

The Case of the Disappearing Library Books

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It was a sunny Tuesday morning at Willow Creek Elementary, and the air buzzed with chatter. Mrs. Parker's 4th-grade class was halfway through their reading hour when the first clue appeared.

"Um, Mrs. Parker," said Cal, peering into the library cart, "I think something's wrong."

Mrs. Parker leaned over. "What is it, Cal?"

"All the mystery books are gone!" he announced dramatically, his hands waving like a game show host.

Sure enough, the entire shelf that usually held mysteries—Nancy Drew, Encyclopedia Brown, The Boxcar Children—was empty.

"That's...mysterious," Mrs. Parker said with a twinkle in her eye.

The class gasped. Someone whispered, "Maybe The Mystery of the Missing Mysteries is the mystery!"

The next day, things got stranger. The animal books—gorillas, penguins, sharks—vanished too. And on Wednesday, the sports books were missing. Each morning, another category disappeared, like the library shelves were being erased one section at a time.

"Who would take every book from a section?" wondered Sam, the class detective. He'd once found the missing stapler in the art room by following a trail of paper clips.

A group formed immediately: Sam, Cal, Mia (the fastest runner in class), and Theo (who could remember every book he'd ever read). They called themselves The Page Protectors.

That afternoon, they staked out the library. They hid behind beanbag chairs, peeking out when Mrs. Miller, the librarian, wasn't looking.

Hours passed. Then, just before dismissal, Mia spotted movement near the back door. A tall shadow—followed by a shorter one—slipped into the library, carrying a big rolling cart. The shadows began loading it with all the science books.

Mia signaled the group, and they crept closer.

"Stop right there!" Sam shouted.

The figures froze. Then they turned around—revealing... the principal, Mr. Harris, and the custodian, Mr. Lee.

Everyone blinked.

“Oh!” Mr. Harris laughed. “You caught us. We’re moving the books to the old computer lab. We’re turning it into a brand-new reading room for the start of next month. We wanted to surprise the school.”

“So you weren’t stealing them?” Cal asked, slightly disappointed.

“Only if you count stealing them to make them better,” Mr. Lee smiled.

The next week, the new reading room opened—comfy chairs, colorful rugs, and shelves filled with every single missing book. The Page Protectors were named honorary “Book Guardians” and got the first pick of the brand-new titles.

From then on, whenever a book went missing, the class knew exactly where to look—right in their new reading room.



Activity Sheet — The Case of the Disappearing Library Books

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Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Reading Comprehension

Answer the questions in complete sentences.

1. What type of books disappeared from the library first?
2. What is the name of the group Cal, Sam, Mia, and Theo formed?
3. Who were the “mysterious” figures taking the books?
4. Why were the books being moved?
5. How did the students feel when they found out the truth?

2. Vocabulary

Match the word to its meaning. Write the correct letter on the line.

- | | |
|--------------------|---|
| 1. ____ Mysterious | A. A person whose job is to take care of a building |
| 2. ____ Vanished | B. Strange or hard to explain |
| 3. ____ Detective | C. Disappeared suddenly |
| 4. ____ Custodian | D. A person who solves mysteries or crimes |

3. Creative Thinking

Imagine you are one of the **Page Protectors**. Write a short paragraph about what you would have done if *you* had discovered the disappearing books first. Use at least 4 sentences.

4. Fun Bonus — Solve Your Own Mini-Mystery

Draw or write about a “missing” object in your school and create clues that lead to the solution. Be creative and make it fun!



Activity Sheet — The Case of the Disappearing Library Books

Teacher's Answer Key

Reading Comprehension

1. Mystery books
2. The Page Protectors
3. Principal Mr. Harris and custodian Mr. Lee
4. They were moving them to a new reading room
5. Surprised and happy

Vocabulary

1. B
2. C
3. D
4. A

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