pleasure. A heavy emphasis is thus placed on reading literature during the lessons. The teacher is tasked in choosing appropriate reading materials for the students. For this material package, short stories (max. 20 pages) are preferred. A few texts are chosen as example recommendations, but the teacher should always choose texts that best suit their students' needs. Few tips are also given for teacher on how to choose good materials for students. To make the reading easier for students, dictionaries with context for expressions should be used. Example dictionaries:

- 1) [Sanakirja.org](http://Sanakirja.org)
- 2) [Redfox sanakirja ja kielioppi](#)
- 3) [Suomienglantisanakirja.fi](http://Suomienglantisanakirja.fi)

### Tips for choosing reading materials for students:

- 1) Listening to student interests. Students are often interested in fantasy, horror, sci-fi or murder mystery stories. These are good starting points, but individual interests can vary greatly. Take recommendations from your students.
- 2) Short story collections can be a great resource for classroom reading materials. Reading through shorter fictions can be less labor intensive for both teachers and students alike.
- 3) Students enjoy encountering and discussing taboo subject matter. Do not shy away from challenging topics.
- 4) Think of the language used in the text. How much assistance do the students need with vocabulary grammar before/during reading?

### Reading recommendations:

- 1) Ozioma the Wicked by Nnedi Okorafor
- 2) The Veld by Ray Bradbury
- 3) Study in Emerald by Neil Gaiman
- 4) The Griffin and the Minor Canon by Frank R. Stockton
- 5) The Faceless Things by Edward D. Hoch
- 6) The Flock of Geryon by Agatha Christie
- 7) The Black Cat by Edgar Allan Poe
- 8) Troll Bridge by Terry Pratchett

If you want to choose your own readings, keep the following points in mind:

- The readings have to be something everyone in your group enjoys/understands.
- The maximum length for the story is 25 pages. Minimum Length 15 pages.
- The readings have to be fiction literature. The tasks done during the lessons focus on fiction literature.
- Tell your teacher, which text you want to read. Quickly tell what the story is about and where your teacher can find the text.

Remember to use a dictionary to help you with your readings. Dictionary recommendations:

- 1) [Sanakirja.org](http://Sanakirja.org)
- 2) [Redfox.sanakirja.ja.kielioppi](http://Redfox.sanakirja.ja.kielioppi)
- 3) [Suomienglantisanakirja.fi](http://Suomienglantisanakirja.fi)

## 2.4 Assessment

### Teacher guide: Assessment

Assessment criteria are built around the Finnish national core curriculum and Common European Framework of Reference for Language skills (CEFR). Because the materials are designed for an interdisciplinary learning module, assessment criteria from first language literature learning will be blended with English language teaching assessment criteria. Below are criteria for getting grade 8 (good) in the learning module. The assessment criteria can be freely tailored to suit different groups/individuals. Further information on the assessment criteria can be found from the national core curriculum and CEFR-scale:

- 1) [Core curriculum](#)
- 2) [CEFR](#)

#### **Aims of the materials. Students should be able to:**

- read and understand literary texts within their interests. Students should be able to understand basic textual features of fiction literature (characters, setting, etc.)
- evaluate and choose materials appropriate for their language proficiency level.
- actively participate in verbal communication and meaning negotiation within their peer groups.
- search for additional information and resources in the target language.

**Student participation (40%):**

- Students are able to discuss and share interpretations of their readings.
- Students should openly share their opinions, while allowing space for other students.
- Students' communication should be understandable. The student should be able to transfer basic information about literary works both verbally and in writing.

**Reading comprehension (40%):**

- Students should be able to understand the basic plot points of literary texts.
- Students should be able to recognize and describe events, characters and settings in fictive texts on a basic level.
- Students should be able to relate their readings to the real world/their personal lives in some way.

**Meta-learning skills (20%):**

- Students should be able to utilize linguistic resources (dictionaries, grammar guides, background information)
- Students should be able to evaluate their own learning and set specific reading goals for themselves.

### 3 Escape room rules

#### 3.1 Teacher guide

##### Teacher guide: Game instructions

This section contains instructions on how to operate the gamified elements of the material package. Read this section carefully before utilizing any of the materials. After reading this section, reading the student guide is recommended. The student guide details all of the interactions students can make throughout the gamified experience. After this you are free to explore all of the individual game pieces. Each piece is preceded with additional information on how to use those materials. If any questions about any game piece should arise, it is recommended to consult the teacher guide preceding that specific game piece.

##### **Main goal:**

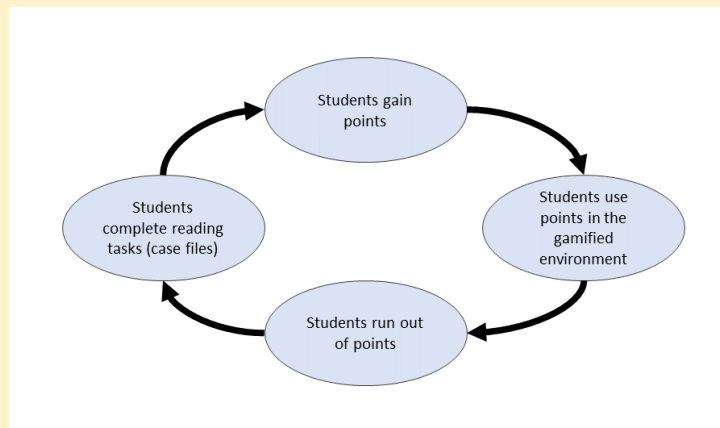
The students' main goal is to find out which character in the game has committed a murder. The students are required to answer three questions relating to the murder:

- 1) Who is the murderer?
- 2) How was the murder committed?
- 3) What was the motive?

Students will have to collect clues and evidence and interrogate characters in order to form a coherent narrative of events. When students get a clue, evidence or an interview answer, they keep it with themselves for the remainder of the lessons. This allows the students to reflect on how literary narratives are formed, what features they have and what their effect is on the reader.



The students are able to interact with the gamified materials by using points (brain power). Points are gained by completing the literature reading tasks (2.1 Case files & 2.2 Lesson plans). By using the points, students gain additional information about the murder mystery. The graph below details how the gameplay loop functions:



### Preparing the materials:

Each material has to be printed out for the students to use. Favorably, each piece should be printed on a separate piece of paper. **You should have most of the materials printed before using the gamified system in the classroom!** In order to reinforce the pieces for repeat use, glue them onto a piece of cardboard or laminate them. The following game pieces have to be printed out:

- Reading lists
- Room cards
- **Victim cards**
- **Character cards**
- **Interview sheets**
- **Interview answers**
- **Clue cards**
- **Evidence cards**

- **Puzzle pieces**

Page numbers for each game piece can be found in the table of contents. The **underlined** pieces written have to be cut into smaller pieces. Optionally, the puzzle pieces can be cut into separate smaller pieces to better help visualize the puzzle pieces. The pieces marked in **red** have to be copied for each student group. For example, for four student groups, four victim cards have to be printed out.

Alternatively, the materials could be placed on a Google Classroom/Peda.net page. Take care to hide all of the separate pieces from students before beginning the lessons. Other materials include:

- Pen and paper for note taking.
- Dice or other small objects, which indicate the amount of points (brain power) students have.


### **Setting up:**

The following sequence explains how the game materials are set up for each lesson:

#### ***1) Place the room, character and unrevealed clue cards on a table***

Place all of aforementioned materials on a table. If this is the first lesson, *only* place the library room card, the corresponding clue cards and the inspector character card onto the table. You can also give the students the student guide if they need it. Keep the other cards to yourself for now. It is important to not reveal the game pieces to students before they get them through interactions with the game. This increases students' sense of discovery and curiosity about the events of the experience. Below is a

picture of an example on how to setup the cards.

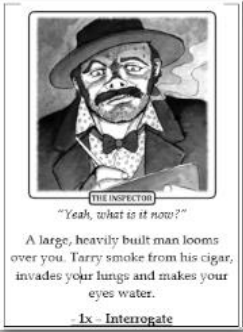


**1. THE LIBRARY**

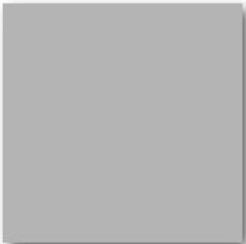
The smell of molding paper and dried ink is cut with the metallic scent of blood. Books and furniture are scattered on the floor. In front of his desk, sits the lifeless body of Lord Blackberg VII. (Take The Inspector character card; Take clue cards numbered 1 and place them face down into a pile)

Points of interest:

- 1x - Interrogate the Butler (Ask a question using the interview sheet)
- 1x - Search the room for clues (Pick a card from the clue pile)
- 2x - Investigate the body (Solve the puzzle)
- 2x - Investigate the bookshelves (Solve the puzzle)
- 2x - Investigate the paintings (Solve the puzzle)
- 2x - Search the desk (Solve the puzzle)
- 3x - Leave the Library (Take The Hall room card)
- + 2x - Complete a case (Select a case file)



**CHARACTER CARD**



**CLUE CARDS PILED  
FACE DOWN**

If this is not the first lesson, place all of the room, character and clue cards students have encountered on the table. For example, if the students have entered the hall, place that card on to the table alongside other revealed cards.

## 2) Give the students the victim cards

Provide students with the victim cards. This highlights the various objectives students have to achieve. Each group should have one victim card.

## 3) Give the students the case files

Before interacting with the materials, provide students with the case files related to that lesson. Each lesson has their own case files tied to them.

#### ***4) Begin the session***

After setting up, you are ready to begin. The students start by interacting with either the case files or the gamified materials. To set the mood, you can also play some ambient soundscapes from Youtube. It is highly recommended to have the present document open at all times, during the lessons.

#### **Clean up:**

At the end of the lesson, the materials have to be cleaned up. The following sequence details how to efficiently end as single session.

##### ***1) Students store their clues, evidence and interview answers***

Students are responsible in storing all of the pieces they collect throughout the gamified experience. Provide students with containers, where they can place their pieces for the next session. Cardboard boxes or plastic containers should work.

##### ***2) Detail what students have achieved***

Take a picture of the table or write down what game pieces students have gained throughout the session. Also write down how many points each student group has. This will help you remember what pieces you have to give the students during your next lesson. Especially focus on what room and character cards students have gained.

##### ***3) Collect the remaining game pieces***

Place all of the remaining game pieces into containers. It is helpful to keep all of the materials organized in separate boxes. Once all of the pieces have been gathered, you are done.

**The students' roles:**

During the lessons, students interact with the case files and the escape room in groups. This reinforces group communication and teamwork skills. The activities can also be completed individually, if the class sizes are small. However, this might require more guidance and interaction from the teacher.

**Teacher's role:**

During the lessons, the teacher has to take up various roles. When using the gamified elements, the teacher functions as an instructor, a game-master and a guide. The teacher provides the students with all the necessary information regarding the game system. Therefore, careful use of the teacher guides provided here will be mandatory. Furthermore, the teacher acts as the game-master: controlling the progression of the gamified experience, by providing the students with required game pieces and rewards. Additionally, the teacher has to provide the students with guidance and support when facing obstacles during the gamified interactions. The teacher also monitors how students' progress with each task.

**Rewards:**

Students' progress by completing certain actions, which rewards them with various items. The teacher is tasked in organizing and administering the rewards in correspondence with the students' actions. Therefore, it is important for the teacher to keep all the game pieces organized for easy access during the lessons. When a student completes an action, the teacher

provides them with the reward tied to that action. What rewards the teacher has to give are indicated separately on each game piece. Additional information on rewards and how to use them can be found in sections 2.1 *Case files*, 4.1 *Room cards*, 4.3 *Clue cards* and 4.4 *Evidence cards*.

As a teacher, it is important to not place too much emphasis on the reward. Instead, students' focus should be directed more to the contents of the reward and how it fits with the surrounding narrative. This is important in lessening students' extrinsic motivation towards learning.

### 3.2 Student guide

#### Student guide: Game instructions

##### Main goal:

Lord Roderick Blackberg VIII has been murdered in cold blood. It is your task, as an up and coming detective agency, to **solve the mystery** confounding London police. Your task is to gather evidence, interview suspects and solve the mysteries of Blackberg manor. **To solve the crime, you need to find out who carried out the crime, why they did it and how.** Keep in mind that without solid proof, the murderer walks away free. Good luck!

##### Progressing through the game:

In order to progress you have to perform **actions** indicated in the room cards. Completing actions will provide you with useful information you need to solve the murder mystery. Actions cost brain power, which you can get by completing case files provided to you by your teacher. Each lesson has new case files for you to complete.

##### Interview suspects:

An important skill to master for any detective is interrogation. In order to interview a suspect

- 1) Take the interview sheet provided to you by the teacher.
- 2) Go to your teacher.
- 3) Say which character you want to interview.
- 4) Ask one of the questions from the sheet.

Your teacher will give you the answer to your question. Some interview options can reward you with valuable **evidence**. After receiving an answer,

place it next to the corresponding character card. This way, everyone can see what questions have been already asked and what have not. One question costs one brain power.

You can also ask any character about any clue/evidence, by choosing interview option 4 and telling your teacher which clue/evidence you want to ask about. Remember to also say the **number of the clue!** If the suspect does not know anything about the clue/evidence, you can ask another question for free.

### **Search the room for clues:**

Clues found in your surroundings can point you to the right direction in finding the murderer. When choosing the *search the room for clues*-action, pay the indicated cost and pick one clue card from the face-down clue card pile. Stringing together clues can reveal necessary information about how the crime was committed. Each room has specific clues for you to find.

### **Puzzles:**

Sometimes investigating a crime scene might require you to use your gray brain cells a bit more. Some actions require you to solve a puzzle. In order to get a puzzle, inform your teacher which action you want to perform in the room (e.g. *examine the watch*). Your teacher will give you the puzzle tied to that action. Once you complete the puzzle, give your teacher the correct answer alongside with a short explanation on how you solved the puzzle. The teacher will reward you with a piece of **evidence**. Don't be afraid to use pen and paper to your advantage when completing puzzles. If the puzzle is



too difficult, you can always complete it later.

**Entering rooms:**

You begin by entering The Library. When entering a room, take the corresponding room card and place it on the table alongside all the accompanying character and clue cards indicated in the room card. If you already have the indicated room card, do not do anything. Room cards contain actions you can perform in the game.

**Using clues and evidence:**

When you receive a clue/evidence, place it on your group's table. This helps you keep track of all the evidence you have gathered. You can also mark connections between pieces of evidence/clues, with string and blu-tack (=sinitarra). Remember to share information you have gathered with the other groups. This can help you fill in the gaps between your clues and evidence.

## 4 Escape room materials

### 4.1 Room cards

#### Teacher guide: Room cards

Room cards indicate which rooms students have encountered during their play session. In each room, students can perform certain **actions** indicated in the room card's *points of interests*-section. In front of the action is how much brain power (resource) the action costs to perform. Students gain brain power by completing case-files (further information section *case files*).

Initially, students only have access to *The Library* room card. By performing certain actions, students are able to enter into new rooms. When entering a new room, place the corresponding room card onto the table, alongside with relevant character and clue cards indicated in the room card. If the students already have the indicated room card, nothing happens.

# 1. THE LIBRARY



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The smell of molding paper and dried ink is cut with the metallic scent of blood. Books and furniture are scattered on the floor. In front of his desk, sits the lifeless body of Lord Blackberg VII. (*Take The Inspector character card; Take clue cards numbered 1 and place them face down into a pile; Take The Victim card*)

## Points of interest:

- 1x - Interrogate the Inspector (*Ask a question using the interview sheet*)
- 1x - Search the room for clues (*Pick a card from the clue pile*)
- 2x - Examine the broken watch (*Solve the pocket watch puzzle*)
- 2x - Search the desk (*Solve the desk puzzle*)
- 2x - Investigate the paintings (*Solve the paintings puzzle*)
- 2x - Investigate the bookshelves (*Solve the bookshelf puzzle*)
- 3x - Leave the Library (*Take The Hall room card*)
- + 5x - Complete a case (*Select a case file*)**

## 2. THE HALL



Rain quietly pats against the windows. On your left is a cozy looking lounge. You walk down the hallway into a large room. Your footsteps echo in the vast hall. Six suspects wait for you in the middle of the room. (*Take The Butler, The Writer, The Politician, The Lawyer, The Medium and The Doctor character cards; Take clue cards numbered 2 and place them face down into a pile*)

### **Points of interest:**

- 1x - Interrogate a suspect (*Ask a question using the interview sheet*)
- 2x Search guest room 1 (*Solve the rooms puzzle*)
- 2x Search guest room 2 (*Solve the rooms puzzle*)
- 2x Search guest room 3 (*Solve the rooms puzzle*)
- 2x Search guest room 4 (*Solve the rooms puzzle*)
- 2x Search the servants' quarters (*Solve the rooms puzzle*)
- 2x Investigate the safe (*Solve the safe puzzle*)
- 3x Enter the Kitchen (*Take the Kitchen room card*)
- 3x Enter the Laboratory (*Take the Laboratory room card*)

### 3. THE KITCHEN



---

The warmth of the kitchen hits you like a wall. The aromas of coffee and freshly made soup float in the air. As you are about to get comfortable, a subtle cold draft sends shivers down your spine. *(Take clue cards numbered 3 and place them face down into a pile)*

**Points of interest:**

- 1x - Search the room for clues *(Pick a card from the clue pile)*
- 2x - Investigate the cupboards *(Solve the cupboards puzzle)*
- 2x - Find the source of the draft *(Solve the draft puzzle)*
- 3x Enter the Hall *(Take the Hall room card)*

## 4. THE LABORATORY



---

Chemicals bubble in various beakers, flasks and tubes. A steady electrical hum emanates from one of the many science experiments in the room. You try to walk as carefully as possible among the toppling piles of research notes and delicate scientific equipment. A bed layered with notes and is placed in one corner of the room. A strange pungent smell permeates from one of the closets. *(Take clue cards numbered 4 and place them face down into a pile)*

### **Points of interest:**

- 1x - Search the room for clues *(Pick a card from the clue pile)*
- 2x - Investigate the bed *(Solve the bed puzzle)*
- 2x - Examine the closet *(Solve the closet puzzle)*



## 5. THE CATACOMBS



---

You go down the stairs into the darkness. The stairs disappear and your feet sink into muddy shallow water. You can hear things scurrying and groaning in the dark. Rats... hopefully. In the midst of the skittering, you can also hear a faint sound of music coming deeper from the pitch dark tunnels. (*Take clue cards numbered 5 and place them face down into a pile*)

### **Points of interest:**

- 1x - Search the room for clues (*Pick a card from the clue pile*)
- 2x - Follow the sound of music (*Solve the music puzzle*)
- 2x - Go deeper into the catacombs (*Solve the tunnels puzzle*)

## 4.2 Characters

### 4.4.1 The Victim card

#### **Teacher guide: The victim card**

The victim card is a special character card, which introduces the students to the murder victim. Additionally, the card provides students with the goals they must reach during the experience. The card also includes a few bonus mysteries students can try to solve. This card can help students orient themselves towards specific goals and help them stay focused on the different tasks. Furthermore, the bonus mysteries can provide additional content to those who solve the central mystery within a short amount of time. Solutions for the objectives can be found in section 4.6 *The story*.

It is recommended that the teacher prints out multiple copies of the victim card for the different groups. This helps the groups focus on their chosen objectives, without having to share a single document among multiple students.

Note: Students cannot interview this character (he is quite dead after all).



# RODERICK BLACKBERG

## THE VICTIM



The dead body of a pale young man sits behind a desk. He cannot be older than 25. His face is frozen in a state of relief.

### Main objectives:

#### Who did it?

Solve who is behind the crime! Anyone in the manor could have been the killer. There is only one killer. The criminal worked alone.

#### How did they do it?

The room is locked from the inside. No one could have entered the room without being seen. How did the killer commit the murder?

#### The motive?

There has to be a reason for the killing. Solve why the murder was committed!

### Bonus mysteries:

#### The research

Solve what is being researched in the laboratory.

#### The curse

What is the curse everyone is talking about?

#### The séance

Find out about the séance. What happened last night in the mansion?

#### Spirits of the dead

The mansion is said to be haunted by the townsfolk. Mysterious music has been heard in the empty halls. Find out the source of the music.

#### 4.2.2 Character cards

##### Teacher guide: Character cards

Character cards indicate the different suspects students encounter throughout the game. The students' main goal is to decipher which character is behind the murder. Students encounter new characters when entering rooms (further information in section 4.1 *Room cards*).

Students can **interview** each character by using the interview sheet (4.2.3 *Interview sheets*). Students interview characters by paying the indicated brain power cost (e.g. 1x) and asking the teacher one of the questions from the interview sheet. The teacher checks the interview answers sheet and provides the students with the corresponding answer card (4.2.4 *Interview answers*).

Certain answers can provide students with **evidence**. These are indicated with a separate text in the answer (e.g. *take the evidence 1-1*). If the text is present in the answer, give the students the evidence indicated in the answer.

Students can also ask the characters about any piece of evidence/clue. This is done by asking question 4 in the interview sheet, in conjunction with the evidence/clue the students want to ask about. The students can also state the number of the clue (further information section 4.3 *Clue cards*). The teacher checks the answers sheet and gives the appropriate answer based on the number of the clue given by the student. If the character does not know about the clue, provide the *item not relevant*-answer to students. In this case, students can ask another question for free.



THE BUTLER

*"How may I be of assistance?"*

A gaunt, tall man stares at you from the corner of the room. His gaze is almost as lifeless as the corpse in the library.

**- 1x - Interrogate**



THE INSPECTOR

*"Yeah, what is it now?"*

A large, heavily built man looms over you. Tarry smoke from his cigar, invades your lungs and makes your eyes water.

**- 1x - Interrogate**

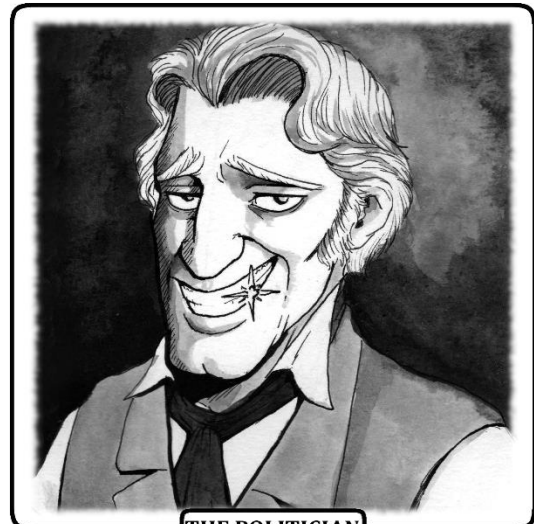


THE WRITER

*"Ah...um, what is it!?"*

A woman as pale as fungus, is hunched on the sofa. You are unable to maintain eye contact, as her eyes dart here and there across the room.

**- 1x - Interrogate**

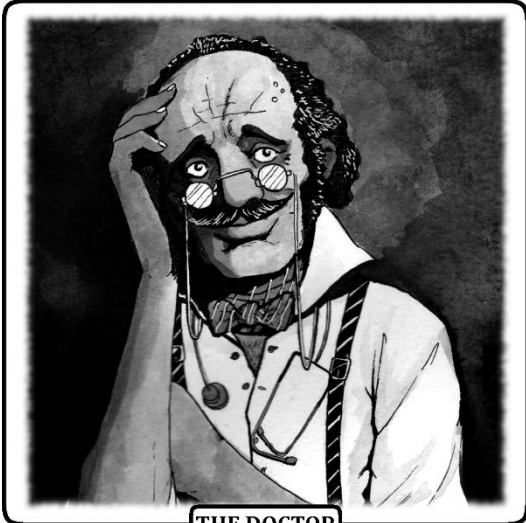


THE POLITICIAN

*"How you doing, sport?"*

The man flashes his snow white teeth at you as he grips your hand. His handshake could crack coconuts with its sheer force.

**- 1x - Interrogate**



THE DOCTOR

*"How can I help you?"*

The older gentleman's smile makes your face warm up. Despite, his otherwise calm demeanor, he keeps feverishly scratching his face.

**- 1x - Interrogate**



THE MUSICIAN

*"What are you doing down here!?"*

A dark cloaked figure is hunched behind a large organ. In the midst of the black mass, a white mask gleams towards you.

**- 1x - Interrogate**



THE MEDIUM

*"Well, hello..."*

A sharply dressed woman slithers from the sofa to greet you. You feel lightheaded as her deep voice crawls its way straight into your brain.

**- 1x - Interrogate**



THE LAWYER

*"Good evening... sir!"*

Behind two small spectacles, two sunken in eyes stare at you. Her yellow eyes follow your every move with machine precision.

**- 1x - Interrogate**

### 4.2.3 Interview sheets

## INTERVIEW SHEET

Use this sheet to interview suspects. Ask your teacher one of the questions and they will give you an answer. Keep in mind; not everyone speaks the truth. One question costs one 1 brain power!

### Interview questions:

- 1) Who are you and what are you doing here?
  - 2) Can you tell me something about the people in this castle?
  - 3) What can you tell me about the victim?
  - 4) Can you tell me something about \_\_\_\_\_ (*Use a clue or an evidence card*)?
- 

## INTERVIEW SHEET

Use this sheet to interview suspects. Ask your teacher one of the questions and they will give you an answer. Keep in mind; not everyone speaks the truth. One question costs one 1 brain power!

### Interview questions:

- 1) Who are you and what are you doing here?
- 2) Can you tell me something about the people in this castle?
- 3) What can you tell me about the victim?
- 4) Can you tell me something about \_\_\_\_\_ (*Use a clue or an evidence card*)?

## 4.2.4 Interview answers

INTERVIEW ANSWERS

<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q1</b>
Surely you should know who I am! Or are you going a bit soft in the head? Chief Inspector Jack Kane! I'm the one who called you here! In case you've gone blind, there is a dead person right there."
<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q2</b>
"Everyone has been called to the main hall just behind this door. As far as I know, there's something fishy about that <b>writer</b> . Apparently had a big fight with the Lord here last night. Nothing complicated about this case if you ask me! She wanted her share of the old man's will and couldn't wait. Bam! A knife in the back and the money starts flowing. I'll bet his will has her name on it. Too bad, she <b>won't be seeing a penny of it if she did it</b> . Here, I'll give you my notes on the others if it helps." <i>(take the evidence 1-5)</i>
<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q3</b>
"Rich, lonely, ol' wife passed away in January. He was in <b>bad health</b> and was about to <b>share his inheritance</b> . Not sure to who, as there are no direct heirs. You see, these Blackbergs don't have too long of a life expectancy. The whole family have died from the same disease. The <b>Blackberg curse</b> they call it."
<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q4 + CLUE 1-1</b>
"Plenty of boot marks on the floor here. I'd wager the size is somewhere around <b>42-43</b> ." <i>(Take Evidence 1-1)</i>
<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q4 + CLUE 1-2</b>
"Well look at that! I'll bet 100 bucks that this belongs to that <b>writer</b> gal. This case is as good as closed!"
<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q4 + CLUE: 1-3 / CLUE: 5-1 / CLUE 5-2</b>
"Yeah, I got plenty of scratches on me. In fact, <b>got a few fresh cuts just a couple of days ago!</b> Some bloke smashed a bottle on my head. Comes with the job, I guess."
<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q4 + CLUE 1-6</b>
"The door was locked from the inside. The killer could not have used this door. They must have come from somewhere else. Where though?"
<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-4</b>
"The Lord didn't fight back, but the room is trashed. Maybe our murderer was looking for something and made a mess while doing it."

<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-5</b>
“You right on the head there? No, these are not my boot marks. In fact, my boots are <b>size 47</b> if you’re curious”
<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-6</b>
“Would you look at that! That must be how the murdered got in and out of the room, without nobody noticing.”
<b>THE INSPECTOR: Q4 + Item not relevant</b>
“Care to explain how that’s relevant here.”
<b>THE BUTLER: Q1</b>
“I am the Blackberg family’s butler Ernest Ashmore. I have been serving the family all my life, like my father before me. I called the police this morning. Master was not responding to my knocks on the door. <b>The door was locked from the inside.</b> I could not get in so I called the police. A terrible mess that inspector made with the door. Oh, I wish I could just retire.”
<b>THE BUTLER: Q2</b>
“If you need help finding the quest rooms, here is a map sir. I must mention, this morning, there was a great <b>mess in the hall. Dirt and mud</b> was littered all across the floor. I would appreciate if the quests would wipe their feet before coming inside. I do not have the energy to do any extra work nowadays. The strange thing is, the mud did not seem to come from outside. Instead, the mud came from <b>the kitchen.</b> Speaking of which, I saw someone enter the kitchen at <b>11pm</b> and exit at <b>12pm.</b> This morning, the kitchen smelled like <b>smoke.</b> The strangest thing, I’ll say.” <i>(Take evidence 2-1)</i>
<b>THE BUTLER: Q3</b>
“Like others in his family, Master was greatly ill. As he grew more ill, he got more... how would you say it... superstitious. When the medicines and treatments did not have any answers to his sickness, Master hired that <b>medium</b> to lift the “ <b>family curse</b> ”. Hiring her was not cheap, so I had my doubts. However, yesterday she held a séance at <b>6pm</b> and I do not know what to believe in anymore. It was only an <b>hour long session,</b> but it shook me to the core. The <b>candles went out and I heard ghastly whispers.</b> She even knew things about Master she could not have known. It was like my old masters were in the room with us, talking to Master. Now that he is gone, I guess I can finally retire.”
<b>THE BUTLER: Q4 + CLUE: 1-1 / CLUE 1-3</b>
“A terrible mess in the Library. Oh, how I wish the killer could have been a bit tidier.”



<b>THE BUTLER: Q4 + CLUE: 1-3 / CLUE: 5-1 / CLUE 5-2</b>
"I got a small cut on my finger, when preparing yesterday's beef bourguignon. This must have been at <b>7pm</b> , right after the séance. It was not a deep cut, as you can see. Despite that, the bourguignon turned out perfect... as always."
<b>THE BUTLER: Q4 + CLUE 2-3</b>
"Someone had left their drink on the table. Very impolite! I guess it was that <b>writer</b> . She always has a glass of tonic to calm her nerves before going to bed."
<b>THE BUTLER: Q4 + CLUE 3-2 / CLUE 3-3 / CLUE 3-4</b>
"Yes, I noticed all of that mud, sir. Someone did a very poor job in cleaning after them. Someone was in the kitchen last night somewhere between <b>11pm and 12pm</b> . I just cannot remember who."
<b>THE BUTLER: Q4 + CLUE 3-5</b>
"I have never burned my food and never will, sir. It might be one of those quests, sir. I saw one of them entering the kitchen somewhere around <b>11pm</b> . I cannot remember who it was. My memory is not what it used to be, sir."
<b>THE BUTLER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-5</b>
"I wear <b>size 41</b> , charcoal black leather shoes, passed down from my father, sir."
<b>THE BUTLER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-6 / EVIDENCE 3-2</b>
"Oh, I had no idea there were tunnels like these underneath the manor. Masters have always been very secretive, even to us servants. I would imagine it is quite <b>dirty</b> down there."
<b>THE BUTLER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 2-7</b>
"I hope my room was clean, sir. Oh... You noticed my letter. Well, it is true, I was going to <b>leave Master</b> . You see, I have become too old. I do not have the energy I once had. Master <b>would not let me leave</b> , saying that he does not have too much time left. I suppose he was right. I did not kill him. Even if I wanted to, I am too weak to do anything like that. I am nothing, but a brittle old man now."
<b>THE BUTLER: Q4 + Item not relevant</b>
"Unfortunately, I know nothing of that, sir."
<b>THE WRITER: Q1</b>
"Oh, um.. my name is Emily Mallory. I am a writer. I sort of...live here with Roderick. I'm writing a book, inspired by the Blackbergs. I... I can't remember too much of last night. I went to see Roderick at <b>9pm</b> . I had a glass of tonic like every night at <b>10pm</b> . After that, nothing. I fell asleep, I think. Oh, would you have a <b>handkerchief</b> ? I think I lost mine somewhere."



<b>THE WRITER: Q2</b>
<p>"I have lived here for some time. Roderick and I found each other's company... inspiring so to say. In addition to us there are Lord's servants and all those vulgar people after his inheritance. I don't know what it is about that <b>politician</b> that makes me feel nervous. He... smiles too much. Him and that <b>lawyer</b> always made me anxious. She reminds me of an owl about to strike down on a helpless mouse. I don't... don't remember seeing anyone last night though. I think the medium was sitting at the bar last night, right before I... fell asleep."</p>
<b>THE WRITER: Q3</b>
<p>"The relationship between Roderick and I was uhm... complicated. I really cannot say too much I am afraid. It is true, we had arguments, not only last night, but other nights too. I... I wanted to be closer to him, but he was apprehensive. Afraid of his <b>family's curse</b> he was. He said that, if I were to get too close to him, the same curse will pass on to me like to the rest of his family."</p>
<b>THE WRITER: Q4 + CLUE 1-2</b>
<p>"Yes! That is <b>my handkerchief</b>, where did you find it? Next to the body!? No...uhm that could not be. I think.... I could swear I had it after I left the library last night. At <b>9pm</b> I think it was. The... <b>the medium</b> saw me, she can confirm I had the handkerchief before I went to sleep."</p>
<b>THE WRITER: Q4 + CLUE: 1-3 / CLUE: 5-1 / CLUE 5-2</b>
<p>"No, I don't have any cuts or scratches on me. What is this all about?"</p>
<b>THE WRITER: Q4 + CLUE: 2-3</b>
<p>"Yes, I have a glass of tonic every night at <b>10pm</b>. It helps me relax my nerves. This time... I don't remember pouring it into a glass myself. It was like it just stumbled into my hand. I was still quite mad after having an argument with the Lord, so I didn't really pay attention to my surroundings. The taste was somewhat funny. Not sure how, but more bitter than usual."</p>
<b>THE WRITER: Q4 + CLUE: 5-2</b>
<p>"I'm sorry, I don't wear anything in red. I think <b>the lawyer, the medium and the politician</b> often wear red though."</p>
<b>THE WRITER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-1</b>
<p>"Oh, I... let me think... I guess I wear <b>size 37 shoes</b>. Size 38 also fits, but that depends on the shoe."</p>
<b>THE WRITER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-2 / EVIDENCE 3-1</b>
<p>"I... I don't know what to say... I... um... Can you give me a moment... Yes, he often talked about helping me after he was gone. I didn't know exactly what he meant then, but now I do."</p>

**THE WRITER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-4 / EVIDENCE 2-9**

“Y...yes. Roderick and I were more than just friends. We tried our best to hide it to avoid a scandal. There were horrible, slanderous things said about us in one of those trashy gossip magazines. I...I wanted to marry him, but he refused. He was afraid, I would catch his **family’s curse**. You... you have to find the person who did this to him. Despite our arguments, I would never hurt him. Yesterday, he gave me this letter. That is what started our argument last night. Here take it.” (*Take Evidence 2-8*)

**THE WRITER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-7 / EVIDENCE 2-2**

“Yes, Roderick believed very much in the curse. He wasn’t like that at first. When his wife, Annabelle, died and his illness got worse, he started to believe in it more and more. Roderick became obsessed and hired that **medium**. I think she is nothing but a charlatan. She was only after Roderick’s money.”

**THE WRITER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 2-5**

“Oh you visited my room. I hope you didn’t take a peek at my writing. It’s... It’s still unfinished. I noticed the floor was quite **dirty** this morning. Maybe I went outside last night, but I can’t... I can’t remember. I could swear... someone was walking in the room last night. I thought it was a dream... but perhaps it wasn’t after all.”

**THE WRITER: Q4 + Item not relevant**

“Oh, I’m not sure what I’d do with that.”

**THE POLITICIAN: Q1**

“Jonathan Hawkes is my name, and politics is my game. I’m here to promote my political campaign to the good old Lord Blackberg. I can’t say much about last night, sport. I was in my room working on my campaign. I heard there was a séance at **6pm**. It ended somewhere at 7pm if I’m not mistaken. Oh, I also heard loud arguing from the Library. I think it was that **writer gal**. Must have been somewhere around **9pm-10pm**. Other than that, I was in my room. Speaking of my campaign, care to make a donation, sport! Every penny counts.”

**THE POLITICIAN: Q2**

“Just between you and me sport, there was something happening between Blackberg and that **writer**. I remember reading something about those two in **The Weekly Tattle**. Yes, something like them having a possible affair. You might want to look into that!”

<b>THE POLITICIAN: Q3</b>
“Oh, he was a magnificent man, sport. An irreplaceable help for my campaign. He could be a little spooky at times, with all that talk about ghosts and curses. He even hired that <b>medium</b> to lift his curse or whatever. She’s a bit... odd. The only living dead walking in that house is that butler, hahhah, wouldn’t you agree sport!”
<b>THE POLITICIAN: Q4 + CLUE: 1-3 / CLUE: 5-1</b>
“Oh...um... just a <b>scratch</b> nothing much. Got it while um... walking in the garden yesterday. Yes! See, a big boar came at me. Full speed! Fortunately, I have been working out. Fought the beast and it ran off. I survived with only a scratch on the arm. Good thing it didn’t get my face hahhah! That’s what gets the voters in the polling booth.”
<b>THE POLITICIAN: Q4 + CLUE: 5-2</b>
“Yes... I do own some <b>red shirts</b> . Last I checked, they were all intact. I have appearances to maintain you see! I mean, they could have gotten ripped somehow, but I wouldn’t know where. Now, why don’t you look into something actually relevant, huh sport!”
<b>THE POLITICIAN: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-2</b>
“I had no idea I would have a place in his will! I am honored. I will remember Blackberg’s contributions to my campaign, by raising a statue of him in his memory. A great, great man he was!”
<b>THE POLITICIAN: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-5</b>
“Uh.. <b>size 42 boots</b> is what I wear. Snakeskin. Custom made. I can recommend a guy to you if you want a pair yourself, sport!”
<b>THE POLITICIAN: Q4 + EVIDENCE 2-6</b>
“Did you find anything unusual there, eh sport... No, I did not think so. I took a little walk in the garden yesterday. I came back to my room and worked on my campaign. Top secret work, sport.”
<b>THE POLITICIAN: Q4 +Item not relevant</b>
“Can’t really say anything much about that, sport!”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q1</b>
“I am the lord’s personal physician, Harvey Wingfield. For 30 years I have served this family and now... this is how it ends. What a shame. This morning I conducted my last medical check on him. Dead. <b>A knife in the back</b> . Based on the placement of the knife, he passed away without a struggle. For someone to do this, they either had to have extensive <b>medical knowledge</b> , or immense <b>physical strength</b> . Hey... why are you looking at me like that!”

<b>THE DOCTOR: Q2</b>
“Lot of them <b>after his money</b> . Saying sweet nothings to him, to get a place in his <b>will</b> . A bunch of parasites taking advantage of a sick man. Lord had fallen ill, much like the rest of his family. All passed away from the same disease at a young age. A <b>curse</b> in the family he used to call it. Bah! A bunch of nonsense that quack <b>medium</b> has fed him, as far as I know. Just kept telling him that to get to his money. She probably killed him as well.”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q3</b>
“Lord Blackberg was suffering from severe insomnia, brought on by his illness. Every night at <b>8pm</b> in his library, I would administer him <b>chloral hydrate</b> to help him sleep. Which reminds me, I noticed one of the bottles was missing from the <b>chemical storage</b> . Curious, I checked none were missing before <b>the séance</b> .”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q4 + CLUE: 1-3 / CLUE: 5-1 / CLUE 5-2</b>
“No, I don’t have any cuts or scratches on me. That reminds me, I believe some <b>medical supplies have gone missing</b> from the kitchen. Someone here sure was scratched.”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q4 + CLUE 2-2</b>
“Yes, I used <b>chloral hydrate</b> to aid Lord Blackberg’s insomnia. A few drops will make anyone sleep in no time.”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-7 / EVIDENCE 2-2</b>
“Bah, that curse! I am sick of hearing about it. The Lord was adamant that his illness was the result of that blasted curse. Nothing but superstition.”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q4 + CLUE 4-1</b>
“If I wanted to get into the storage, I would simply use my key. No need to try and pick the lock.”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-1</b>
“Oh I wear size <b>42 shoes</b> .”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q4 + EVIDENCE 2-3 / E 2-4 / E2-5 / E2-6 / E2-7</b>
“Oh, I do not live in any of those rooms. I sleep in the laboratory. Helps me focus on my research.”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q4 + EVIDENCE 4-1</b>
“PLEASE... could you keep your voice down. Y... yes, we were conducting experiments on bodies with Blackberg. Do not ask how we came across those bodies. He wanted to discover the secrets of life through science, before falling into that curse nonsense. And, last night, I DID IT. I discovered how to defeat death itself. A finger twitched after it had been dead and buried for a week. Just a bit more work, and even the Lord himself could be brought back... Th... Think of the possibilities.”

<b>THE DOCTOR: Q4 + EVIDENCE 4-1</b>
“Lord and I were research partners. I... cannot reveal what we were experimenting on. The results of our experiments could have changed the world. Sadly, he fell under the spell of that medum.”
<b>THE DOCTOR: Q4 + Item not relevant</b>
“My apologies, I do not know anything about this.”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q1</b>
“My name is Madame Zastra. I am a medium; The communicative line between the land of the living and the dead. I was summoned here to realign the Lord’s negative auras and connect him more to his spiritual side. A séance was held at <b>6pm</b> in the library. This, I did to untangle him and the spirits of his predecessors from a <b>horrible curse</b> . Sadly, I failed in my mission and now Lord Blackberg has returned to his ancestors in the astral plane.”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q2</b>
“After my séance, I had to recharge my cosmic powers by having a drink at the bar. I could hear the <b>writer</b> having a loud argument with the Lord. It was as if she was possessed by the spirits. She wept and sniveled into her <b>handkerchief</b> . She had a <b>glass of tonic</b> to calm her senses and retreated away down the hall. This was somewhere around <b>10pm</b> if I remember correctly. The strange thing is that the glass of tonic was already on the table when I got to the bar at <b>9pm</b> .”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q3</b>
“The Lord was a believer in the paranormal. He often said, how he’d seen a <b>ghost</b> wandering in the halls. And no, I am not talking about that half dead butler, but a real ghost. A black figure, with a white shining face. There is a lot of cosmic energy flowing through this place. If given the chance, I would further investigate all the secrets this house has.”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q4 + CLUE: 1-3 / CLUE: 5-1 / CLUE 5-2</b>
“No, I don’t have any cuts on me. I take precise care not to damage my mortal vessel. I cannot have any of my spiritual energy leak out. ”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q4 + CLUE: 2-3</b>
“Yes, the writer drank a tonic last night at <b>10pm</b> , much like every night. The strange thing is though, the glass was <b>already on the counter</b> when I got to the bar. It was like someone was expecting the writer to come in and drink that tonic. A clear sign of paranormal activity.”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q4 + CLUE 5-2</b>
“It is true, I have a fondness for red silk scarves. I take good care of mine, they should not be ripped.”



<b>THE MEDIUM: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-2</b>
“I was in the Lord’s will?! Well, that was a pleasant surprise. However, that was to be expected in all honesty. Especially, since I worked so hard to cleanse the Lord’s cosmic auras”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-5</b>
“My, my, aren’t you curious! I wear <b>size 42 shoes.</b> ”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-7 / EVIDENCE 2-2</b>
“Last night at <b>6pm</b> we tried to lift the Lord’s curse, by communicating with the spirits of his ancestors. Everyone was there... except that smiling <b>politician.</b> ”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q4 + EVIDENCE 2-3</b>
“Uhh... it... it must have been the spirits...They... Tell you what, yes I’ll confess; I was <b>conning</b> the Lord for a quick buck. Girl’s got to make a living you see. What I can say for certain is, that I did not kill him. Why would I snuff out my fountain of wealth, eh? Anyway, if you really want to suspect someone, look into that <b>politician.</b> He was the only one not attending the séance last night. His good looks might fool his voters, but not me. There is something strange about him.”
<b>THE MEDIUM: Q4 +Item not relevant</b>
“Sorry, love. Don’t really know anything about that.”
<b>THE MUSICIAN: Q1</b>
“I... am an artist! The outside world has cast me away for my appearance and now I dwell here. They cannot understand the genius of my work! Some say this manor is haunted. Truth is, I am the only phantom roaming these halls. Not once in the 40 years I have been here, have I seen a ghost. At least not one that could match my musical grandeur.”
<b>THE MUSICIAN: Q2</b>
“Hah! I do not bother myself with those fools, as long as they don’t bother me. However, last night at around <b>11pm to 12pm</b> , I heard a noise in the tunnels. I went to investigate and saw <b>a man</b> holding his arm. He must have been <b>hurt</b> . The tunnels can be dangerous if you do not know where you are going. He dropped this on his way out of the tunnels.” <i>(Take Evidence 5-2)</i>
<b>THE MUSICIAN: Q3</b>
“I often saw him. He would occasionally wander in the tunnels. One time, I was stealing food from the kitchen and I saw him lurking about. He didn’t see me, but I could see him <b>hiding something</b> in one of the cupboards. It looked like a <b>very important document</b> to me.”

<b>THE MUSICIAN: Q4 + CLUE: 1-3 / CLUE: 5-1 / CLUE 5-2</b>
“The tunnels can be dangerous. It’s easy to cut yourself on something, or get cut by something. I know my way around these tunnels. No cuts or scratches on me.”
<b>THE MUSICIAN: Q4 + CLUE: 5-3</b>
“The muddy floor can be a nuisance if you are not used to it. It is easy to get your feet stuck. The mud is why I do not wear any shoes. They would just <b>get dirty.</b> ”
<b>THE MUSICIAN: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-5</b>
“Shoes!? I do not own any shoes, see! Novelties for those living on the surface. What would I do with such frivolities here in the depths. Fools are those who come down here with shoes. Tell me, do you like walking around with soggy shoes, huh!”
<b>THE MUSICIAN: Q4 + EVIDENCE 3-1</b>
“This must be the same document I saw the Lord hiding in the kitchen. It is a will I see. A strange place to store something like this.”
<b>THE MUSICIAN: Q4 +Item not relevant</b>
“I don’t know anything about that, and really don’t care to know either!”
<b>THE LAWYER: Q1</b>
“I am the Lord’s lawyer, Elizabeth Mandrake... pleased to make your acquaintance. I was hired to council Lord Blackberg on his <b>will</b> . For the first time the Lord’s will shall be revealed to the public. No one except the Lord has seen it. <i>Tsk tsk tsk</i> , what a mess of things, someone has made. If the <b>murderer’s name is on the will</b> , they will get <b>nothing</b> . The money will go to the other beneficiaries named in the will, according to the Forfeiture act 1982. This is of course, IF the murderer gets caught. I will follow your progress with great interest, hmhmhm.”

**THE LAWYER: Q2**

“*Tsk tsk tsk...* Many naughty people in this house, but who could resort to murder? Well, that is for you to solve. There is **the butler**. A loyal servant of the family, who perhaps wished to enter an early retirement while he still has life in him. Then there is **the writer**. Most likely in love with the Lord. Perhaps, out to get a good place in the Lord’s inheritance. A stab in the back and suddenly she’s a rich woman. Of course, there is **the doctor**. A nice reliable man on the surface, but behind closed doors, who knows what he experiments on. Maybe the Lord finally found out what the doctor was really up to. A quick stab is all it takes to silence him from talking to the police. **The politician** is an interesting one. He used to work in the national archive before entering politics. Behind that smiling façade hides mountains of gambling debt and financial trouble. Even a small portion of the Lord’s wealth would fix that. And finally there is **the medium**. A spiritualist, tangled in more than a few fraud lawsuits. She is only able to afford her luxurious lifestyle by conning rich desperate people. Surprisingly, many of her old clients have died in mysterious circumstances. So many choices to choose from, hmhmhmhm.”

**THE LAWYER: Q3**

“Lord Blackberg was in the middle of finalizing his will. As he grew more ill, he also got more paranoid. Last night at **7pm** he told me he had written **two copies of his will**. One he kept in his **desk** and the other he kept secret from even me. No one else here knows about the second will. I was the only one he trusted with that information. The will was to be revealed only after his passing. Well, now is good as time as any to do so.”

**THE LAWYER: Q4 + CLUE: 1-2**

“No, this is not mine. It might belong to **the writer**. We have the same initials after all.”

**THE LAWYER: Q4 + CLUE: 1-3 / CLUE: 5-1**

“Not a single cut on me. I am not someone easily cut.”

**THE LAWYER: Q4 + CLUE 5-2**

“Yes, I wear **silk shirts** in shades of either burgundy or maroon red. I keep immaculate care of my clothes. I also represent my clients with my appearances.”

**THE LAWYER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-1**

“**Size 42** dress shoes is what I wear. Either in shades of pearl or antique white. Polished and maintained to perfection. Perfection is what my clients expect and that is what I give.”



**THE LAWYER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-2**

“Lord always kept his hidden away from prying eyes. This is the first time anyone except the Lord sees this. I must say, the beneficiaries chosen are... interesting to say the least. I would not have expected to see most of these people in here. There is also **a second copy of the will**. I would be interested to see that as well.”

**THE LAWYER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 3-1**

“Where did you find this? Hidden in the kitchen? Precisely, then this must be the second copy of the will, only the Lord and I knew about. This has me interested. If it is possible, could you **show me both copies of the will at the same time**. There is something I want to check.

**THE LAWYER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 1-2 + EVIDENCE 3-1**

“I was correct, hmhmhmhm. The two wills are different. This means that someone has **forged a fake will**. What a nasty thing to do, wouldn't you say.”

**THE LAWYER: Q4 + EVIDENCE 2-4**

“Did you find anything of interest. It is not particularly polite to rummage through other people's belongings.”

**THE LAWYER: Q4 + Item not relevant**

“I am afraid, I cannot help you with that.”

### 4.4.3 Clue cards

#### Teacher guide: Clues

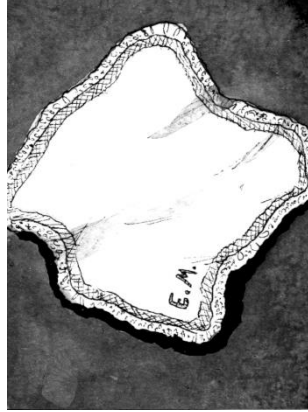
Clues provide the students with useful information about the room's they are investigating. Clues are coded by numbers (e.g. 1-1, 2-3). The **first number** indicates **the room** the clue is tied to and the second number is the clue's individual index number. Clues are placed, in random order, face down into piles next to the corresponding room cards. The teacher can also keep the clues with themselves, and hand them out when necessary. This can prevent cheating amongst the students.

Students begin the game by having access to the clue cards tied to the first room (clues with initial number 1). As the students move to new rooms, the teacher provides the students with new piles of clues, tied to those rooms based on their numbering. For example, when the students enter the Laboratory (room card 4), the students get access to clues with the initial number 4.

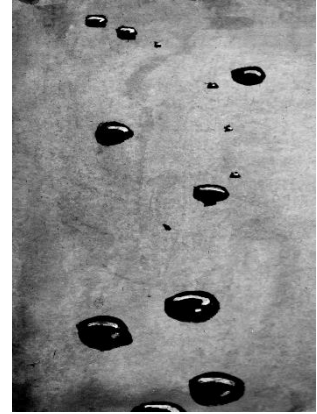
Students gain clues by doing the *search the room*-action indicated in each room card. After paying the cost of the action, students pick one card from the top of the clue pile.

CLUE1-1: Footprints

Muddy footprints cover the floor. They go here and there across the floor. Was someone trying to hide their tracks?

CLUE1-2: Handkerchief

A lace trimmed handkerchief lies next to the body. "E.M." is embroiled on its edge.

CLUE1-3: Drops of blood

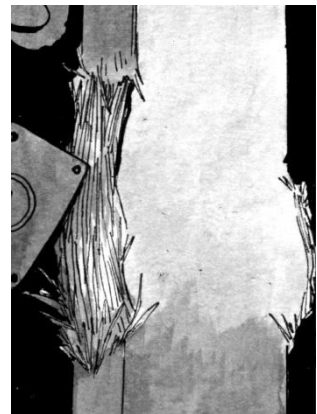
Footprints on the floor are followed by a trail of blood drops. These could not have come from the victim.

CLUE1-4: No signs of struggle

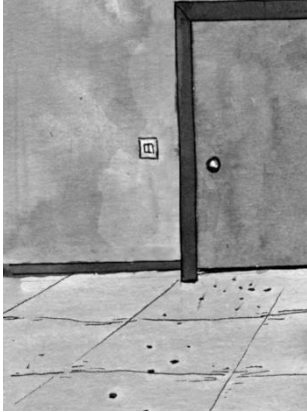
There are no signs of struggle in the room. The Lord was surprised from behind. He did not have time to fight back.

CLUE1-5: Weapon

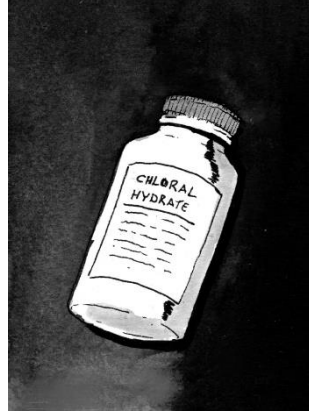
A knife sticks out from Lord Blackberg's back. Based on the wound he passed away **immediately**.

CLUE1-6: Broken door

The door was **locked from the inside**. The inspector had to break the door to get in. No one got out of here through this door.

CLUE2-1: Traces of dirt

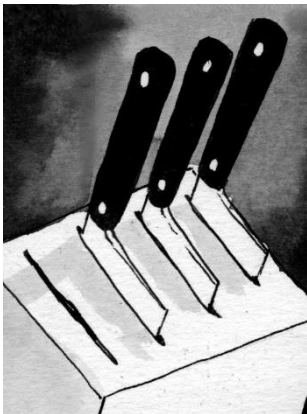
Small crumbs of dirt form a trail on the floor. The trail leads from the kitchen to one of the rooms.

CLUE2-2: Medicine bottle

A small bottle has rolled under one of the sofas. The label says: "CHLORAL HYDRATE: USE WITH CARE!". It has a faint bitter smell.

CLUE2-3: A glass of tonic

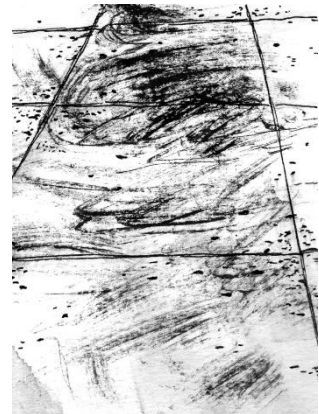
A glass of tonic sits on the counter. The drink smells very bitter. Someone drank this last night.

CLUE3-1: Knife rack

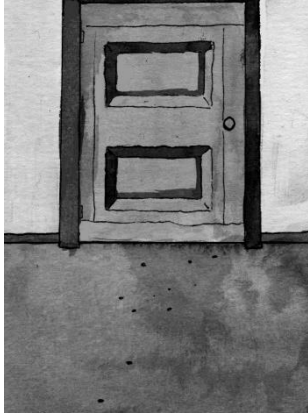
A rack of kitchen knives sits on the counter. One of the knives is **missing**.

CLUE3-2: Dirty towel

A **muddy towel** has been thrown to a garbage can. A small amount of blood highlights the towel's edge.

CLUE3-3: Wiped mud

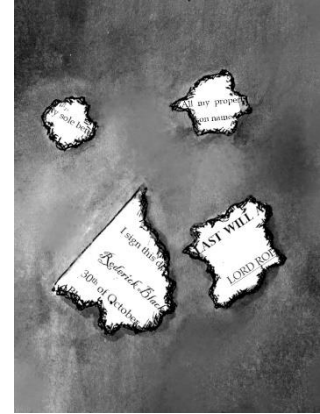
Someone tried to wipe **mud** from the floor. The scrubbed mud leads from the wall to a nearby garbage can.

CLUE3-4: crumbs of mud

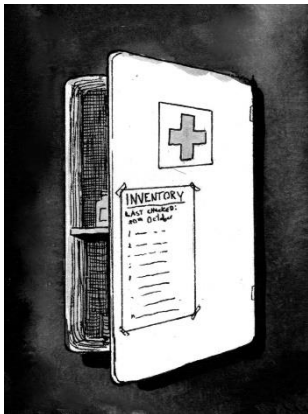
Small crumbs of mud and dirt form a trail on the kitchen floor. They lead to the hall.

CLUE3-5: Smell of smoke

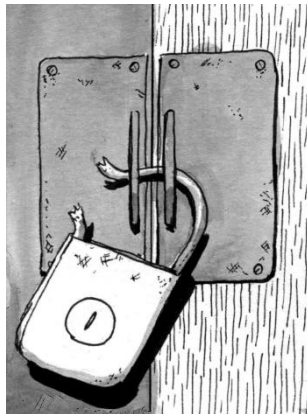
There is faint smell of smoke in the kitchen? Someone **burned** something here.

CLUE3-6: Burned paper

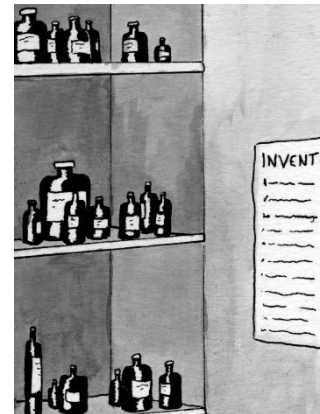
One of the trash cans is filled with ash. Based on the remains, someone was burning paper here. Only **parts of the document remain**.

CLUE3-7: Medical supplies

Some of the medical supplies have been taken. Mainly bandages. Was someone **hurt**?

CLUE4-2: Chemical storage

The lock of the chemical storage has been broken. Did someone need something from here?

CLUE4-3: Missing bottle

Based on the inventory, **one of the bottles** is missing from the chemical storage; Chloral hydrate.

CLUE5-1: Cut

Something cuts you in the darkness. **Drops of blood** drip down your arm. You don't want to know what just scratched you.

CLUE5-2: A piece of cloth

A piece of **red silk** floats on the shallow water. Looks like someone was **scratched**.

CLUE5-3 : The muddy floor

Under the shallow water, your feet sink into the slimy floor. **Mud and dirt** stain your shoes. A shame, you just bought a new pair.

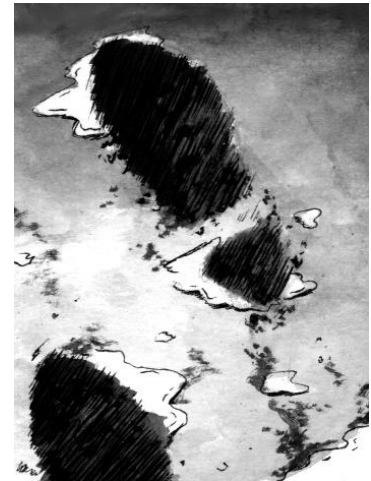
#### 4.4 Evidence cards

##### Teacher guide: Evidence

Evidence provides the students with more substantial information about the murder. Students gain evidence by completing certain actions (*talking to characters, completing puzzles etc.*). Each action, which rewards the student with a piece of evidence, is indicated separately within the action. For example, some dialogue options, might contain the following: *Receive evidence 1-1 from the teacher.* When faced with this text, the teacher provides the corresponding piece of evidence to the student.

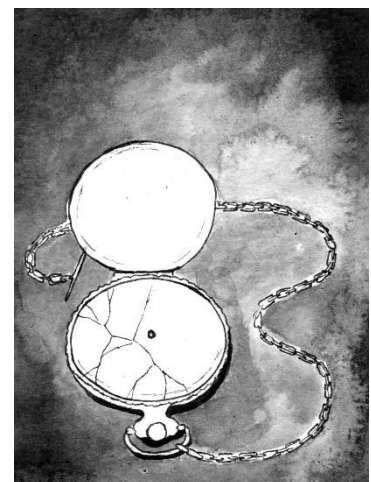
##### EVIDENCE 1-1: Size 41-43 shoes

According to the inspector, the marks on the floor are from **size 41-43 shoes**. This could narrow down the suspects considerably.



##### EVIDENCE 1-3: Broken watch

The victim's pocket watch lies next to the body. Someone has stepped on it. The pointers are stuck at **11.55**. This could be the time of death.





**EVIDENCE 1-4: The picture inside the pocket watch**

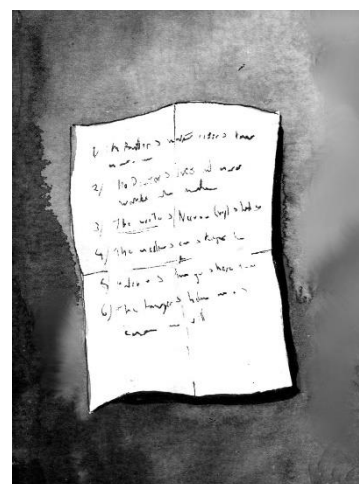
The pocket watch clicks open. Inside you find a small folded **photograph**. You are unable to recognize the person in the faded picture. On the back is written: "Forever yours. E.M."



**EVIDENCE 1-5: The Inspector's notes**

The Inspector has made some notes on the people in this manor:

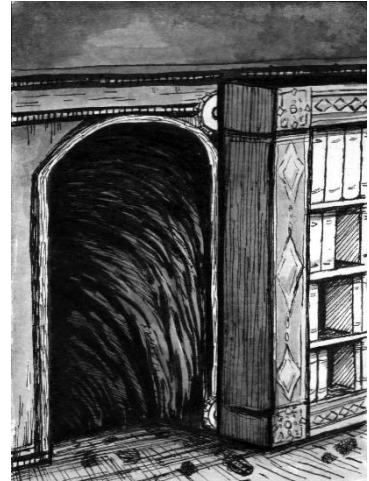
- 1) The Butler > wants to retire > knows more about the manor.
- 2) The Doctor > lives in the manor - works at the laboratory. Knows about medicine
- 3) The Writer > Nervous (why??) > hides something
- 4) The Medium > creepy - keeps talking about ghosts/curses
- 5) The Politician > a standup guy ---- here to get funds for his campaign
- 6) The Lawyer > helps the Lord with his will > knows about the will.





**EVIDENCE 1-6: The secret behind the bookshelf**

You pull the book from the shelf. *Click!* The bookshelf opens and reveals a narrow dark staircase leading downwards. The pungent air makes you wince. As you look down, you see muddy **footprints** leading up and down the staircase. On the steps, **drops of blood** glisten in the light that floods the darkness below. (Take *The Catacombs room card*)

**EVIDENCE 1-7: The Blackberg curse**

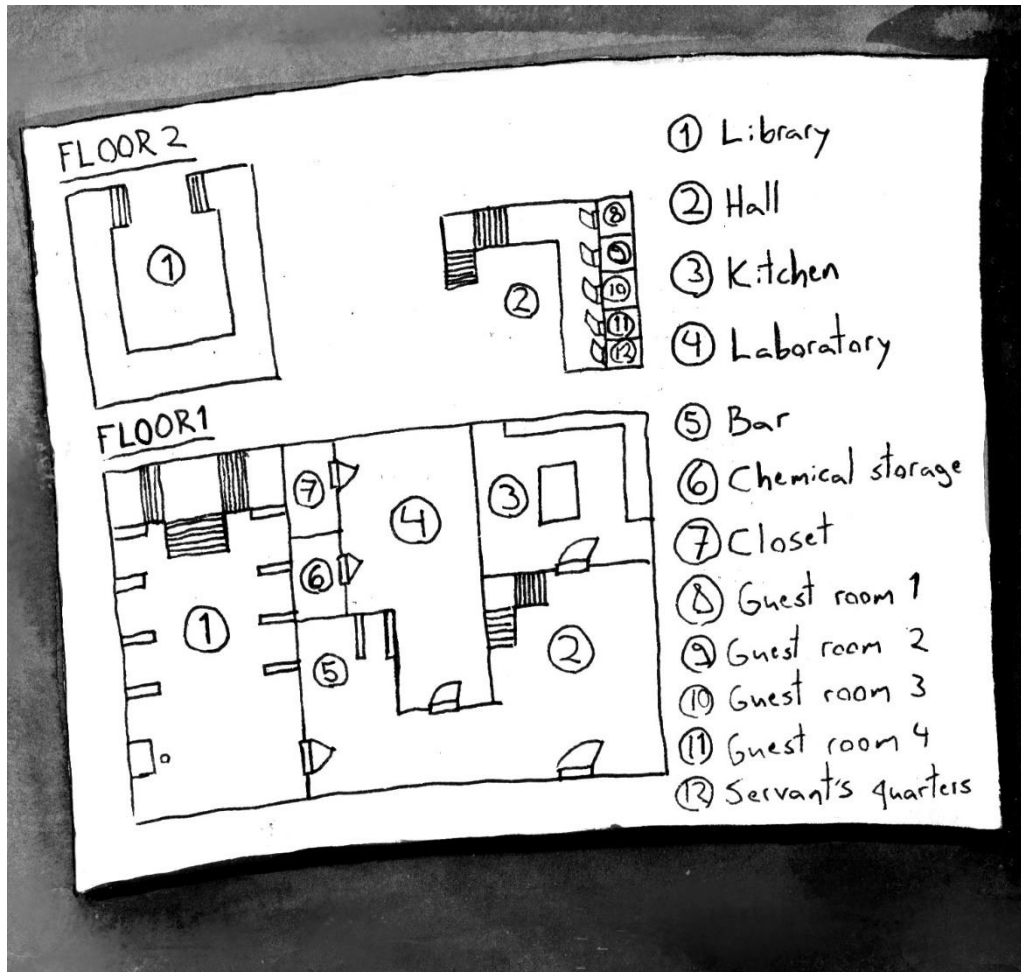
You flip through the book and land on a page marked with a bookmark. The section is titled “The Blackberg Curse”, written in sharp pitch black letters. It reads:

*Our blood is tainted. Tainted by our ancestor Lord Radcliffe I, who cursed us with his greed. Now, his descendants, shall pay for the atrocities he committed. Not one of us will live beyond the age of thirty. There is no escape from this fate you are born into. Anyone you bring into your life, will be plagued by our curse. Beware your tainted blood! Lord Blackberg V, 31<sup>st</sup> of June 1935*



**EVIDENCE 2-1: Map of the manor**

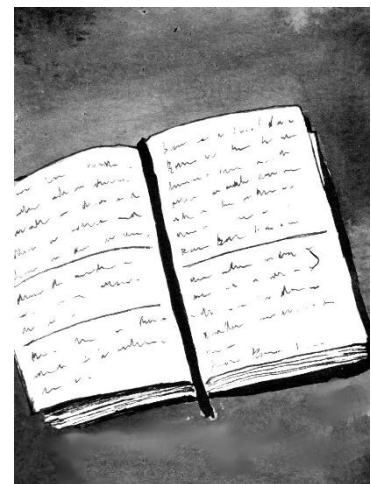
The butler hands you the map of the manor. It is simple, but shows how the rooms connect to each other.

**EVIDENCE 2-2: Diary entry**

Inside the safe are piles of legal documents. Nothing of interest except a journal. A page from a diary. I reads:

*The Blackberg curse is real. I did not believe in it at first, but now there is nothing else left to believe in. Everyone who enters this family meets the same fate. My father, my mother and my love Annabelle, all gone. I cannot drag anyone down with me. This curse has to end with me.*

*Roderick Blackberg 1<sup>st</sup> of June*



**EVIDENCE 2-3: Contents of room 1**

Fancy clothes and jewelry fill the wardrobe. **Size 42** high heel shoes in different colors are neatly placed in a row on the floor. You also find **piles of documents**, all relating to Lord Blackberg and his life. Someone was studying intimate details about the Lord. Moreover, you find **candles** that extinguish themselves with a press of a button. An audio recorder lies on the bed. You press the play button and you hear **strange whispers** coming from the machine.

**EVIDENCE 2-4: Contents of room 2**

You enter a dimly lit room. A suitcase is placed on the bed, alongside a collection of white and silver suits. The suitcase is locked. White dress shoes are tucked away under the bed. The bed looks like no one has ever slept on it. The room is in immaculate order.

**EVIDENCE 2-5: Contents of room 3**

Entering the room, you notice **scratches on the lock**. Someone must have **broken into this room**. A typewriter sits on a desk. In the closet you find various dresses and shirts. Nothing out of the usual. **Size 38** shoes are thrown on the bottom of the closet. All of the shoes are well enough maintained and clean. Your eyes quickly move from the closet to the floor. The floor is littered with **specs of dirt**.



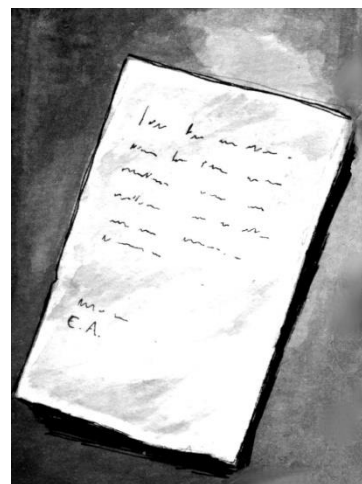
**EVIDENCE 2-6: Contents of room 4**

The desk is littered with various documents. Fresh ink is splattered on the desk. Someone has been **writing documents** here. The closet is filled with clean, sharp clothing. Vests, shirts and neckties are organized neatly in the closet. A red, silk shirt catches your attention. A piece of the shirt has been torn off. **Size 42**, snakeskin boots stick out of the floor. Mud covers the soles of the boots.

**EVIDENCE 2-7: Contents of the servant's quarters**

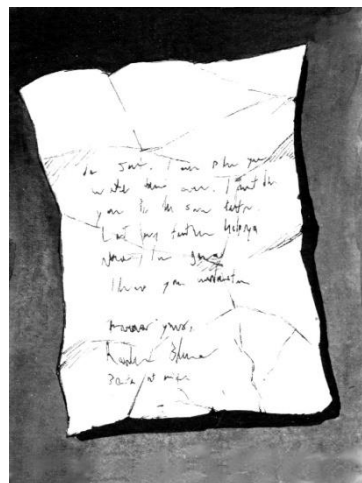
The only personal belongings in the room are the six copies of the exact same tuxedo. Beyond that, **size 41 dress shoes** are immaculately organized next to the door. The room is perfectly dusted, with an uncanny lack of stains or dirt. A letter is left on the desk:

*I am tired Master. I can not continue any longer. I have become too old to clean and maintain the house. My humblest apologies, but I have to leave this manor. I need to have my retirement while I still can. Kindest regards, E.A.*

**EVIDENCE 2-8: Letter from the victim**

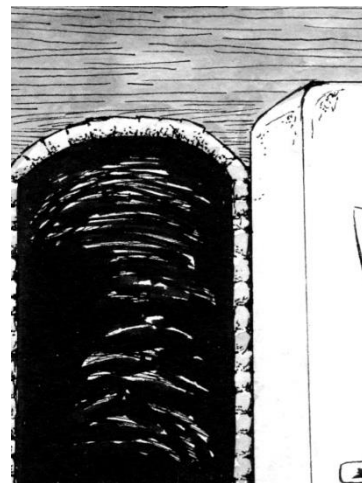
A crumpled letter. Dried tear drops are speckled all across the paper. It reads:

*I am sorry. I cannot plague you with this curse. I cannot damn you to the same fate. Let my fortune help you after I'm gone. I hope you understand. Forever yours, Roderick Blackberg 30<sup>th</sup> of October.*



**EVIDENCE 3-2: The secret behind the refrigerator**

A secret passage reveals itself behind the refrigerator. **Muddy steps come up** from the depths. A **trail of blood** drops glisten in the light. (*Take The Catacombs room card*)

**EVIDENCE 4-1: Materials for the experiment**

The closet is freezing cold. You turn on the lights and see dead bodies piled on the floor. These are not fresh, but have been dead for some time. The closet reeks of rot and dirt. On a nearby table is a note:

*Finally, reanimation of dead tissue! Last night at exactly 9pm, I made a breakthrough. An arm, once dead, was made alive again. By combining my chemical solution with the right amount of electric currency, I was able to defeat death itself. Lord will be very pleased in hearing this. This is how I will lift the Lord's "curse"!*



*Harvey Wingfield, 30<sup>th</sup> of October 9:15pm*

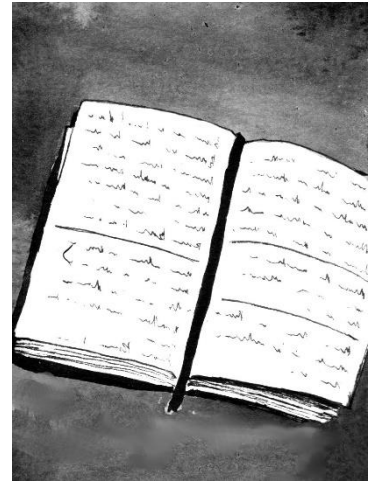
**EVIDENCE 4-2: The doctor's diary**

Inside the box you find the doctor's diary. The entry from yesterday reads:

*Journal of Harvey Wingfield, 30<sup>th</sup> of October 8:30pm.*

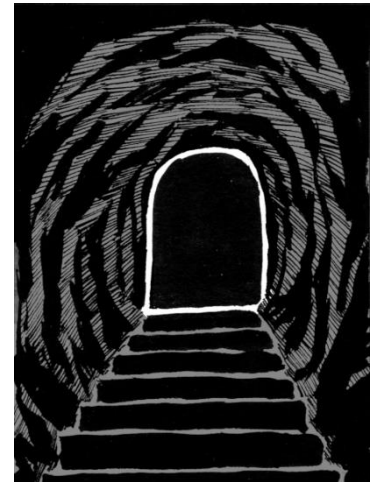
*The Lord grows more ill every night. His insomnia is getting worse. The Lord talked eagerly about the séance held last night at 6pm. He is under the spell of that medium. There are no answers in superstition, only in*

*science. My experiments have progressed well. I was able to acquire some fresh materials for my work last night. I will make the Lord see the value in my work, before it is too late for him. p.s. someone has broken into the chemical storage. Order refills on chloral hydrate.*

**EVIDENCE 5-1: A light in the dark**

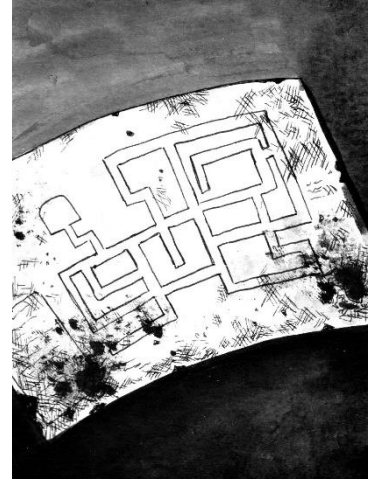
You approach the horrific statue and hear a click under you. The statue moves away revealing a steep staircase. You can see light shining atop the stairs. You walk up and press a lever. A door slides away, revealing the warm light of the manor.

*(Take The Kitchen room card & Evidence 3-2 & Evidence 1-6)*

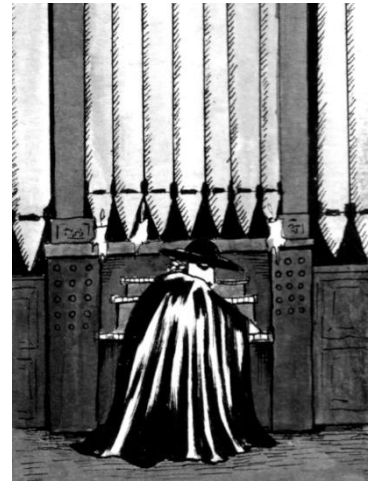


**EVIDENCE 5-2: Map of the catacombs**

A complicated map of the catacombs shows the secret passageways underneath the manor. Water has nearly destroyed it. The map shows to access the tunnels. Sadly, the explanations are made unreadable due to the damage. The map has the insignia of *London Metropolitan Archive* stamped in the lower right corner. This map came outside of this manor.

**EVIDENCE 5-3: The hidden chamber**

You open the locked door and enter a candle lit chamber. Right in front of you, a large church organ dominates the wall. Behind it, a **small figure cloaked in black** plays a haunting, yet beautiful melody. The figure spins around in shock as you approach it. *(Take the Musician character card)*



**EVIDENCE 2-9: A newspaper clipping****THE WEEKLY TATTLE****SCANDAL!**

The bestselling author of "Death in the Wings", Emily Mallory, has been seen coming and going at the Blackberg manor. It was only last January, when Lord Roderick Blackberg's wife, Annabelle Hawthorne, passed away suddenly due to a mysterious illness. Now Lord Blackberg has fallen ill of the same illness that claimed his wife. What is Mallory doing in the manor? An affair? A plot to get a spot in Blackberg's will? Something more sinister? Read more on page 5!

**PRIME MINISTER  
CANDIDATE IN  
MORE  
FINANCIAL  
TROUBLE**

The general election candidate, Jonathan Hawkes, faces trouble with his political campaign. Hawkes, is running out of financial resources, as his political campaign grows larger and more ambitious. More on page 9!

**AT LAST: THE CURE FOR  
BALDNESS!**

Is your hair loss causing you anxiety? Do you no longer look like the young man you once were? Here comes your savior: Baldaway! The new miracle product from Madame Zastr! Just apply an even coating of Baldaway on your head every night and your hair will be more lush, more thick and more attractive in no time! Single serve bottles for the miraculous **price of only 25,99!**

**MORE GRAVES  
EXHUMED!**

Another series of strange grave robberies took place last night at Silent Meadows Cemetery. The incidents perplex authorities, as all of the valuables have been left in the graves. Instead, only the bodies have disappeared. More on page 11!



**EVIDENCE 1-2: The will**

Lord Blackberg's will. One corner of the document is stained brown. Dried blood perhaps? It reads:

**LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT  
OF****LORD RODERICK BLACKBERG**

Hereby I pass down my property as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> Beneficiary: Emily Mallory

2<sup>nd</sup> Beneficiary: Ernest Ashmore

3<sup>rd</sup> Beneficiary: Harvey Wingfield

4<sup>th</sup> Beneficiary: Jonathan Hawkes

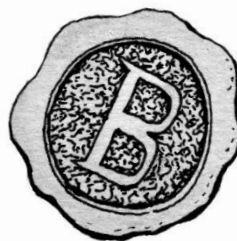
Each beneficiary will get 25% of my property equally.

I sign this document with a clarity of mind and my full consent:

*Roderick Blackberg*

30<sup>th</sup> of October

Blackberg Manor



EVIDENCE 3-1: The will

Lord Blackberg's will. It reads:

**LAST WILL AND TESTAMENT  
OF**

LORD RODERICK BLACKBERG

Hereby I pass down my property to my sole beneficiary:

**Emily Mallory.**

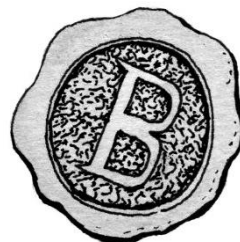
All my property and funds will be left in their entirety to the person named in this letter.

I sign this document with a clarity of mind and my full consent:

*Roderick Blackberg*

30<sup>th</sup> of October

Blackberg Manor



## 4.5 Puzzles

### Teacher guide: Puzzles

During gameplay, students can encounter puzzles, which reward them with evidence cards. In order to begin solving a puzzle, students have to choose an action on a room card, which indicates that it contains a puzzle. For example, an action might have the following text: **Investigate the body** (*Solve the puzzle*). If the students choose to complete a puzzle, they pay the required brain power cost and receive all of the required puzzle pieces from the teacher. After finishing the puzzle, the students tell their answer to the teacher and receive a reward from the teacher. Each reward is indicated in the puzzle's teacher guide.

Puzzles are designed to be challenging and require a level of group communication skills to solve. It is also possible to solve each puzzle individually, but this might require more guidance from the teacher. Each puzzle is self-contained and does not require outside knowledge or items outside of the puzzle. Further teacher guidance on how to solve each and how to give appropriate hints are provided before every puzzle.

It is recommended to print out the puzzles on separate papers and cut them into smaller pieces. This allows the students to closer examine and move the game pieces among the group members.

### 4.5.1 Paintings

#### Teacher guide: The Paintings

The first puzzle requires students to open a book locked with a 9-number lock. The puzzle consists of 3 pieces: the locked book, the paintings and a maze.

#### How to solve:

- 1) The students solve the maze. They should notice that the 4x4 grid represents the paintings. By comparing the trail and the paintings, students get nine numbers from the family names. The nine numbers represent the code needed to open the book
- 2) The code for the lockbox is **133275475**.

#### Hints:

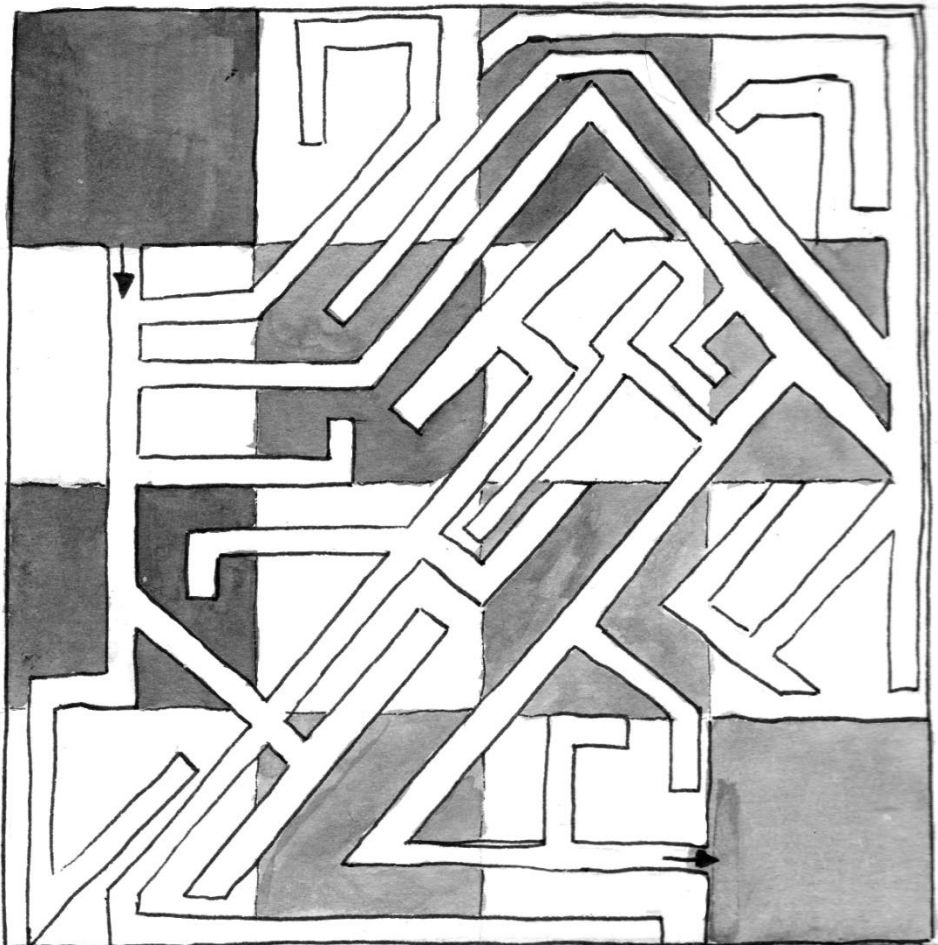
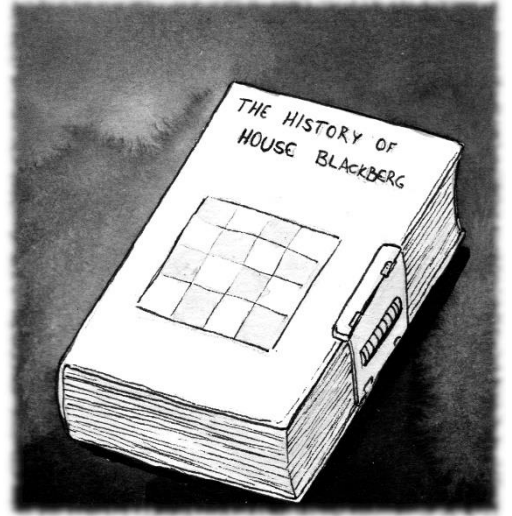
- 1) In what order are the paintings in? Do they have anything in common with the maze?
- 2) What can you see in the maze? Are there any similarities to the paintings?

#### Reward:

- EVIDENCE 1-7: Blackberg curse

## THE PAINTINGS

While investigating the room, a series of paintings catch your attention. The grim faces make your skin crawl. Next to the paintings is a small plaque titled: The Blackberg Family Tree. Upon further investigation you find a large book titled "The History of House Blackberg". A strange design decorates the cover. The book is locked shut with a combination lock with nine numbers on it.

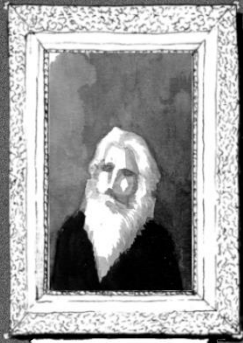




\*LORD RADCLIFFE 1\*



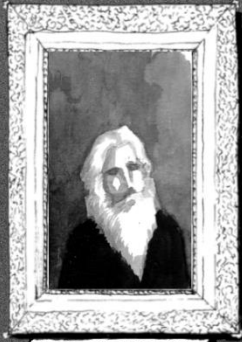
\*LADY RICE 7\*



\*LORD RADCLIFFE 2\*



\*LADY BECKFORD 6\*



\*LORD STEVENSON 3\*



\*LADY RADCLIFFE 3\*



\*LORD LEWIS 1\*



\*LADY STEVENSON 7\*



\*LORD LEWIS 2\*



\*LADY RUTHVEN 8\*



\*LORD BLACKBERG 5\*



\*LADY LEWIS 2\*



\*LORD BLACKBERG 6\*



\*LADY JACKSON 4\*



\*LORD BLACKBERG 7\*



\*LADY HAWTHORNE 5\*

### 4.5.2 The Bookshelf

#### Teacher guide: The Bookshelf

In this puzzle, the students have to choose one of the books from the bookshelf. The puzzle consists of a bookshelf and a blackboard with numbers on it.

#### How to solve:

- 1) The rows on the blackboard represent the shelves in the bookshelf.
- 2) The numbers on the blackboard represent books on the bookshelf. The first number represents the number of the book on the shelf. For example in 2;5, the book is Carrie and in 2;3, the book is ABC Murders.
- 3) The second number represents a letter in the books name. Getting the letter requires the students to count which letter the number represents in the book's name. For example, in 2;5, "I" is the fifth letter in Carrie.
- 4) The correct book is Time Machine.

#### Hints:

- 1) What do the numbers mean? How many rows are there on the blackboard? How about the bookshelf? Could there be a connection?
- 2) How do you get the correct book? What do you need to find it? Could the blackboard have any useful information?

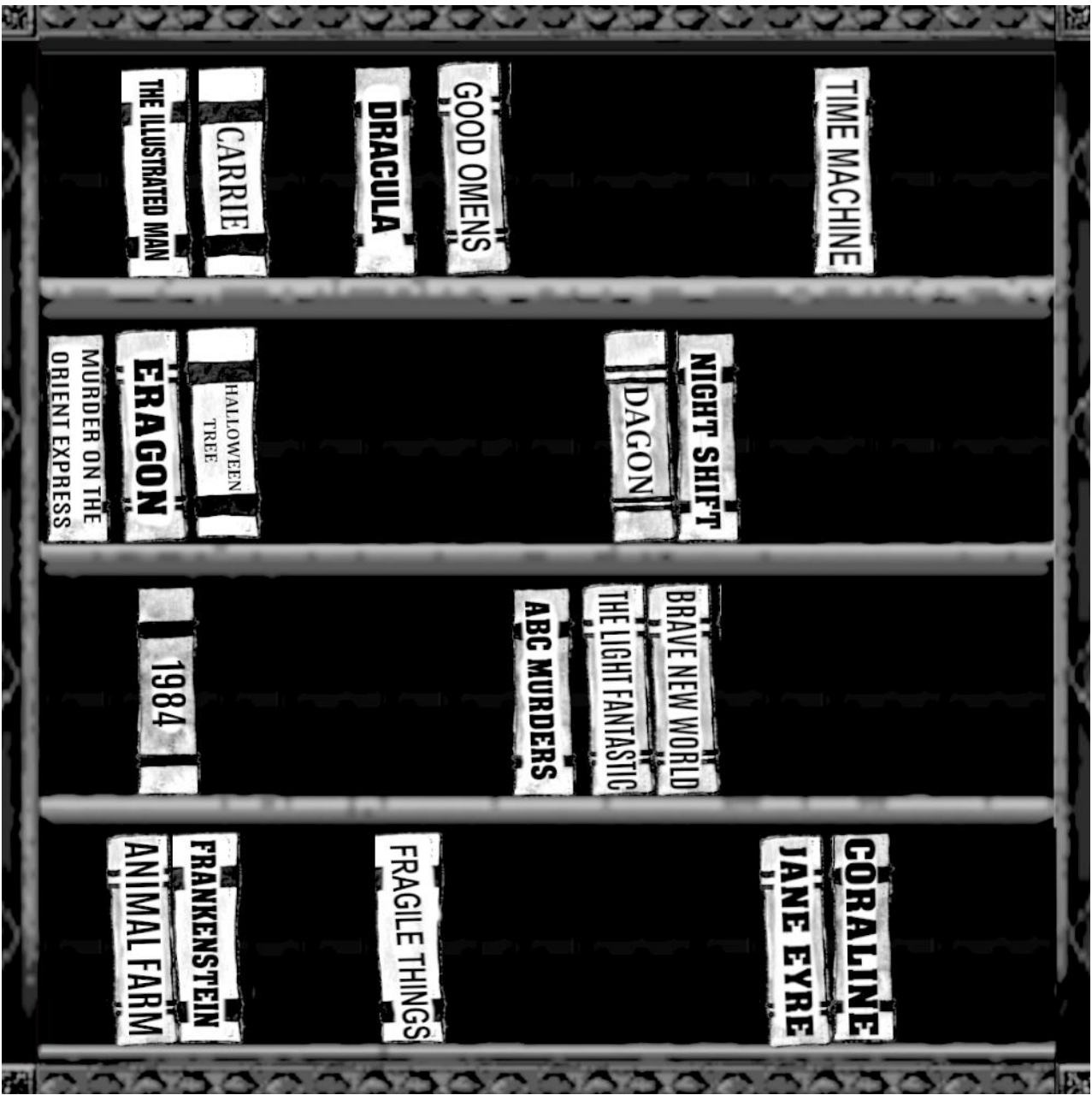
#### Reward:

- EVIDENCE 1-2: The secret behind the bookshelf

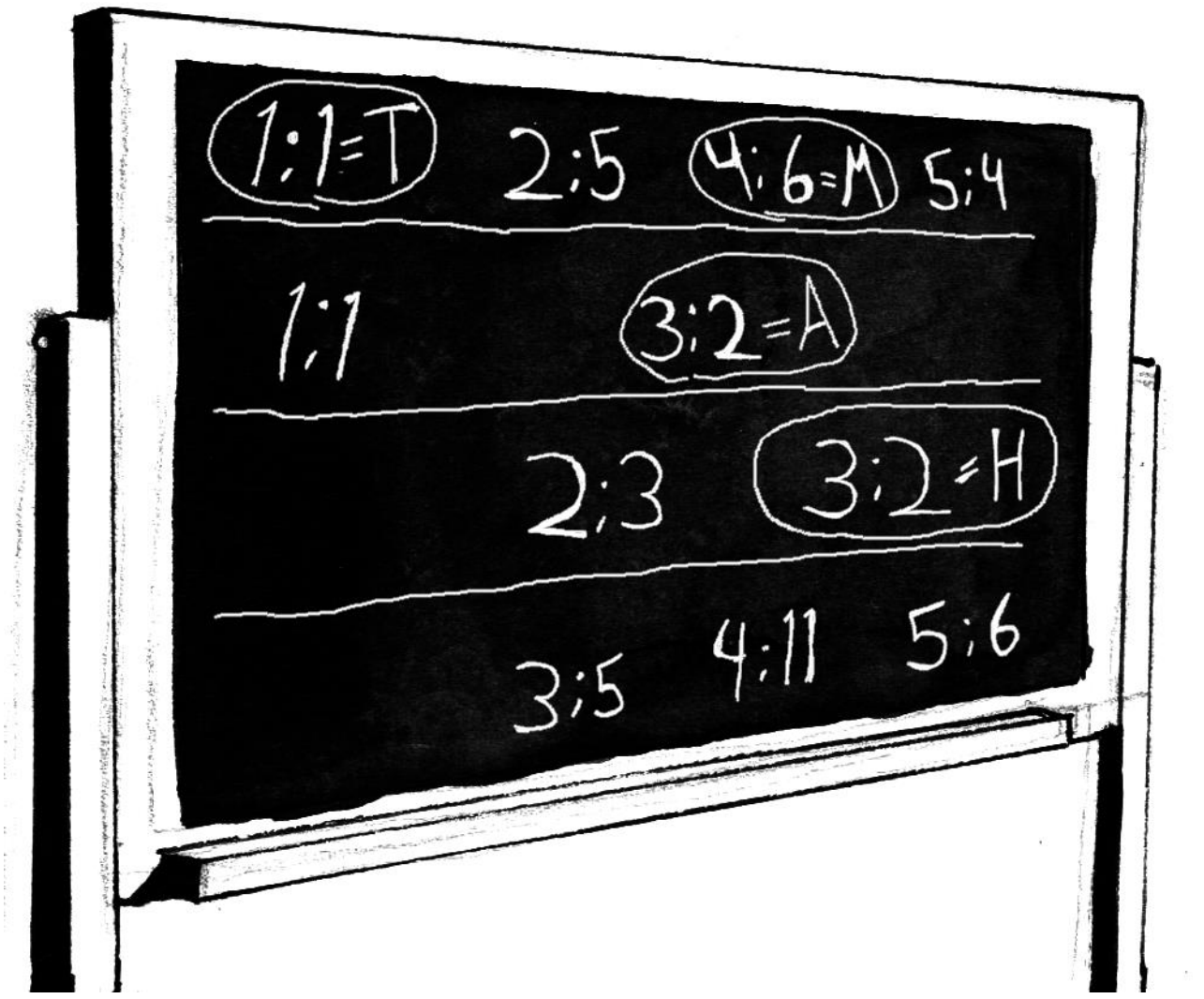


## THE BOOKSHELF

Someone has rummaged through one of the bookshelves. Was someone searching for something specific? Perhaps a specific book? Next to the shelf is a blackboard. What could the numbers mean?







### 4.5.3 The Desk

#### **Teacher guide: The Desk**

The third puzzle requires the students to open a desk drawer with three keys. The puzzle consists of the desk, three keys and a painting.

#### **How to solve:**

- 1) By comparing the icons on the keys to the painting, the students will get the correct order of the keys. The locks go from top to bottom, much like the elements in the painting. The crown sits on top of the knight and the knight sits on top of the horse.
- 2) The correct order from top to bottom is: crown > knight > horse

#### **Hints:**

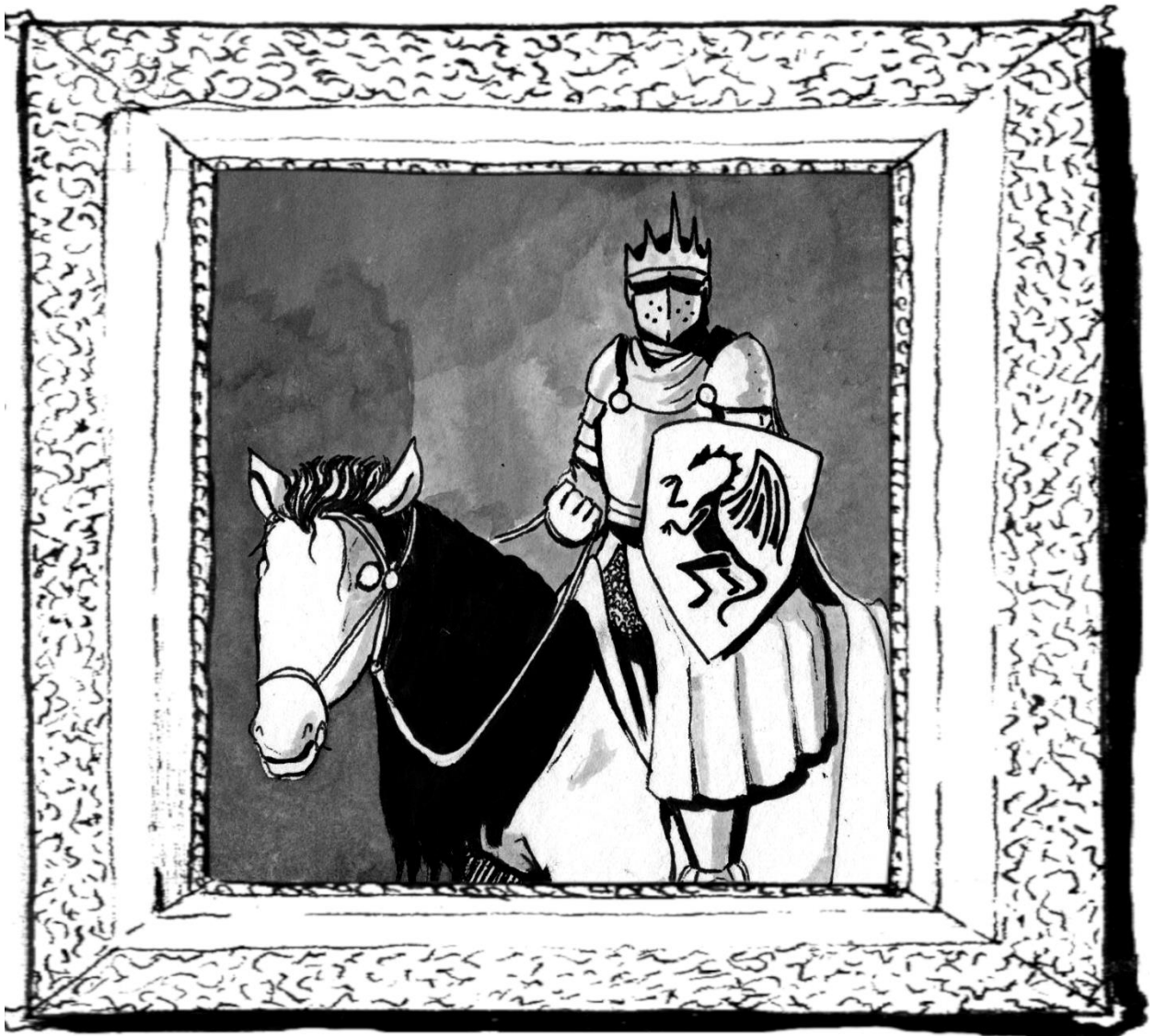
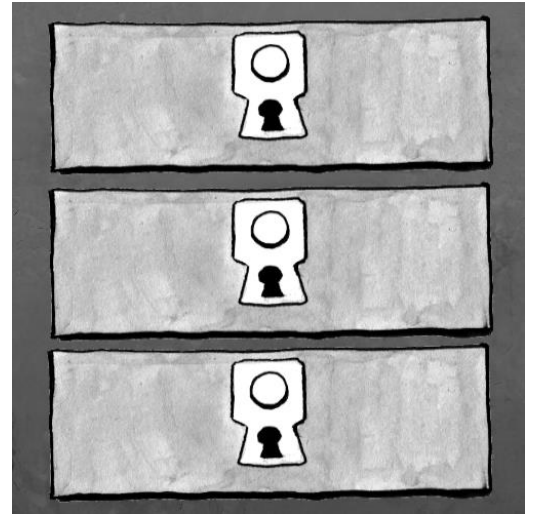
- 1) How are the keys shaped? How do they relate to the painting?
- 2) In what order are locks in? Could this relate to the painting in any way?

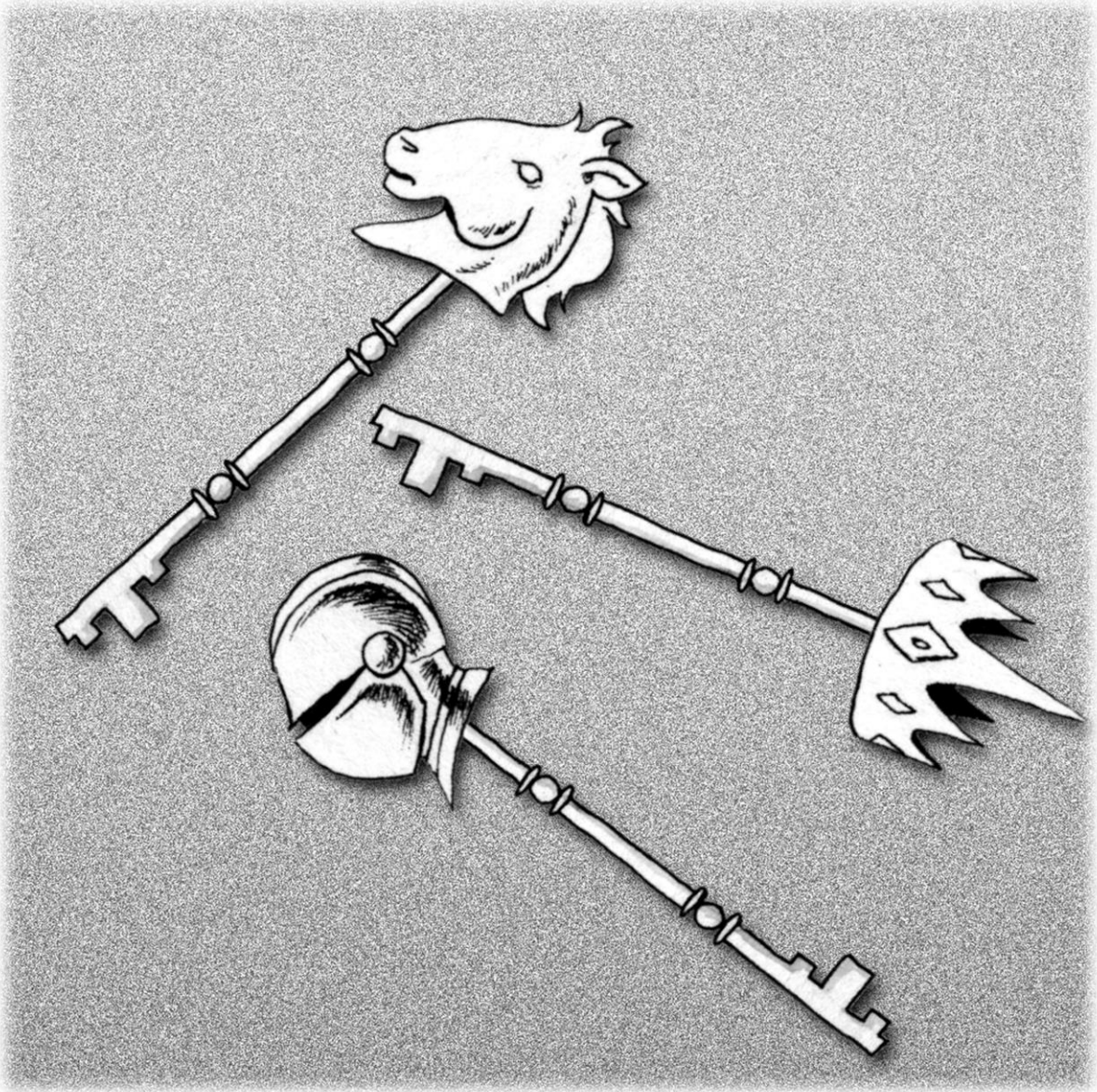
#### **Reward:**

- EVIDENCE 1-3: The Will

## THE DESK

A painting depicting a knight in armor fills the wall behind the desk. Across from the painting, sits the unmoving body of Lord Blackberg.. Three keys are scattered next to the body. Under the desk, you find a drawer locked with three sturdy locks. Something important must be hidden inside. Which keys go to which locks?





#### 4.5.4 The Pocket watch

##### Teacher guide: Bookshelf puzzle

This puzzle requires the students to read and comprehend a short poem by E.F. Hayward, titled Flowers to Give. The puzzle includes: the poem, a series of flower illustrations, and a decorative pocket watch with flower shaped pointers and pictures in place of numbers.

##### How to solve:

- 3) Students have to read and understand what the poem is about.
- 4) The pointers of the watch represent the flowers mentioned in the poem: pansies and orchids. The drawings next to the poem help illustrate what the two flowers look like. The other two flowers are red herrings.
- 5) The pointers have to be placed according to the poem. The orchid pointer points to a grave. This is explained at the end of the poem, where the narrator mentions that orchids are left after death on a grave.
- 6) The pansy pointer has to point to the image representing friends. The main theme of the poem is to give flowers to your friends before they are gone. The words them and there are highlighted to make students focus more on this aspect of the poem.
- 7) The watch has to be set to 12.30.

##### Hints:

- What do the pointers of the watch look like to you?
- Who are “them” that the narrator refers to? What does the narrator encourage the reader to do with “them”?

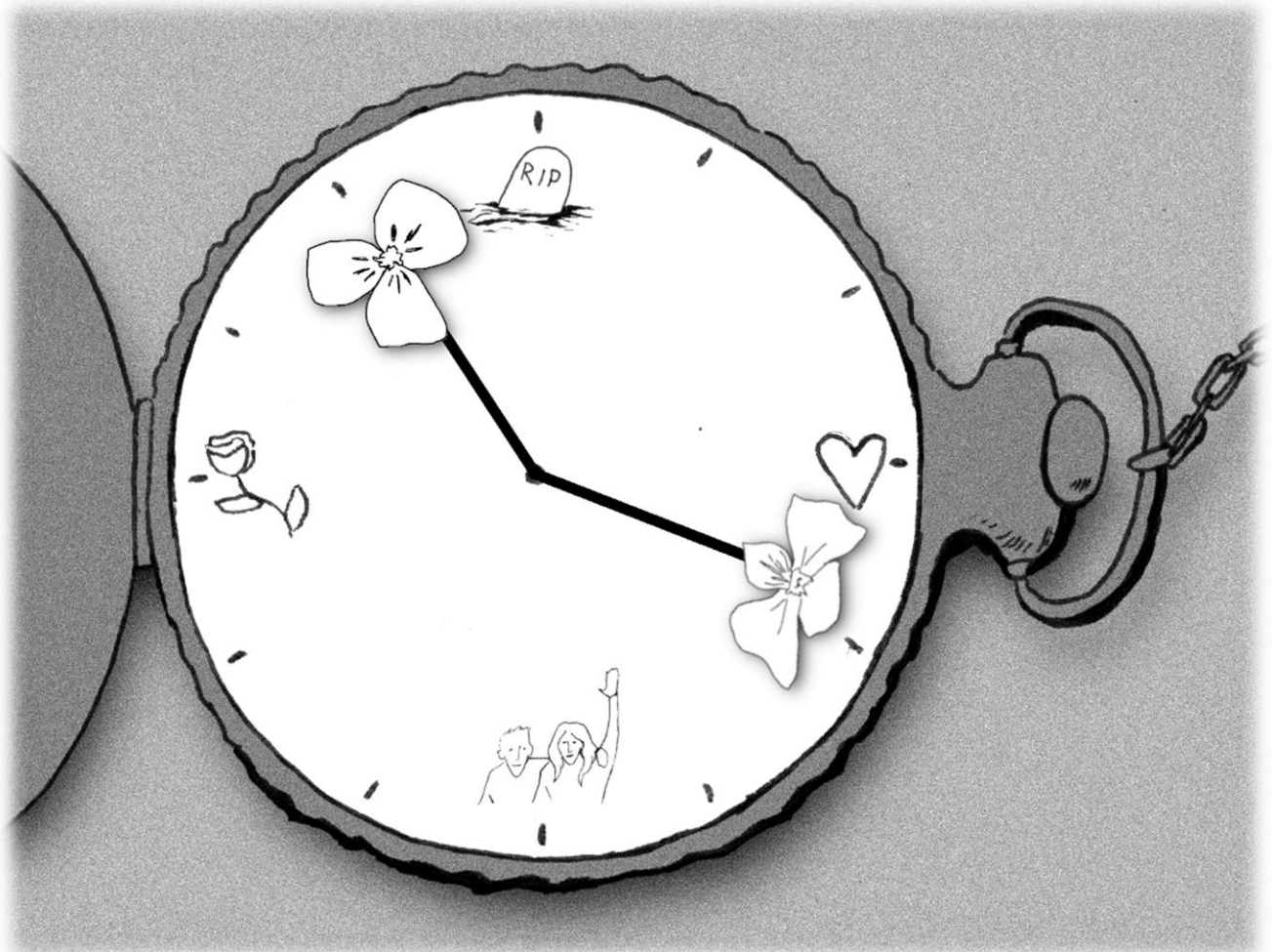


**Reward:**

- EVIDENCE 1-3: Broken watch
- EVIDENCE 1-4: The picture inside the pocket watch

## THE POCKET WATCH

You open the watch and a small folded paper falls on the floor. You pick it up and notice it is a poem called "Flowers to Give". The pocket watch has strange markings on it. The two pointers are shaped like flowers.



## FLOWERS TO GIVE

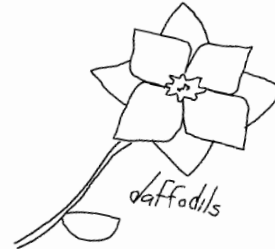
E. F. Hayward

Don't wait until your friends are dead,

Before you bring **them** flowers,

Go pluck a **pansy** from its bed,

And cheer **their** living hours.

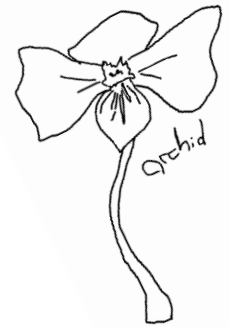


Don't wait until they've passed away,

Then give them but a tear,

But do, instead something today,

To cheer them while they're here.

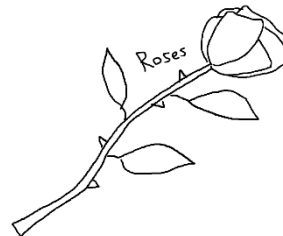


A pleasant word, or look, or smile,

Will help them while they live,

Just try it once, 'tis worth the while

These are the flowers to give.

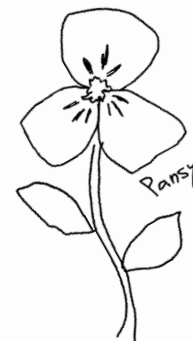


Just try today, to help, somehow,

Some aching heart, and head;

You'd better give **them** pansies now,

Than orchids, when they're dead.



#### 4.5.5 The Safe

##### **Teacher guide: The safe**

This puzzle requires the students to open a safe, by using the right combination. The puzzle consists of a drink recipe, a bar shelf and the safe.

##### **How to solve:**

- 1) The puzzle is solved by looking at the recipe and the bottles on the shelf. By going through the recipe in sequence, the students will get the correct code to open the safe.
- 2) The correct code is left 27, right 20, left 2, right 2

##### **Hints:**

- 1) How are the bottles marked? What could that mean?

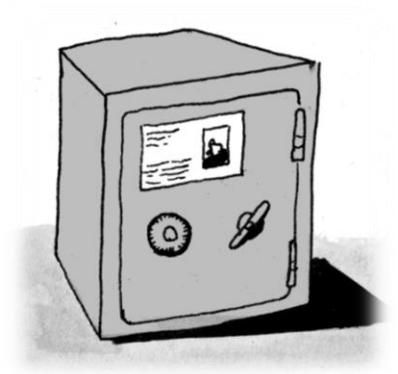
##### **Reward:**

- EVIDENCE 2-2: The diary entry
- EVIDENCE 2-3: Newspaper clipping



## THE SAFE

A safe with a dial lock is hidden underneath the bar counter. A drink recipe has been plastered on its door. A safe like this should open by turning the dial in specific directions. Behind you is a shelf filled with several different drinks. The bottles are peculiarly marked.

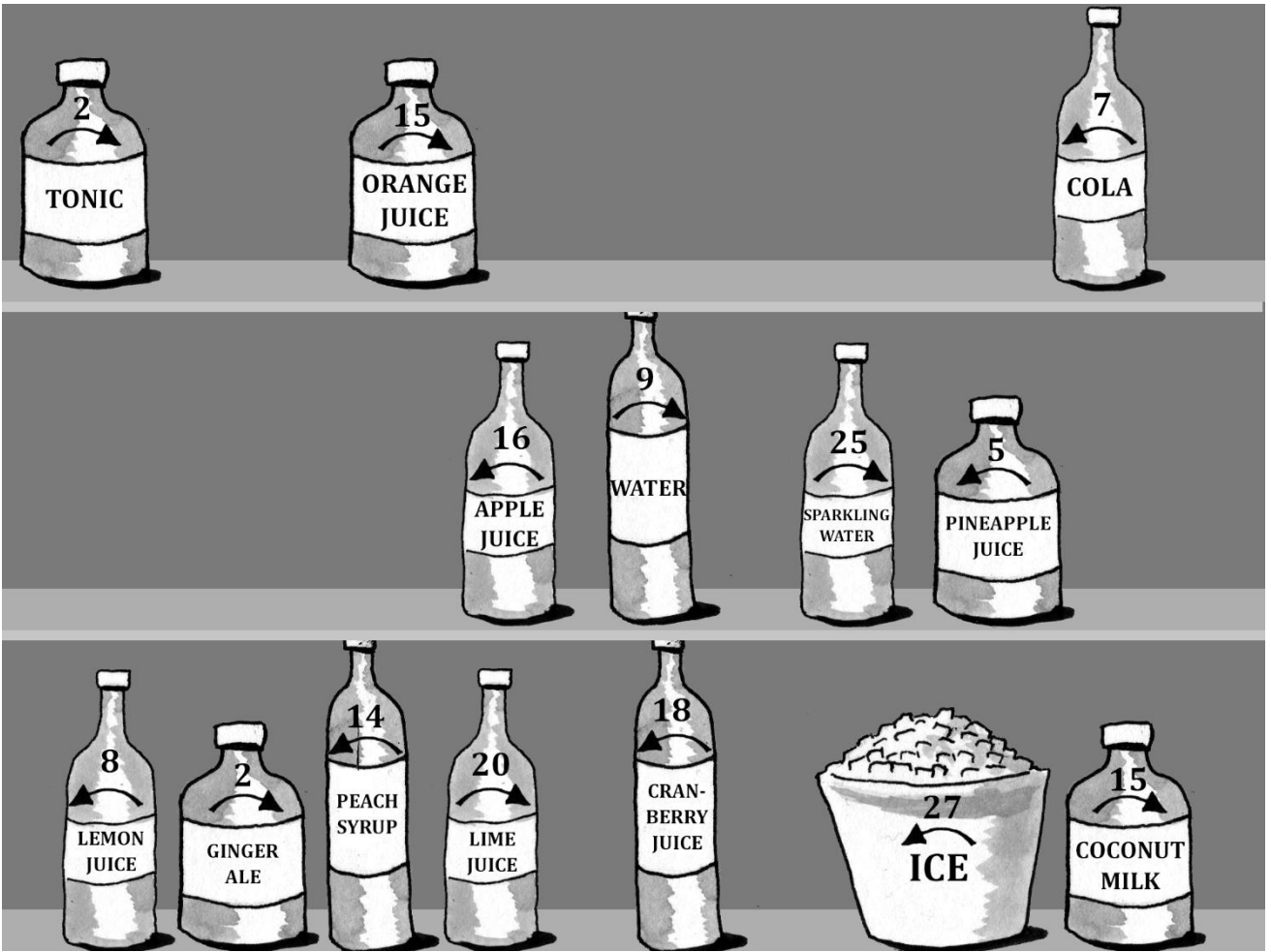


### **The Master's favorite:**

- Ginger ale
- Lime juice
- tonic
- Ice

First, place crushed ice in a glass. Then, pour in lime juice followed with ginger ale. Finally, add in the tonic and serve.





#### 4.5.6 The Rooms

##### Teacher guide: The rooms

The rooms puzzle is reused for multiple interactions in the Hall. Every time a student group decides to search one of the rooms, provide them with this puzzle. After solving the puzzle, give students the room contents corresponding to their choice. Alternatively, the students can solve this puzzle once and receive all of the rewards at once. This puzzle requires the students to choose correct keys for the five doors. The puzzle has three components: the doors, the paintings and the keys.

##### How to solve:

- 1) The students begin by deciphering the correct order of the locked doors. By inspecting the paintings, students will notice that the paintings form a food chain (frog eats ant, stork eats frog, hawk eats stork etc.).
- 2) The eventual food chain is: ant > frog > stork > hawk > snake > badger > jaguar > lion.
- 3) On top of the first door is a stuffed stork and on top of the fourth is a badger. Therefore, the students have to use the keys based on food chain.
- 4) The solution is: first room = stork key, second room = hawk key, third room = snake key, fourth room = badger key, servants' quarters = jaguar key

##### Hints:

- 1) How many paintings are there? How many keys are there? Which animals are on the paintings? How about the keys?
- 2) What is on top of the doors? What could that mean?
- 3) What are the animals doing? Are there any similarities the paintings?

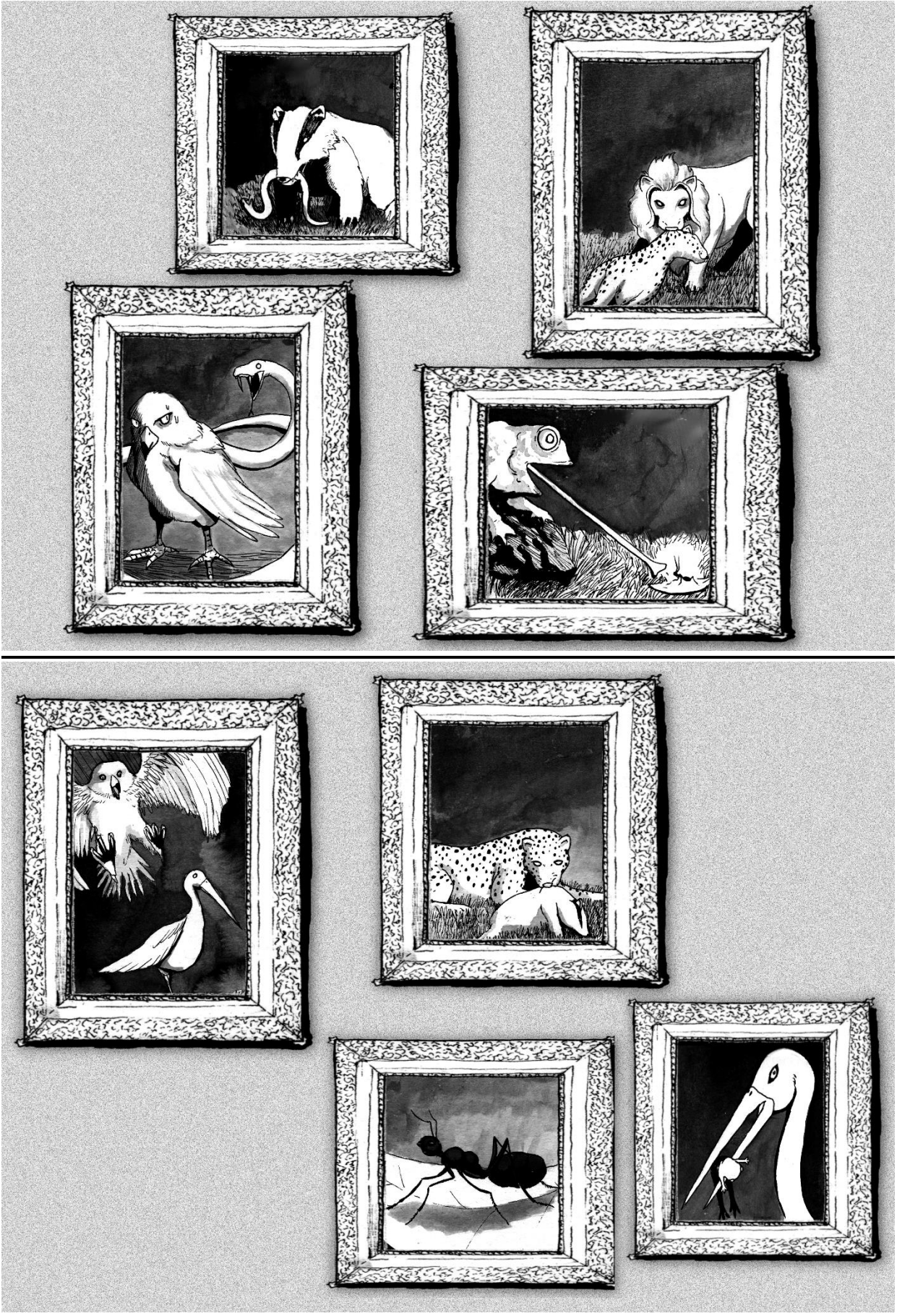
Reward:

- **EVIDENCE 2-3: Contents of room**
- **EVIDENCE 2-4: Contents of room**
- **EVIDENCE 2-5: Contents of room**
- **EVIDENCE 2-6: Contents of room**
- **EVIDENCE 2-7: Contents of room**

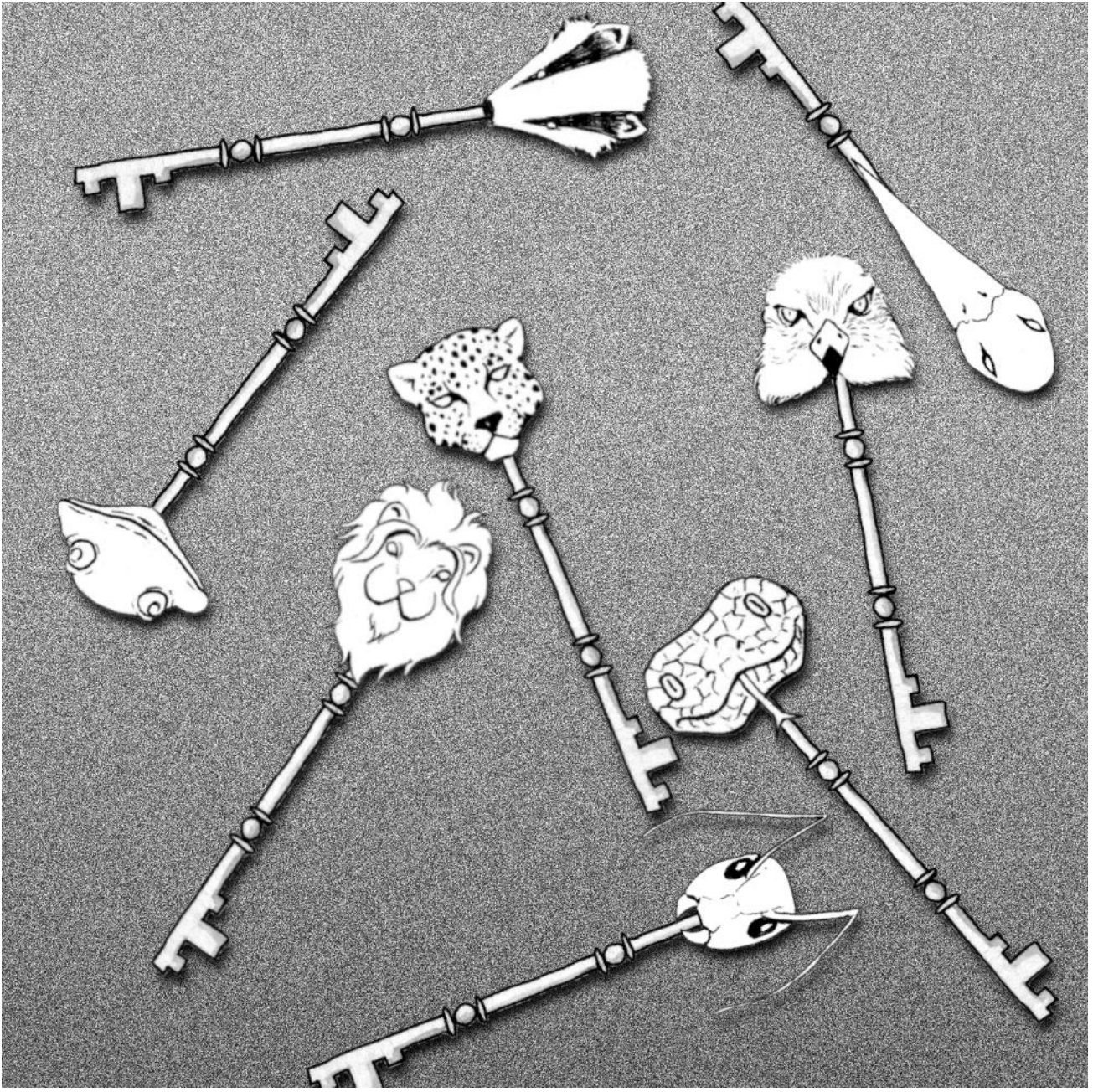
## THE ROOMS

As you walk up the steps, you see a series of paintings depicting various animals. The grizzly pictures startle you to the core. All of the rooms at top of the stairs are locked. The butler hands a collection of animal shaped keys. Unfortunately, he does not remember which key fits each door.









#### 4.5.7 The Cupboards

##### **Teacher guide: The Cupboards**

In this puzzle, the students have to press the buttons in a correct sequence. The puzzle consists of the button panel and a recipe box.

##### **How to solve:**

- 1) The correct sequence is gained by counting all the recipes with the same design.
- 2) The correct sequence is: button 4, button 2, button 1, button 3

##### **Hints:**

- 1) Do the buttons have anything in common with the recipes?
- 2) What could the patterns mean? How many of each pattern is there?

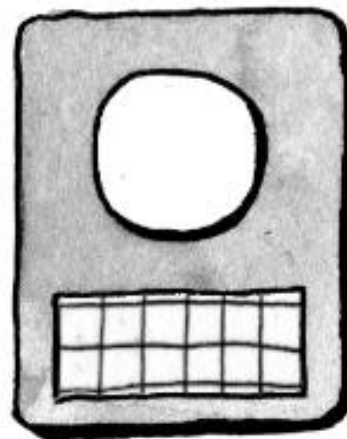
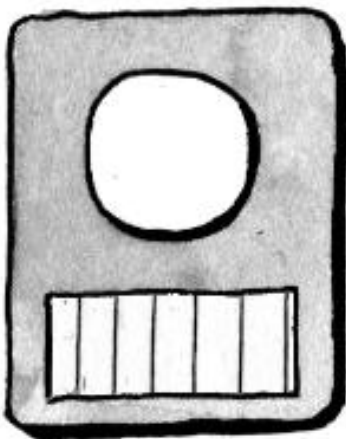
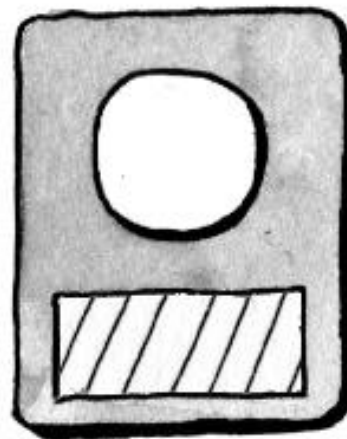
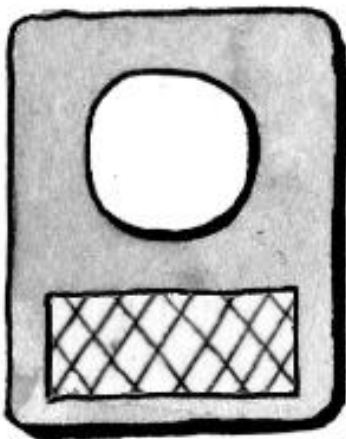
##### **Reward:**

- EVIDENCE 3-1: The Will



## THE CUPBOARDS

You begin going through the cupboards. A panel has been hidden at the back of one of the cupboards. The panel has four buttons on it. You try pressing the buttons randomly. After pressing the fourth button, you hear a quick buzz and nothing happens. Each button has to be pressed only once it seems. There must be a specific sequence to the buttons. Next to the panel you find a recipe box. The labels have curious designs on them.





#### 4.5.8 The Draft

##### **Teacher guide: The Draft**

Here students have to attach fuses to a fuse box in the right order. The puzzle includes a fuse box with 12 places, 4 fuses and a helpful note.

##### **How to solve:**

- 1) The puzzle is solved by looking at the icons on the fuses. The note informs where each fuse has to be placed based on their icons.
- 2) The correct order is: Z fuse in place 1, star fuse in place 9, CCC fuse in place 6 and N fuse in place 12

##### **Hints:**

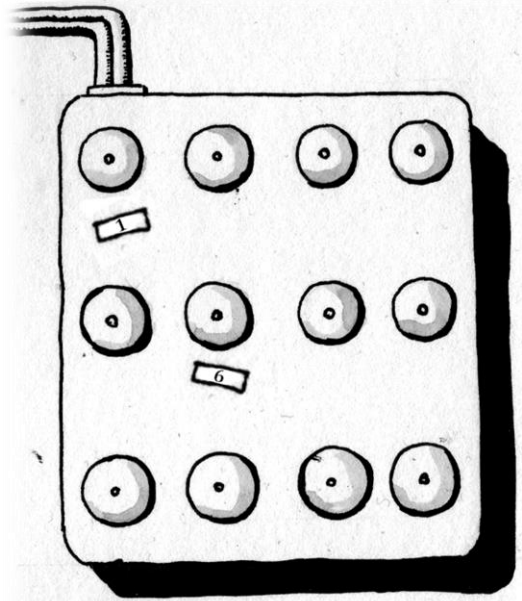
- 1) What icons do you see on the fuses? Are they similar to anything else you see?

##### **Reward:**

- EVIDENCE 3-2: The secret behind the refrigerator

## THE DRAFT

You try to locate the source of the draft in the kitchen. To your surprise, it leads you to the refrigerator. You can see scratch marks next to the fridge. Someone has moved the fridge. You try to move it, but with no success. There must be a system for opening the fridge. A fuse box is hidden next to the fridge. You pick out four fuses from the fuseboard. A small pamphlet is glued on the fuse box door, with the words "In the case of malfunction". Perhaps the fuses have to be placed in a correct order.



### IN THE CASE OF MALFUNCTION:

$$\textcircled{Z} = 1$$

$$\star = 9$$

$$\textcircled{\text{skull}} = 2$$

$$+ = 10$$

$$\textcircled{\text{triangle with diagonal lines}} = 3$$

$$\bigcirc = 11$$

$$\textcircled{\text{triangle with diagonal lines and slash}} = 4$$

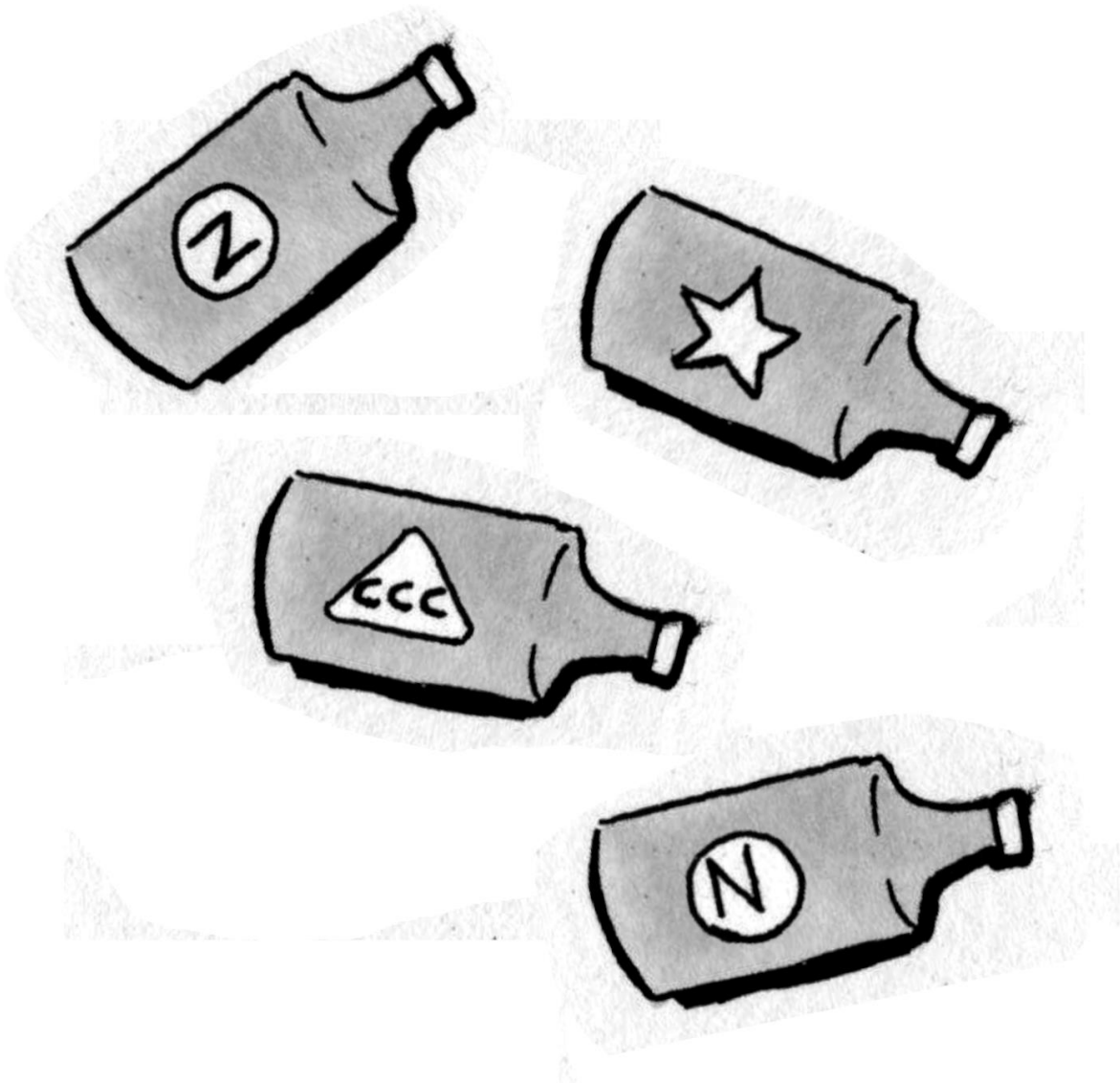
$$\textcircled{N} = 12$$

$$\text{=} = 5$$

$$\textcircled{\text{ccc}} = 6$$

$$\vee = 7$$

$$\textcircled{\text{cc}} = 8$$



#### 4.5.9 Bed

##### **Teacher guide: The Bed**

Here students have to search for correct elements in the periodic table. The puzzle contains a lockbox, the periodic table and a note. If the students are unable to see the items in the periodic table, they can also search one from the internet.

##### **How to solve:**

- 1) The students have to form a six letter word based on the clues given. The word is formed by looking at the note and comparing it to the periodic table. The students have to search for four elements in the table.
- 2) The correct elements are: Osmium (Os) > Iridium (Ir) > Iodine (I) > Sulfur (S)
- 3) The correct answer is OSIRIS.

##### **Hints:**

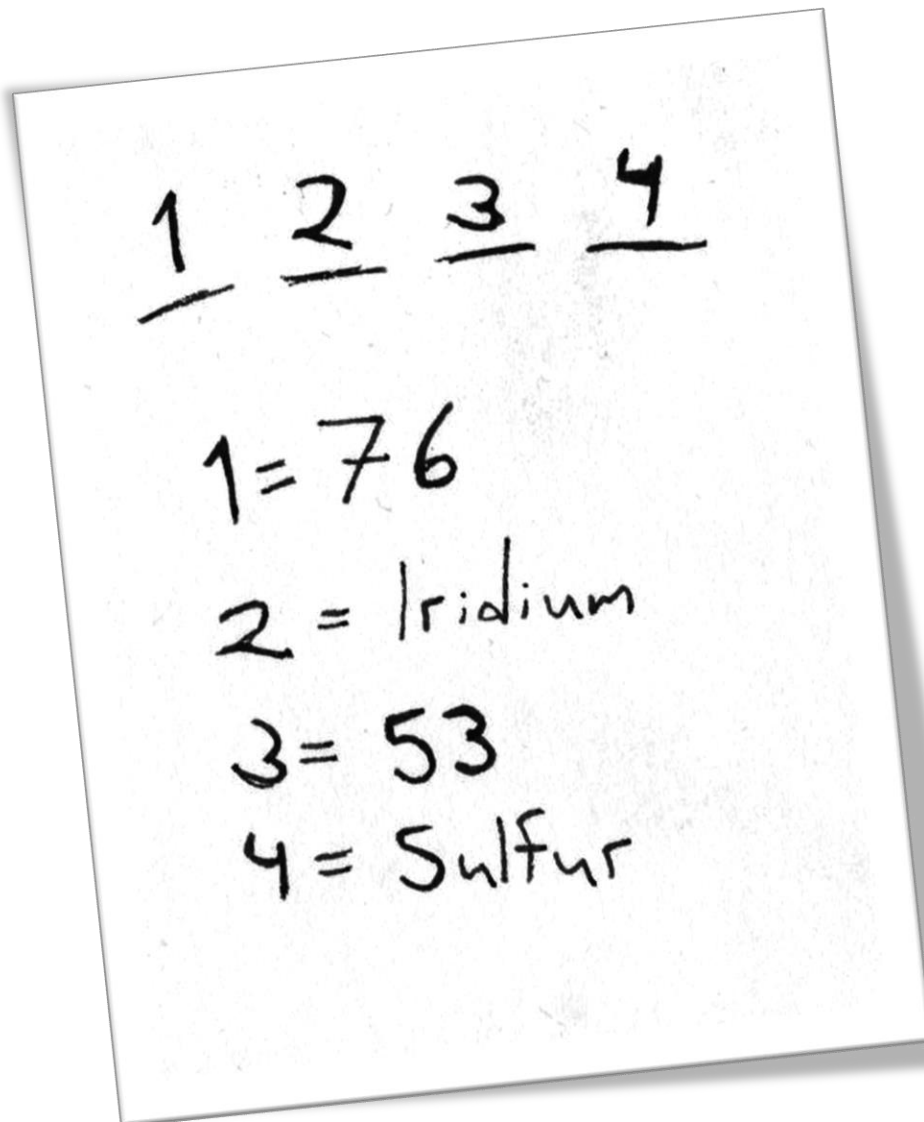
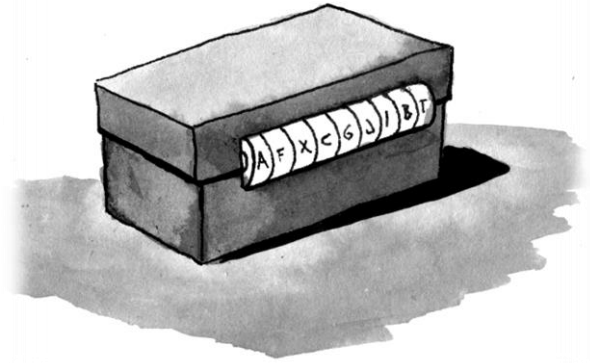
- 1) What do you need to open the lock? Where could you get those?
- 2) What information does the note contain? How does it relate to the table?

##### **Reward:**

- EVIDENCE 4-2: The doctor's diary

## THE BED

This must be the doctor's bed. It is layered with scientific articles, research notes and various drawings. You can hardly understand anything written on the notes. Under the bed you find a small box. Something rattles inside. The box is locked with a word lock. The lock has six letters on it. Maybe the surrounding items might help.



1	H Hydrogen	2	He Helium
3	Li Lithium	4	Be Beryllium
11	Na Sodium	12	Mg Magnesium
19	K Potassium	20	Ca Calcium
37	Rb Rubidium	38	Sr Strontium
55	Cs Cesium	56	Ba Barium
87	Fr Francium	88	Ra Radium
21	Sc Scandium	22	Ti Titanium
39	Y Yttrium	40	Zr Zirconium
57	La Lanthanum	58	Ce Cerium
89	Ac Actinium	90	Th Thorium
23	V Vanadium	24	Cr Chromium
41	Nb Niobium	42	Mo Molybdenum
73	Ta Tantalum	74	W Tungsten
105	Db Dubnium	106	Sg Seaborgium
25	Mn Manganese	26	Fe Iron
43	Tc Technetium	44	Ru Ruthenium
75	Re Rhenium	76	Os Osmium
107	Bh Bohrium	108	Hs Hassium
27	Co Cobalt	28	Ni Nickel
45	Rh Rhodium	46	Pd Palladium
77	Ir Iridium	78	Pt Platinum
109	Mt Meitnerium	110	Ds Darmstadtium
29	Cu Copper	30	Zn Zinc
47	Ag Silver	48	Cd Cadmium
79	Au Gold	80	Hg Mercury
111	Rg Roentgenium	112	Cn Copernicium
31	Ga Gallium	32	Ge Germanium
49	In Indium	50	Sn Tin
81	Tl Thallium	82	Pb Lead
113	Nh Nihonium	114	Fl Flerovium
5	B Boron	6	C Carbon
13	Al Aluminum	14	Si Silicon
31	Ga Gallium	32	Ge Germanium
49	In Indium	50	Sn Tin
81	Tl Thallium	82	Pb Lead
113	Nh Nihonium	114	Fl Flerovium
7	N Nitrogen	8	O Oxygen
15	P Phosphorus	16	S Sulfur
33	As Arsenic	34	Se Selenium
51	Sb Antimony	52	Te Tellurium
83	Bi Bismuth	84	Po Polonium
115	Mc Moscovium	116	Lv Livermorium
9	F Fluorine	10	Ne Neon
17	Cl Chlorine	18	Ar Argon
35	Br Bromine	36	Kr Krypton
53	I Iodine	54	Xe Xenon
85	At Astatine	86	Rn Radon
117	Ts Tennessine	118	Og Oganesson
63	Eu Europium	64	Gd Gadolinium
95	Am Americium	96	Cm Curium
65	Tb Terbium	66	Dy Dysprosium
97	Bk Berkelium	98	Cf Californium
67	Ho Holmium	68	Er Erbium
99	Es Einsteinium	100	Fm Fermium
69	Tm Thulium	70	Yb Ytterbium
101	Md Mendelevium	102	No Nobelium
71	Lu Lutetium	72	Hf Hafnium
103	Lr Lawrencium	104	Rf Rutherfordium
73	Yb Ytterbium	74	W Tungsten
105	Nd Neodymium	106	Sg Seaborgium
75	Lu Lutetium	76	Os Osmium
107	U Uranium	78	Pt Platinum
77	Yb Ytterbium	79	Au Gold
109	Np Neptunium	80	Hg Mercury
79	Lu Lutetium	81	Tl Thallium
111	Pm Promethium	82	Pb Lead
81	La Lanthanum	83	Bi Bismuth
113	Ac Actinium	84	Po Polonium
83	La Lanthanum	85	At Astatine
115	Mc Moscovium	86	Rn Radon
85	La Lanthanum	87	Fr Francium
117	Ts Tennessine	88	Ra Radium
87	La Lanthanum	89	Ac Actinium
119	Uue Ununennium	90	Th Thorium
89	La Lanthanum	91	Pa Protactinium
121	Uuh Unbihennium	92	U Uranium
91	La Lanthanum	93	Np Neptunium
123	Uu Untrihennium	94	Pu Plutonium
93	La Lanthanum	95	Am Americium
125	Uu Unpentihennium	96	Cm Curium
95	La Lanthanum	97	Bk Berkelium
127	Uu Unseptihennium	98	Cf Californium
97	La Lanthanum	99	Es Einsteinium
129	Uu Unnonihennium	100	Fm Fermium
99	La Lanthanum	101	Md Mendelevium
131	Uu Ununhennium	102	No Nobelium
101	La Lanthanum	103	Lr Lawrencium
133	Uu Untrihennium	104	Rf Rutherfordium
103	La Lanthanum	105	Nd Neodymium
135	Uu Unpentihennium	106	Sg Seaborgium
105	La Lanthanum	107	Bh Bohrium
137	Uu Unseptihennium	108	Hs Hassium
107	La Lanthanum	109	Mt Meitnerium
139	Uu Unnonihennium	110	Ds Darmstadtium
109	La Lanthanum	111	Rg Roentgenium
141	Uu Unbihennium	112	Cn Copernicium
111	La Lanthanum	113	Nh Nihonium
143	Uu Untrihennium	114	Fl Flerovium
113	La Lanthanum	115	Mc Moscovium
145	Uu Unpentihennium	116	Lv Livermorium
115	La Lanthanum	117	Ts Tennessine
147	Uu Unseptihennium	118	Og Oganesson
117	La Lanthanum	119	Uue Ununennium
149	Uu Unnonihennium	120	Uuo Unbinilium
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253	Uu Unbihennium	224	Uuq Unquadrihennium
223	La Lanthanum	225	Uuu Untrihennium
255	Uu Unseptihennium	226	Uuq Unquadrihennium
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257	Uu Unnonihennium	228	Uuq Unquadrihennium
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249	La Lanthanum	251	Uuu Untrihennium
281	Uu Unnonihennium	252	Uuq Unquadrihennium
251	La Lanthanum	253	Uuu Untrihennium



#### 4.5.10 The Closet

##### **Teacher guide: The Closet**

The tenth puzzle requires students to break a lock, with a chemical compound. The students have to choose the correct chemical vials, to create the correct chemical compound. The puzzle has a poster on the wall, different chemical vials and a guide on mixing chemicals.

##### **How to solve:**

- 1) Students have to identify, which chemical compound is able to break metal. The correct answer is  $IF_3$
- 2) Next, students have to learn how to make the compound. This is revealed by looking at the poster's "How to create" panel. Students need to mix chemical  $ch_1$  with  $ch_4$ .
- 3) How they can create these chemicals is revealed in the chemical mixing guide.
- 4) Students need the following chemicals to solve the puzzle: **o, y, g and b**

##### **Hints:**

- 1) What do you need to do to get through the door? What chemical compound could help?
- 2) How do you create the correct chemical compound?

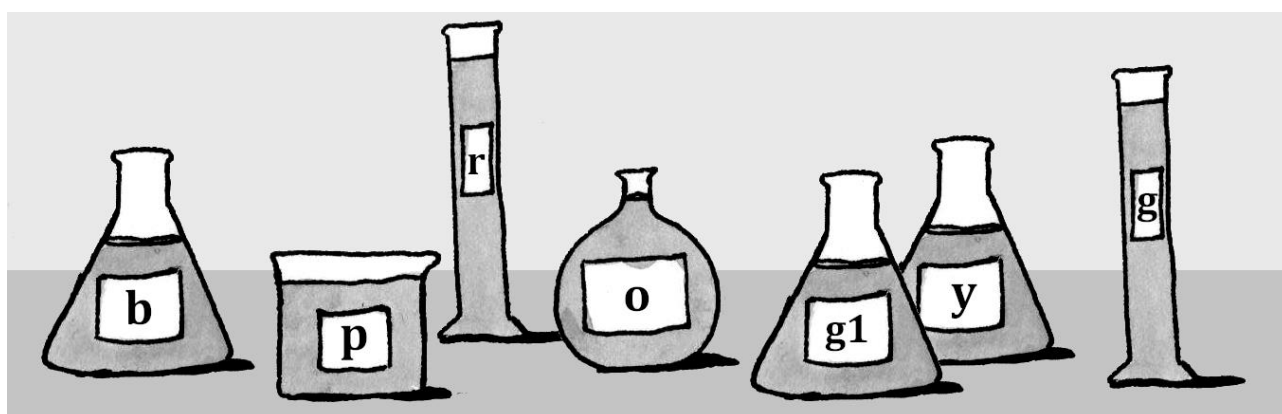
##### **Reward:**

- EVIDENCE 4-1: Materials for the experiment

## THE CLOSET

The strange earthy smell becomes stronger as you approach the closet. The door is locked with a heavy lock. Try as you might, it won't budge. Your attention turns towards an experiment next to the door. "Chemical reactions to metal" says a poster on the wall. If the lock doesn't break with force, maybe some chemistry will do the trick. Question is, which chemicals should you use?

Chemical reactions to metal		
Chemical compound:	Effects:	How to create:
HF12	None	ch2 + ch4
HH7	Increases oxidization/rust. Effects minimal	ch2 + ch2
IH24	Smoke. The metal corrodes slightly, but not much	ch1 + ch2
IF3	Makes metal brittle/easy to break	ch1 + ch4
SI9	Freezes the metal. Effects minimal	ch3 + ch1
FS13	None	ch4+ ch3



Chemical mixtures:

$$\text{ch1} = \text{o} + \text{y}$$

$$\text{ch2} = \text{p} + \text{p}$$

$$\text{ch3} = \text{r} + \text{b}$$

$$\text{ch4} = \text{g} + \text{b}$$

#### 4.5.11 The Tunnels

##### **Teacher guide: The Tunnels**

The tunnels puzzle requires the students to locate a specific statue based on written directions. The puzzle only contains a map and the written directions.

##### **How to solve:**

- 1) The students have to navigate based on the directions written on the wall. The direction begin in the spot marked "Text on the wall"
- 2) The correct statue is the Statue of Dagon

##### **Hints:**

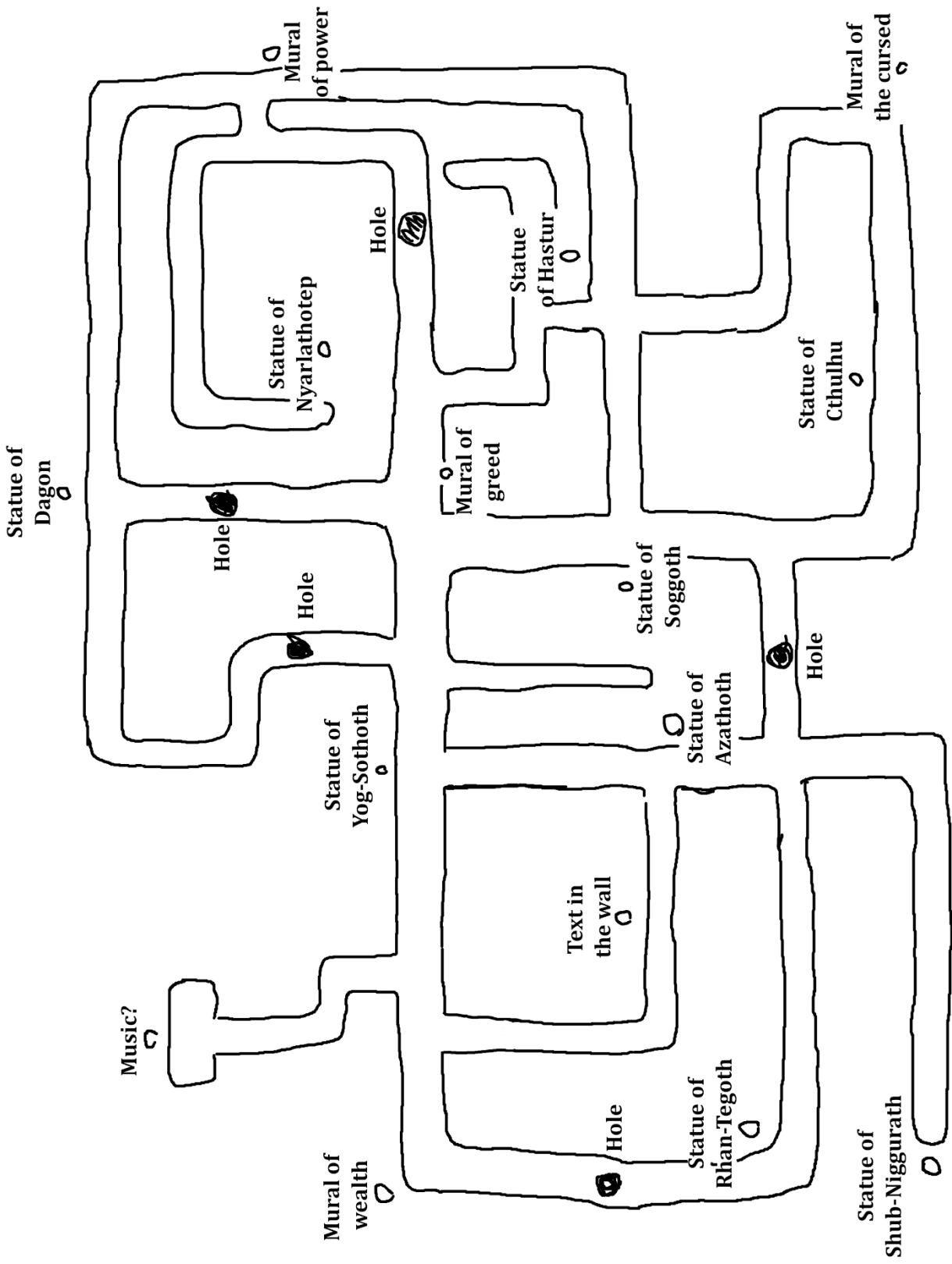
- 1) Where should you start? What does the text say?

##### **Reward:**

- EVIDENCE 5-1: A light in the dark

## THE TUNNELS

You hear things moving in the dark, as you navigate the pitch black tunnels. Walking past the grotesque statues and murals makes your skin crawl. The same statues keep crossing your path. You have been walking in circles. You begin to draw a map of the things you see in the tunnels. As you draw your map, a text on the wall catches your attention: *"From this point, go back towards the statue of Azathoth and turn left. When you reach a statue, turn right, until you reach a mural. From there, turn right and walk forward, until you reach the next statue. Turn left and walk past the statue on your left and keep walking. When you reach the mural, keep walking forward, until you reach the next statue on your path. This is where you will find Lord Radcliffe I's true Master. The one who cursed us all. Find him and a path out will present itself."*



#### 4.5.12 The Music

##### **Teacher guide: The Music**

This puzzle challenges students in understanding simple mechanics of cog based systems. Students are tasked in repairing a lock mechanism, which will open a door. The puzzle only contains the lock mechanism.

##### **How to solve:**

- 1) The students have to place the correct cogs into the machine.
- 2) In the first empty peg, the students should place a clockwise rotating cog. The second peg requires a counter clockwise rotating cog.

##### **Hints:**

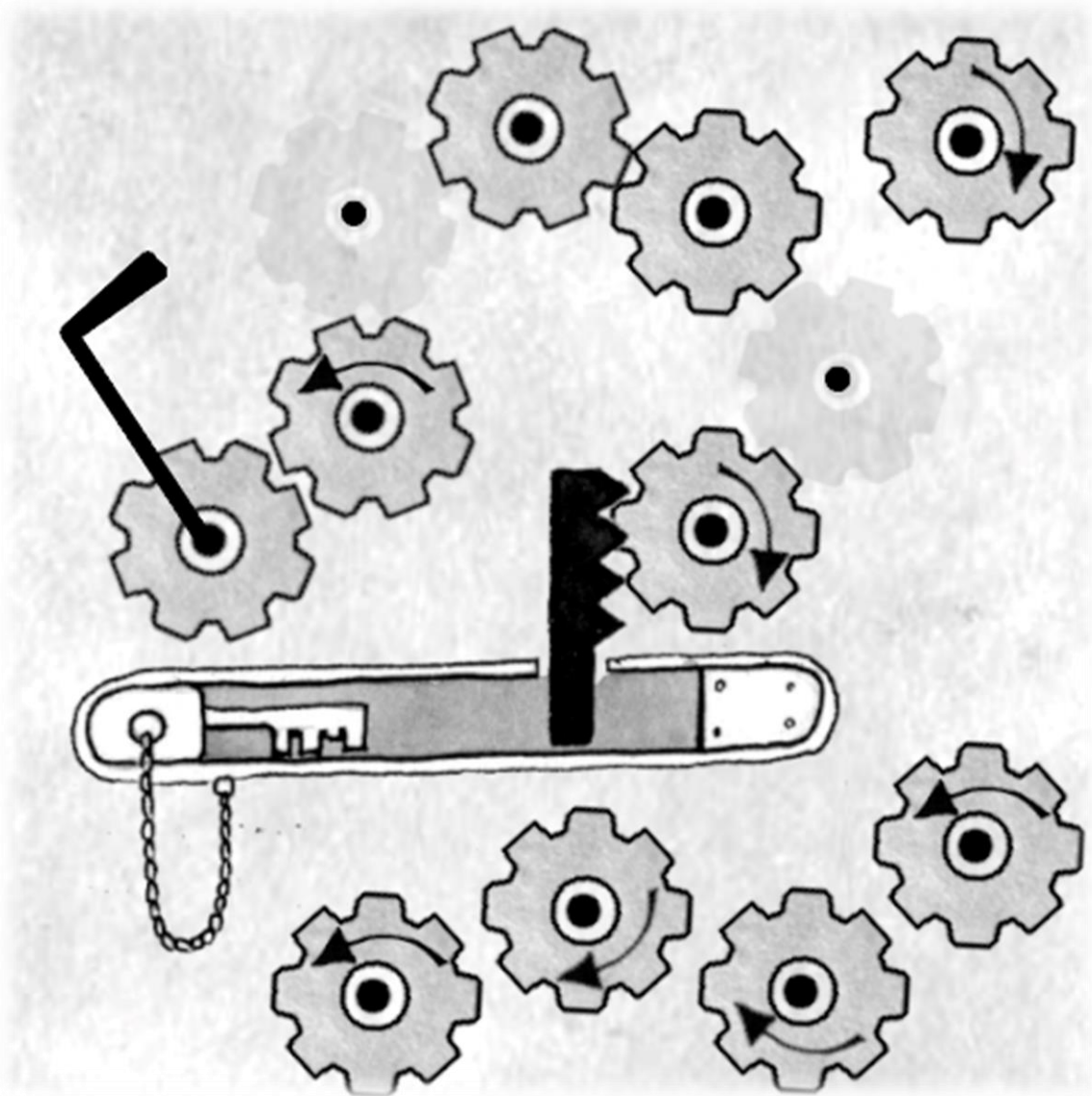
- Which way do the cogs move? If a cog moves clockwise, which direction does the next cog move?

##### **Reward:**

- EVIDENCE 5-3: The hidden chamber

## THE MUSIC

You follow the sound of the music, throughout the tunnels. You soon come across a heavy door locked with a strange mechanism. A key slides down a track towards a keyhole. However, a piece of metal blocks the key from moving all the way. A crank is nearby. You try to move it counter clockwise, but it won't budge. You try to move it clockwise and it rotates without problem. The cogs somehow only rotate in a specific direction. Some of the cogs are missing from the mechanism. Perhaps the cogs not attached to the mechanism could be placed in the empty pegs. Which ones though?



## 4.6 The story

### Teacher guide: The story

During the escape room experience, students will gather information relating to a larger narrative about a murdered Lord. This section will detail how the story unfolds and how the different clues/evidence/interview answers tie to each other. This section will help the teacher assist students' interpret their findings throughout the escape room.

During the final lesson, ask the students to explain the course of events as they have understood it based on the evidence, clues and interview answers they have gained. You can begin recapping the story, by asking students the questions present in the victim card. Answers to each question can be found below. Students do not need to get every detail correct. As long as students are able to explain the narrative in some cohesive form based on evidence, their explanation should suffice. After each answer, you can read the correct answer out loud if you wish.

At the end of section 4.6.1 *The Main objectives*, several conclusions for the narrative can be found. After students give their answers to the narrative, you can read one of these out loud for the students, based on their answer.

Section 4.6.1 *Bonus mysteries* contains endings for the additional objectives students can achieve during the lessons. If students have achieved any of these, proceed in the same manner as with the main objectives.



#### 4.6.1 The main objectives

##### WHO?

The real killer of Roderick Blackberg is **the politician**, Jonathan Hawkes. He did his best to divert you from the truth, by framing the writer as the murderer.

*“Wait? WHAT!? That is a lie! You are a liar!”*



##### WHY?

The motive for the murder was simple: money. Jonathan Hawkes had collected a significant amount of **gambling debt** and **financial imbalance**. Gaining even the smallest portion of the Lord’s wealth would save him from economic ruin. By framing the writer, he would get away free as a rich man.

*“No that is not true! You are all liars! Slanderous snakes all of you!”*

##### HOW?

The method of the murder is made clear by following the events of the night.

1) At **6pm**, the medium holds a **séance** in the library. While everyone else attends the séance, the politician breaks into the chemical storage in the laboratory. He steals a **bottle of chloral hydrate**, a sleeping medicine. While the séance is still active, the politician places a glass of **drugged tonic** on the bar counter. He expects the writer to take it like she does on most nights. He retreats back to his quarters to wait.

2) At **10pm**, the writer drinks the tonic and immediately retreats to her room

to sleep. The politician waits and at 10pm, he **breaks into the writer's room** and steals her **handkerchief**. The politician has a map of the manor's secret passageways with him, alongside **a forged will**.

3) He goes to the kitchen at **11pm** and goes through the secret tunnel underneath the manor. In the tunnels, he is **scratched** by something. A sleeve is torn and his arm starts to bleed. He goes up the steps to the library, **leaving dirty footprints and drops of blood behind**.

4) The politician sneaks up on the Lord and with one strong blow to the back, kills the Lord instantly. He places the writer's **handkerchief** next to the body for the police to find. He searches the room for the will. Accidentally, the politician steps on the Lord's watch, which stops at **11.55pm**. The will is quickly found in the Lord's drawer. He takes it with him, and replaces it with a forged copy with his name on it. Blood from the politician's arm **smudges the corner of the fake will**.

5) The politician returns through the tunnels where the musician sees him. He accidentally **drops the map** in the dirty tunnels.

6) On his way up the steps to the kitchen, the politician leaves a **trail of mud** behind him. Desperately, he tries to clean his shoes with **a towel**, but doesn't manage to do it. Using the gas stove, the politician **burns the previous will**, leaving only a **single edge of the document** intact alongside a **scent of smoke**. On his way out, he takes bandages from the medical cabinet.

7) The politician walks back to the writer's room and **leaves the floor dirty**. This should incriminate her further. He then returns to his room, confident that he won't be suspected of the crime. Instead, the writer will be blamed and her share in the forged will shall be divided among the other beneficiaries. A murder most foul and he would have gotten away with it, if

it weren't for you.

*"Fine! It is true! I DID IT! I killed him. It was easy enough and I would have gotten away with it if it weren't for your meddling in my business. This country needs a firm leader. Someone who will do anything to reach their goals! What will my voters think of all this!"*

## CONCLUSION

### Students solve the mystery!

The politician is arrested by the inspector. He flashes one last grimaced face at you, as he is pushed through the door. The writer and everyone else is saved from a false conviction.

### Students do not solve the mystery

The piles of evidence leave you with nothing. The case remains unsolved.

### The students get the wrong person

The inspector arrests your suspect. They plead their innocence, but you do not want to hear it. Weeks pass and the trial begins. To your shock, all of the evidence point to another person. You arrested the wrong person. The murderer is still on the loose, and you don't know where.

#### 4.6.2 Bonus mysteries

### The research

To save Lord Blackberg from his illness, the doctor aims to defeat death itself through his research. In order to get materials, the doctor resorts to grave robbing. Though ambitious, he has succeeded in reanimating a hand back to life. Knowing of this, the inspector arrests the doctor for desecrating graves.

### The curse

The curse relates to the Blackberg Curse, which Lord Blackberg's ancestor

Lord Radcliffe imparted on his lineage. It is hinted that Lord Radcliffe sold himself to the servitude of the great old god Dagon, in exchange for wealth and riches. According to the curse, every descendant of Lord Radcliffe, will not live beyond the age of 30. Moreover, anyone who enters the family is struck with the curse. It is difficult to say if the curse is real or just superstition. At any rate, none of the Blackbergs have lived beyond their twenties.

### **The séance**

The séance was held between 6pm and 7pm by the medium. The medium is a fraud, intending to fleece Lord Blackberg from his money, by reinforcing his belief in the curse. To create an illusion of spirits communicating with the dead, the medium used recordings of ghostly whispers and candles that go out by themselves. To fully convince the Lord of her supernatural powers, she conducted intensive research on the Lord's life. By exposing her as a fraud, her business is ruined. No longer will the medium prey on vulnerable and desperate people.

### **Spirits of the dead**

The only ghost you were able to find from the depths of the mansion was the musician, and even he was only a flesh and blood man. Deformed, yet brilliant, the musician hid away from the world in the depths of the manor's catacombs. You take pity on him and decide not to reveal his existence to anyone. Maybe one day he might be ready to embrace the world.