



Detective Riddles



25 riddles from easy to tricky. Write your answer on the line. Answers are on the last page.

Easy riddles ★

- 1 The team's soccer trophy vanished from the clubhouse shelf. Coach was at a meeting across town all morning. Jake says, "Wasn't me! I just got back from swimming practice." His hair is perfectly dry, and so is the towel over his shoulder. Who is the prime suspect?

ANSWER _____

- 2 Someone used up all of Zara's gold glitter. Ben was building a train track, Ava was drawing with pencils, and Leo says he was "just washing his hands." When Zara looks closer, the sleeve of Leo's sweater is sparkling. Who took the glitter?

ANSWER _____

- 3 Someone kicked over Noah's sandcastle at the beach. A line of footprints runs from the ruined castle straight into the sea. Mia is reading under an umbrella, Omar is asleep on his towel, and Kira is just walking out of the waves, dripping wet. Who knocked the castle over?

ANSWER _____

- 4 Purple crayon scribbles have appeared on the living room wall, but only down low, no higher than a grown-up's knee. Big sister Emma is 12, Grandpa is visiting, and baby Theo just learned to walk. Who is the artist?

ANSWER _____

- 5 A trail of red yarn runs from Grandma's knitting basket, across the rug and under the bed, where it ends in a giant tangle. The suspects are Bubbles the goldfish, Kiwi the parrot, who was locked in her cage all day, and Pickle the kitten. Who made the mess?

ANSWER _____

- 6 The power was out all evening, and in the morning the last slice of pie is gone. Nina says, "I was reading by flashlight in my room." Pete says, "I was asleep by seven." Sam says, "I watched TV all evening." Who is fibbing?

ANSWER _____

- 7 It snowed all night, and by breakfast a snowman has appeared in the front yard. There is just one set of footprints: small boots with a star pattern, going from the front door to the snowman and back. Dad wears big work boots, Lucy has star-patterned rain boots, and the neighbor never came over. Who built the snowman?

ANSWER _____

- 8 Someone took a bite out of the cheese in the fridge. The bite mark has a gap in the middle, right where a front tooth should be. This week Tia lost a front tooth, Jack got braces, and Dad hasn't lost a tooth since he was little. Who had a sneaky snack?

ANSWER _____

- 9 Grandpa is sure someone has hidden his glasses. He has searched every room, and now he sits down to read the tiny print in the newspaper to calm down, and he reads it with no trouble at all. Where are his glasses?

ANSWER _____

Medium riddles ★★

- 10 Dad hid a birthday cake in a closed box on top of the fridge. Later he finds a fingerprint in the frosting. When he asks the kids, Lucas says, "Don't look at me, I don't even like blue frosting!" Why does Dad look straight at Lucas?

ANSWER _____

- 11 During the night, someone crept into the backyard and picked every ripe strawberry. Rex the dog barks at every stranger, but the family slept soundly: not a single woof. The suspects are a jogger passing by, a new neighbor Rex has never met, and cousin Ben, who is staying with the family. Who picked the strawberries?

ANSWER _____

- 12 Mom hears a video game playing long after bedtime. When she gets upstairs, the screen is off. Ollie is snoring loudly. Ivy calls out, "I've been fast asleep for hours, Mom!" Who was playing?

ANSWER _____

- 13 On a scorching day at the beach, someone took a chocolate bar from the cooler. Three kids are eating chocolate bars. Pia's is soft and gooey, and so is Kai's. Hugo says he bought his at the shop an hour ago and kept it in his pocket, but his bar is cold and rock-hard. Who raided the cooler?

ANSWER _____

- 14 Someone knocked over the fishbowl, and wet paw prints lead away from the puddle. Every print shows little claw marks at the tips of the toes. The suspects are Mittens the cat and Rufus the dog. Who did it?

ANSWER _____

- 15 Mrs. Kay's kite was stolen at the park. Wes says, "I saw the thief at exactly noon. I know it was noon because his shadow was the longest I've ever seen, stretching right across the field." Why doesn't the detective believe Wes?

ANSWER _____

- 16 Lily's lemonade money went missing. Ray says, "I remember exactly when I last saw it: the evening of June 31st." Why is Lily suspicious?

ANSWER _____

- 17 On a freezing morning, the potted plant in the school hallway is knocked over and damp soil is spilled everywhere. Finn arrives with mud splashed on his trousers and says, "I splashed through puddles on the way to school." But every puddle on the street has been frozen solid since last night. Who is the prime suspect?

ANSWER _____

- 18 The goldfish is round as a ball, and the fish food says "one pinch a day." Mom says, "I fed him at breakfast." Dad says, "I fed him at lunch." Kit says, "I fed him after school." Nobody is lying. What happened?

ANSWER _____

Tricky riddles ★ ★ ★

- 19 Someone tore the page with the treasure map out of the library book. The map was printed on page 17. Eli says, "I did tear out a page, but only page 18, the one after the map!" Why is the librarian sure Eli has the map?

ANSWER _____

- 20 One of Amy, Noel and Cal ate the last cupcake. The cupcake thief is lying, and the other two are telling the truth. Amy says, "Noel did it." Noel says, "I didn't do it." Cal says, "Amy didn't do it." Who ate the cupcake?

ANSWER _____

- 21 One of Dan, Eva and Gus broke the vase, and only one of the three is telling the truth. Dan says, "Eva did it." Eva says, "Dan is lying." Gus says, "I didn't do it." Who broke the vase?

ANSWER _____

- 22 Mr. Plum calls the police: "A burglar smashed my shed window to get in and stole my new bike!" The detective finds the window broken, but all the broken glass is lying on the grass outside the shed. Why does she think Mr. Plum isn't telling the whole story?

ANSWER _____

- 23 Snow fell from 8 pm until 10 pm. In the morning, the snowman's carrot nose is gone. Rob says, "I went out at 9 pm to check on the snowman, and the carrot was already missing." The only footprints around the snowman are Rob's, and they are crisp and sharp, with no fresh snow inside them. Why is Rob's story wrong?

ANSWER _____

- 24 Uncle Ted says he couldn't have eaten Grandma's fruitcake last Christmas because "I spent Christmas Day in Sydney, Australia, building a snowman on the beach." Why doesn't Grandma believe him?

ANSWER _____

- 25 Someone wrote "Ms. Reed loves broccoli ice cream" on the class whiteboard. Every word is smudged the way writing gets when a hand slides across it while it's still fresh. Ravi writes with his left hand, and Sue and Tom write with their right. Who wrote the message?

ANSWER _____

Answers

Detective Riddles · answer key · print or fold this page away before you hand out the sheet

1. **Jake.** Hair and towels stay damp for a long time after a swim, so his bone-dry hair and towel mean his alibi doesn't hold water.
2. **Leo.** Glitter is almost impossible to wash off, and his sparkly sleeve gives him away.
3. **Kira.** The footprints lead from the castle into the water, and she's the only one coming out of the sea.
4. **Baby Theo.** The drawings are just as high as a toddler can reach while standing up.
5. **Pickle the kitten.** Bubbles can't leave his tank and Kiwi was locked in her cage, but kittens can't resist a ball of yarn.
6. **Sam.** With the power out, nobody could have watched TV all evening.
7. **Lucy.** The small star-patterned prints match her rain boots.
8. **Tia.** The gap in the bite mark matches her missing front tooth.
9. **On his nose.** He can read the small print because he's been wearing them the whole time.
10. **The cake was hidden in a closed box, so only someone who had peeked inside would know the frosting was blue.**
11. **Cousin Ben.** Rex didn't bark, so the picker was most likely someone he knows, and Ben is the only suspect Rex knows.
12. **Ivy.** If she had really been fast asleep, she couldn't have answered.
13. **Hugo.** An hour in a pocket on a scorching day would melt any chocolate bar. His is cold because it just came out of the cooler.
14. **Rufus the dog.** Cats pull their claws in when they walk, so their paw prints usually show no claw marks. A dog can't pull its claws in, so they usually show in its prints.
15. **Around noon the sun is near its highest point, so shadows are at their shortest, not their longest. Wes's story doesn't add up.**
16. **June only has 30 days, so there is no June 31st.** Ray's "exact" memory is made up.
17. **Finn.** Frozen puddles can't splash, so the mud on his trousers didn't come from the street. The spilled soil from the plant is a much better match.
18. **Everyone fed him, each thinking nobody else had, so the goldfish got three meals instead of one. No thief, just a very well-fed fish.**
19. **In a book, pages 17 and 18 are the front and back of the same sheet.** Tearing out page 18 means tearing out page 17 too.
20. **Noel.** Amy and Noel contradict each other, so one of them is the lying thief, which means Cal is telling the truth. Cal says Amy didn't do it, so the thief is Noel.
21. **Gus.** Eva's words are the exact opposite of Dan's, so exactly one of them is telling the truth. That uses up the only true statement, so Gus is lying, and he broke the vase.
22. **When a window is smashed from outside, most of the glass falls inside.** Glass lying on the grass outside means the window was almost certainly broken from inside the shed, so no burglar broke in that way.
23. **Footprints made at 9 pm would have had an hour of fresh snow fall into them.** Crisp prints mean Rob went out after the snow stopped, so he lied about when he visited, and his are the only footprints by the snowman.
24. **Christmas is in the middle of summer in Australia, and it doesn't snow on Sydney's beaches. There was no snowman, and probably no trip either.**
25. **Most likely Ravi.** English is written from left to right, so a left-handed writer's hand trails over the fresh words and smudges them. A right-handed writer's hand stays ahead of the writing.

Need a hint? Every riddle has one at riddlepedia.com/detective-riddles/, where you can also play them as a game.