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AN ESCAPE ROOM BOOK

Grandma's Memory Chest



Six locked drawers. Six times of her life. One book you write together.

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Book 1 of 3 · The Memory Chest



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How to Play

1. Every puzzle gives you a number. That number is a page. Turn to it.

2. Check the stamp. Each puzzle tells you which stamp the right page has in its top corner. If you land on a page without that stamp, your answer is wrong. Go back and try again. No peeking ahead!

3. Collect the golden letters. Each time you solve a drawer you find a golden letter. Write it on your pass (page 37). You will need all six at the end.

4. Stuck? The hints on pages 44–46 get a little stronger each time. The full answers are on pages 47–48.

5. Play together. This book is for a child and a grown-up. The child solves the puzzles. After each drawer there is a Story Time page: the grown-up tells a true story from their own life and the child writes it down. When the book is finished, it is a keepsake.

You need a pencil. A small mirror and some scrap paper are nice to have. Play alone or as a team. It takes about 60 to 90 minutes.

Start time: _____ Finish time: _____

Ready? Turn the page.

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The Chest in the Attic

It is a rainy afternoon at Grandma's house. You climb up to the attic to look for an old umbrella, and you bump into a wooden chest under a flowered cloth. Biscuit the cat is curled up on the lid and opens one eye at you.

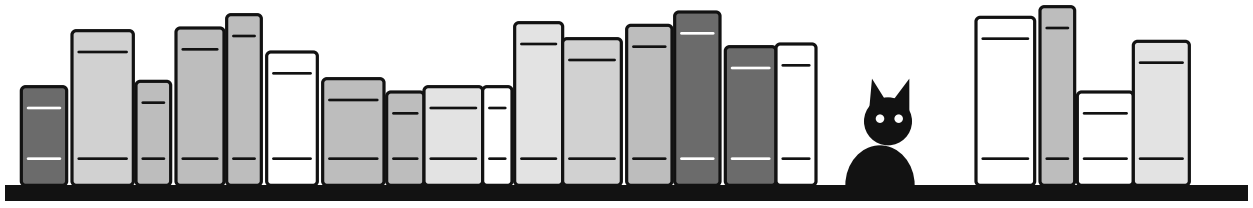
The chest smells of cedar. There is no umbrella inside. There are six small drawers, each with a tiny lock, and under them a secret compartment that is locked with a word.

Grandma is standing at the top of the stairs with a teapot. "That is my memory chest," she says, smiling. "I put one part of my life in each drawer. I was a tease when I was young, so I hid the way to open them inside puzzles. And now I have forgotten every one."

She sits down in the wicker chair and pours two cups. "Open a drawer and I will tell you its story. You write it down for me, so that I do not forget it again."

To whoever opens this chest. I locked in here the things I never want to lose. If you are reading this, I must be old, and you must be someone I love. Open the drawers in order. Each one keeps a letter. Collect all six and you will know the word I locked my whole life with.

Turn to page 4 to begin.



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Drawer 1 · Childhood

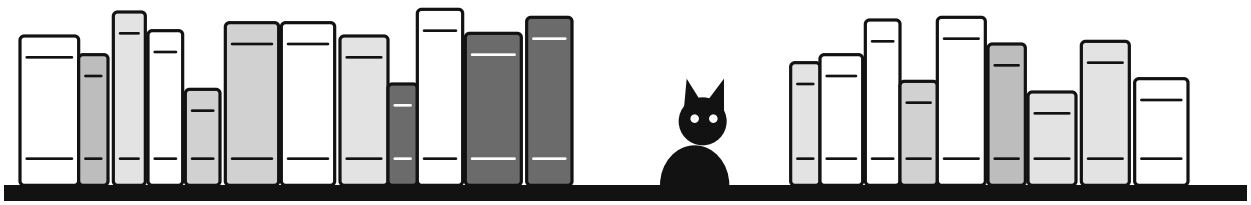
The first drawer is the smallest and the oldest. Through the gap you can see a wooden spinning top, a few glass marbles and a button shaped like a daisy.

Grandma looks at the marbles for a long time. “We had a tin roof. When it rained hard, it leaked, and we all ran for the buckets.” She is about to go on, then she laughs. “Wait. Open the drawer first. Then I will tell you.”

The lock on this drawer has no keyhole. Stuck to the front is a slip of yellowed paper in round, careful, schoolgirl handwriting.

> On the paper: “Nobody opens this in a hurry. Childhood only shows itself to people who look slowly.”

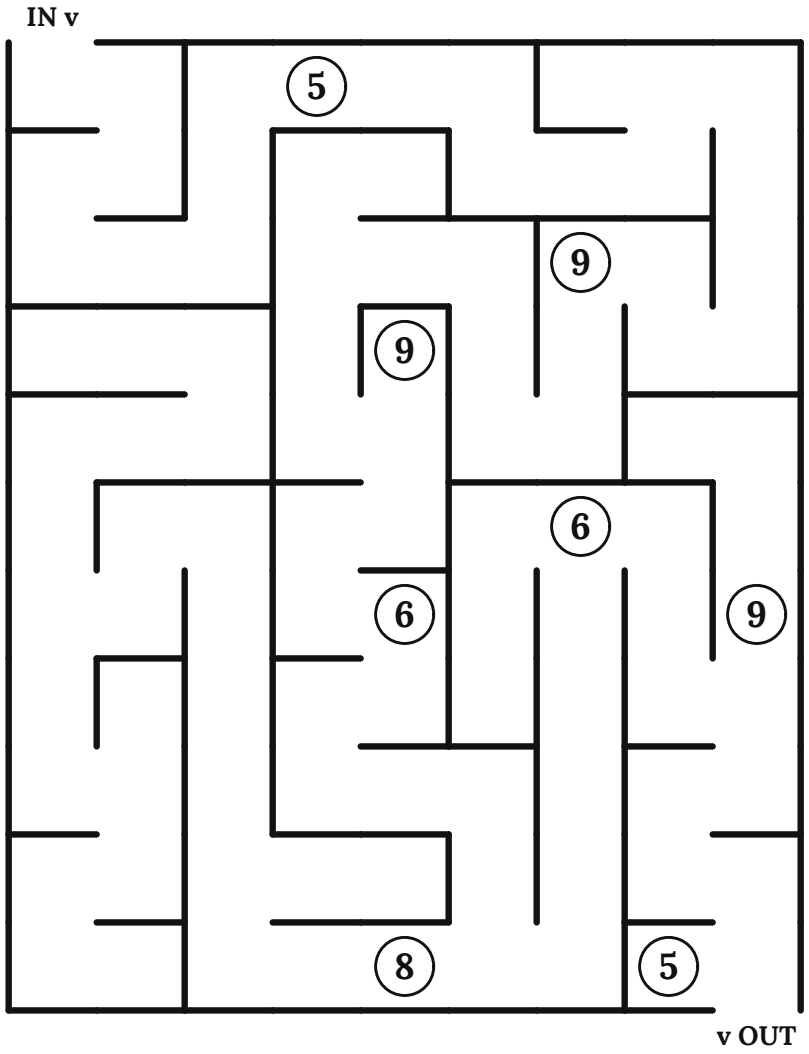
Turn the page.



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The Floor Map

Find the one true path from **IN** to **OUT**. Add up **only** the numbers your path steps on. Numbers in dead ends are traps.



My numbers: _____ Total: _____

Your answer is a page number. Turn to it. The right page has the **MOON** stamp in its top corner. No MOON? Wrong page: come back and try again.

PAGE

Stuck? Hints **A1** (page 44), **A2** (page 45), **A3** (page 46). Full answers on pages 47–48.

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Notes

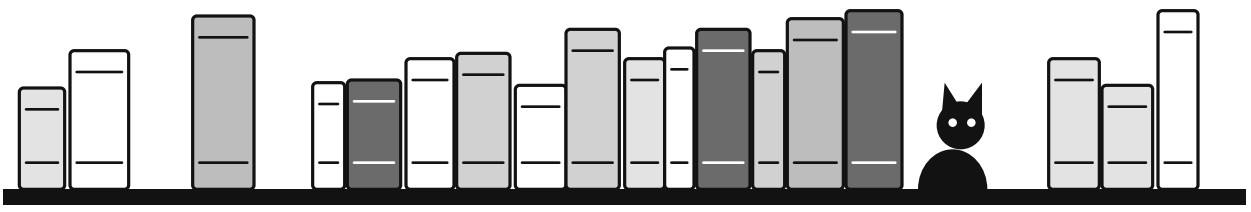
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The Cat's Opinion

Biscuit is lying on the exact spot you wanted to look at, and will not get up. Cats are never wrong about dead ends. Go back.

Whoops!

This page does not have the stamp you need. Go back to the page you came from.



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L

A golden letter is waiting for you here. **Write it in box 5** of your pass on page 37.

STAR

Drawer 6 · Becoming Grandma

The last drawer is the newest. Inside is a photo of a red-faced baby wrapped in a blanket. You look closely. It is you.

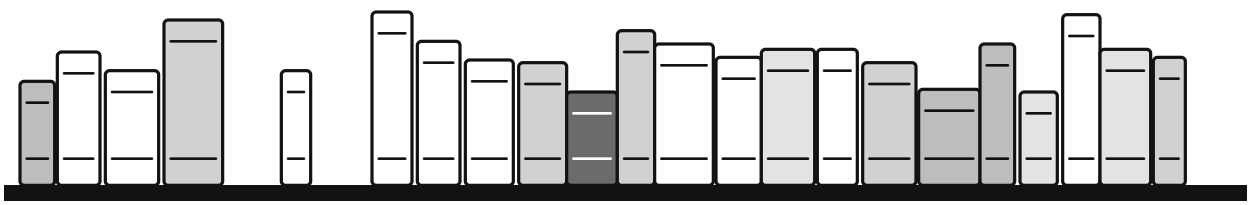
Beside it are a tiny hospital bracelet and a page torn from a calendar, with the date circled in red pen. “I was standing outside that door from four in the morning,” she says softly.

The lock on this drawer is still shiny. The handwriting on the note that comes with it is shakier now, but as round as it was on the very first drawer.

On the note: “One drawer left, one letter left. Then put all six together. There is something at the bottom of the chest that I saved for you.”

Play together: before you go on, turn to page 35. The grown-up tells a story and you write it down.

Turn the page.



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The Word Wall

Find all 12 words. They run **across**, **down**, or **diagonally down to the right**. Then read the letters you did **not** circle, row by row, left to right.

G	**O**	**T**	**L**	**O**	**C**	**K**	**E**	**T**
O	**P**	**S**	**A**	**G**	**C**	**A**	**E**	**E**
T	**W**	**C**	**E**	**L**	**R**	**L**	**N**	**Y**
T	**L**	**A**	**R**	**A**	**A**	**B**	**D**	**M**
C	**E**	**R**	**A**	**N**	**D**	**U**	**R**	**E**
E	**T**	**F**	**D**	**T**	**L**	**M**	**A**	**M**
D	**T**	**Y**	**I**	**E**	**E**	**T**	**W**	**O**
A	**E**	**P**	**O**	**R**	**C**	**H**	**E**	**R**
R	**R**	**H**	**R**	**N**	**E**	**E**	**R**	**Y**

- ☐ ALBUM
- ☐ CEDAR
- ☐ CRADLE
- ☐ DRAWER
- ☐ KEY
- ☐ LANTERN
- ☐ LETTER
- ☐ LOCKET
- ☐ MEMORY
- ☐ PORCH
- ☐ RADIO
- ☐ SCARF

Leftover letters: _____

Your answer is a page number. Turn to it. The right page has the **CANDLE** stamp in its top corner. No CANDLE? Wrong page: come back and try again.



PAGE

Stuck? Hints **F1** (page 44), **F2** (page 45), **F3** (page 46). Full answers on pages 47–48.

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Story Time · Twenty Years Old

What did you dream of when you were twenty? What became of that dream?

What was your first job? What did you do with the first money you earned?

Who was your closest friend then? What did the two of you do together?

Told by: _____ Written down by: _____

Date: _____

When the story is told, go back to page 20 and carry on.

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Story Time · Becoming Grandma

What were you doing on the day I was born? What did you think the first time you held me?

What do you wish for me most when I am grown up?

If you could tell me only one thing to remember all my life, what would it be?

Told by: _____ Written down by: _____

Date: _____

When the story is told, go back to page 23 and carry on.

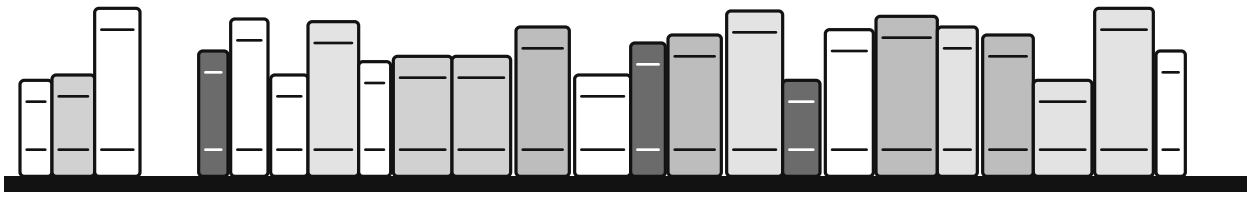
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Cobwebs

You reach into a corner of the attic and pull out a handful of cobweb. The spider looks at you with deep disappointment. Not this way.

Shhh!

This page does not have the stamp you need. Go back to the page you came from.



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Notes

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Notes

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Notes

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A golden letter is waiting for you here. **Write it in box 4** of your pass on page 37.



BELL

Drawer 5 · Becoming a Mother

The fifth drawer is soft. A pair of knitted bootees no longer than two of your fingers, a curl of baby hair tied with thread, and a little notebook with a weight written in pencil for every month.

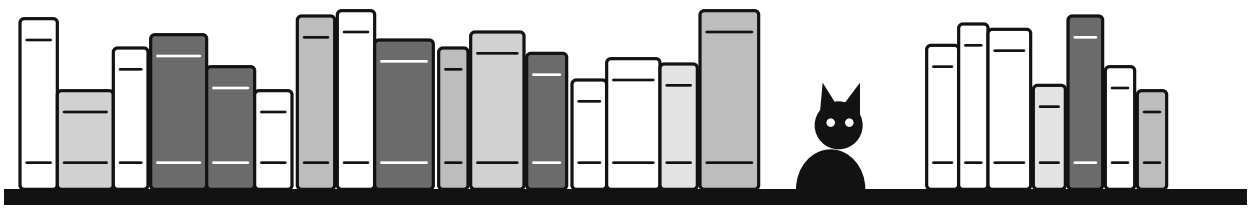
You read the name on the notebook and burst out laughing. It is your own mom or dad, when they were tiny. “That one cried all night long,” Grandma says. “Now it is their turn to stay up all night for you.”

Between the pages is a note in hurried handwriting, as if it was written the moment the baby fell asleep. The lock on the drawer is waiting.

The hurried note: “Writing fast before the baby wakes. Whoever opens this: being a mother is the hardest puzzle, and I have not finished solving it.”

Play together: before you go on, turn to page 36. The grown-up tells a story and you write it down.

Turn the page.



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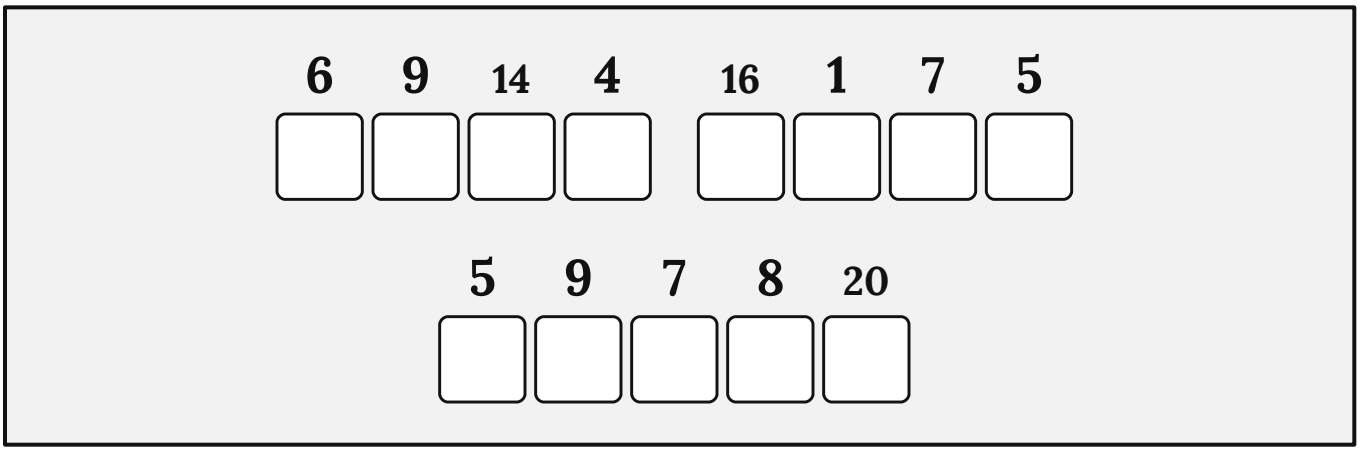
The Number Lock

Each number stands for one letter. **The key shows the number of every letter.**

Find each number in the key and write its letter in the box under it.

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26



Your answer is a page number. Turn to it. The right page has the **STAR** stamp in its top corner. No STAR? Wrong page: come back and try again.

PAGE

Stuck? Hints **E1** (page 44), **E2** (page 45), **E3** (page 46). Full answers on pages 47–48.

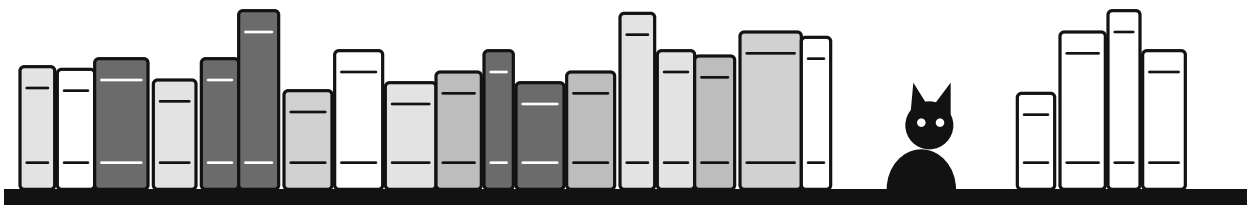
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The Cookie Tin

You open the butter cookie tin, your stomach rumbling. It is full of needles and thread. It is always needles and thread. Go back.

Shhh!

This page does not have the stamp you need. Go back to the page you came from.



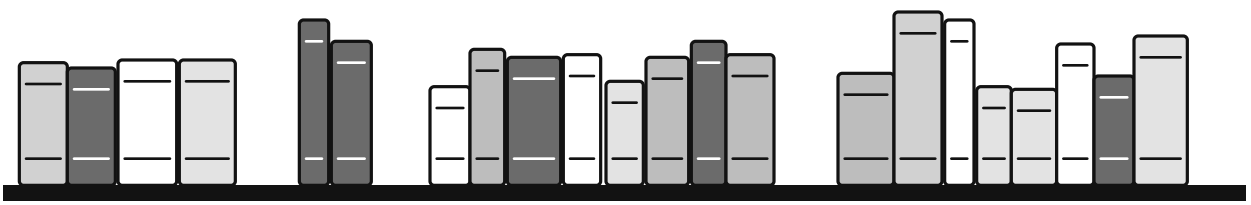
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The Peppermint Jar

You unscrew the wrong jar. The whole attic smells of peppermint and your eyes water. Grandma laughs. “Wrong drawer, my dear.”

Shhh!

This page does not have the stamp you need. Go back to the page you came from.



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A golden letter is waiting for you here. **Write it in box 3** of your pass on page 37.

KEY

Drawer 4 · The Wedding

The fourth drawer is lined with red cloth. In it are a faded wedding invitation, a pair of small earrings and a photo of two young people standing as straight as soldiers.

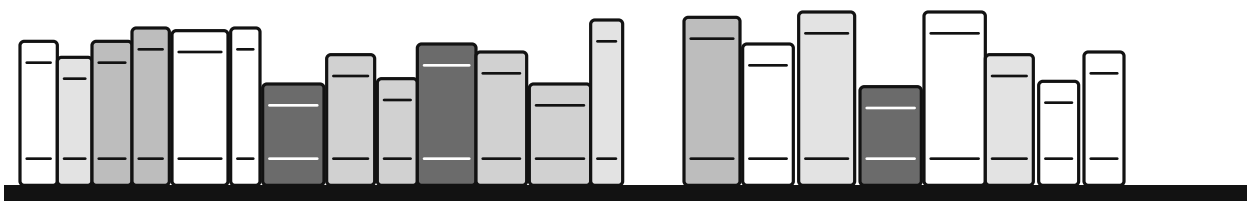
“That is your grandfather,” she says, and for the first time since the chest was opened she is quiet for a while. Biscuit jumps into her lap, lies down and starts to purr.

This drawer has the prettiest lock, shaped like two birds. Under the invitation is a note folded in four, its edges soft from being opened and closed many times.

On the note, in two different hands: “Two people solve it faster than one.” — “Not when one of them keeps getting it wrong.”

Play together: before you go on, turn to page 10. The grown-up tells a story and you write it down.

Turn the page.

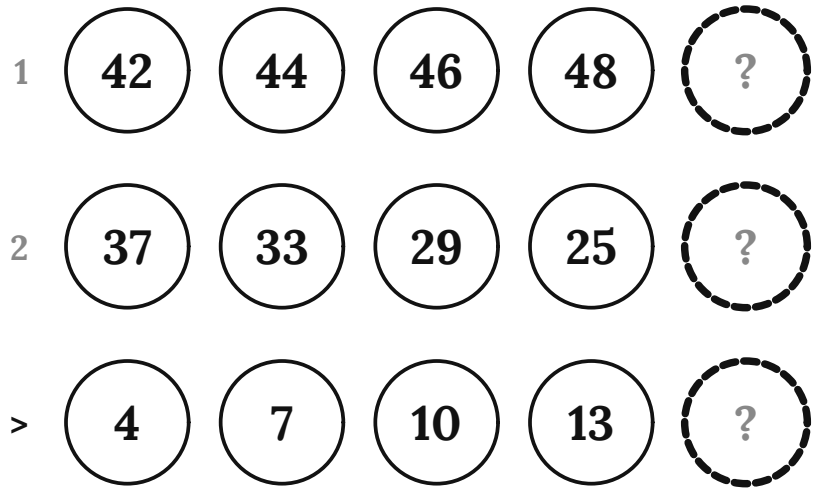


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The Number Dials

Each row of dials follows its own rule. Work out the number that belongs in the empty dial.

The first two rows are practice. The answer to the **last** row is your page.



Your answer is a page number. Turn to it. The right page has the **BELL** stamp in its top corner. No BELL? Wrong page: come back and try again.



PAGE

Stuck? Hints **D1** (page 44), **D2** (page 45), **D3** (page 46). Full answers on pages 47–48.

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Story Time · Childhood

Where did you live when you were little? What did the house look like, smell like and sound like?

What was your favorite game? Who did you play it with?

Which food takes you straight back to being a child? Who made it for you?

Told by: _____ Written down by: _____

Date: _____

When the story is told, go back to page 26 and carry on.

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A golden letter is waiting for you here. **Write it in box 6** of your pass on page 37.



CANDLE

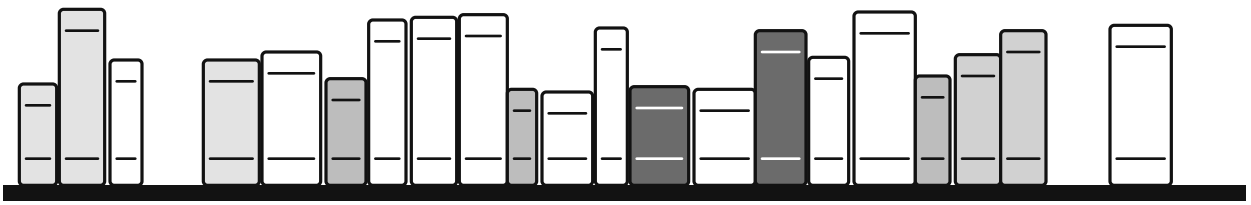
The Secret Compartment

All six drawers are open. At the bottom of the chest is a thin wooden panel with six little squares carved into it. This is the secret compartment, and it is locked with a word.

“I locked it the year I was as old as your mother is now,” Grandma says. “I chose the word I thought mattered most in a whole life. Your six letters spell it.” Biscuit sits up straight, as if waiting too.

Play together: before you go on, turn to page 11. The grown-up tells a story and you write it down.

Turn the page.



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The Last Lock

Look at your pass on page 37. Read your six golden letters in order, box 1 to box 6.

Which word opens the secret compartment?

F I R M L Y	turn to page 32
F A M I L Y	turn to page 41
F A U L T Y	turn to page 38
F A I R L Y	turn to page 33

Your answer is a page number. Turn to it. The right page has the **HOURGLASS** stamp in its top corner. No HOURGLASS? Wrong page: come back and try again.



PAGE

Stuck? Hints **G1** (page 44), **G2** (page 45), **G3** (page 46). Full answers on pages 47–48.

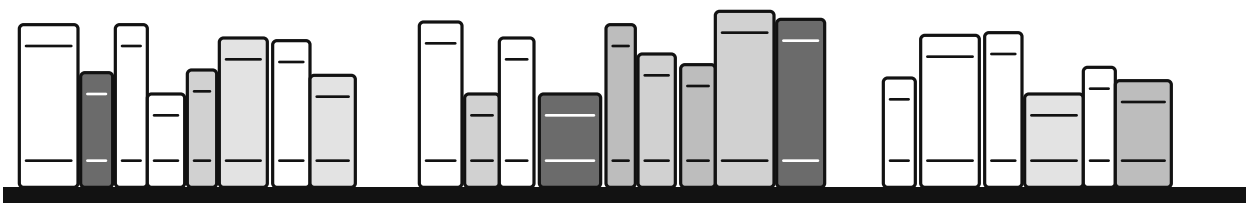
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Mothballs

You open the wrong box and a cloud of mothball smell rolls out. Achoo! Back to the puzzle.

Whoops!

This page does not have the stamp you need. Go back to the page you came from.



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F

A golden letter is waiting for you here. **Write it in box 1** of your pass on page 37.

MOON

Drawer 2 · School Days

The second drawer smells of old paper. Inside are a fountain pen, a dried-up bottle of blue ink and an exercise book with Grandma's name written on the cover in her neatest letters.

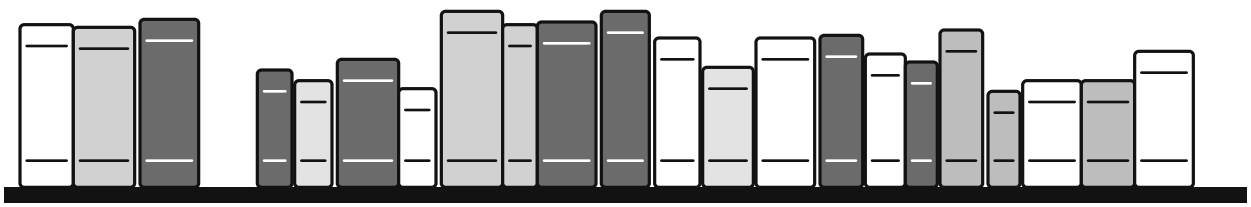
Biscuit reaches out a paw to bat the pen, and pulls it back when Grandma gives a look. "I won that pen. There was only one for the whole class."

This drawer is locked more tightly than the first. Tucked into the exercise book is a squared page that was clearly left for whoever came next.

In the corner of the page: "When a problem is hard, read it twice. My teacher said so, and my teacher was right."

Play together: before you go on, turn to page 22. The grown-up tells a story and you write it down.

Turn the page.

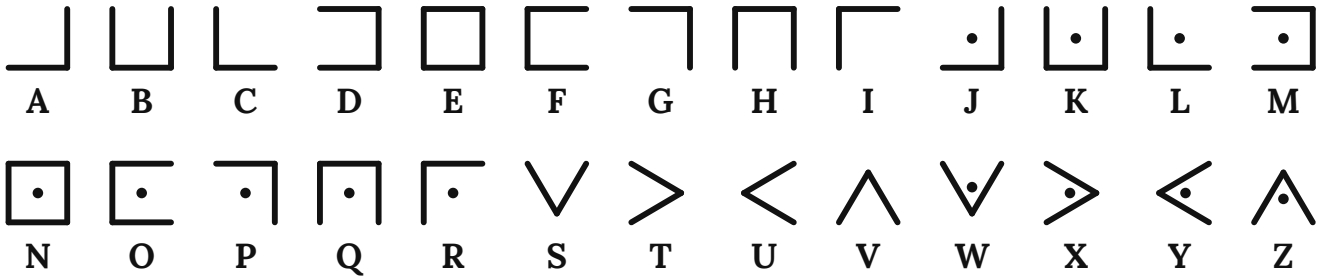


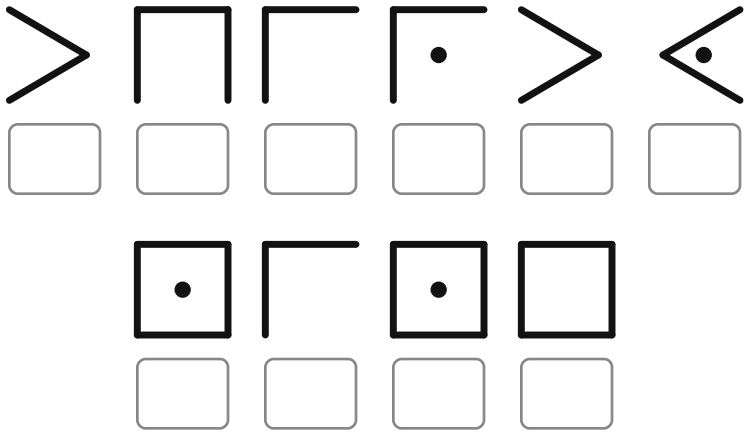
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The Shape Door

Each shape stands for the letter under it in the key. **Look carefully at the dots!**

The door says:





Your answer is a page number. Turn to it. The right page has the **LEAF** stamp in its top corner. No LEAF? Wrong page: come back and try again.

PAGE

Stuck? Hints **B1** (page 44), **B2** (page 45), **B3** (page 46). Full answers on pages 47–48.

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Cold Tea

You looked in the wrong place for so long that the tea went cold. Grandma pours a fresh cup and points. “Back to the page you came from.”

Nope!

This page does not have the stamp you need. Go back to the page you came from.



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Notes

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Notes

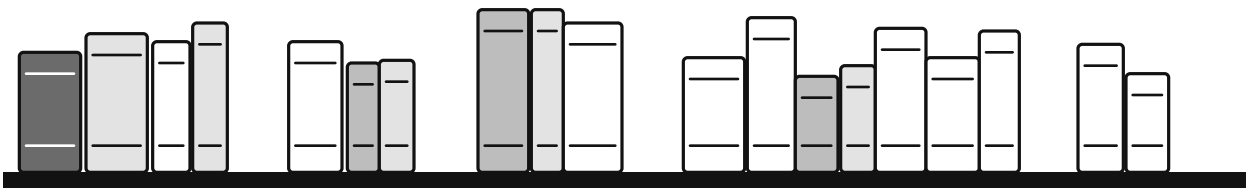
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The Broken Radio

The old radio crackles once and goes quiet. It has nothing to tell you. Try again.

Shhh!

This page does not have the stamp you need. Go back to the page you came from.

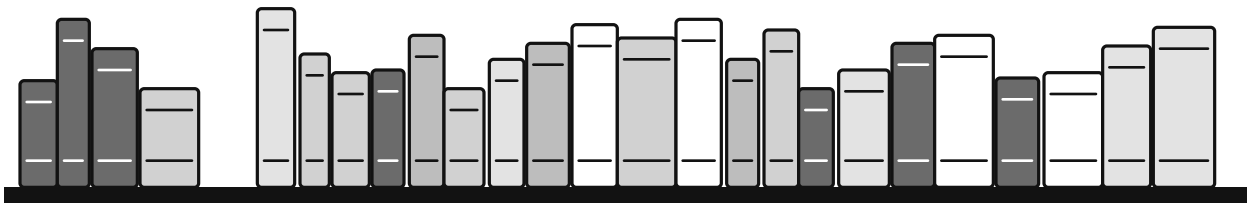


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Not That Word

Nothing happens. Go back to page 24, then read the six letters on your pass again, slowly, from box 1 to box 6.

Hmm...

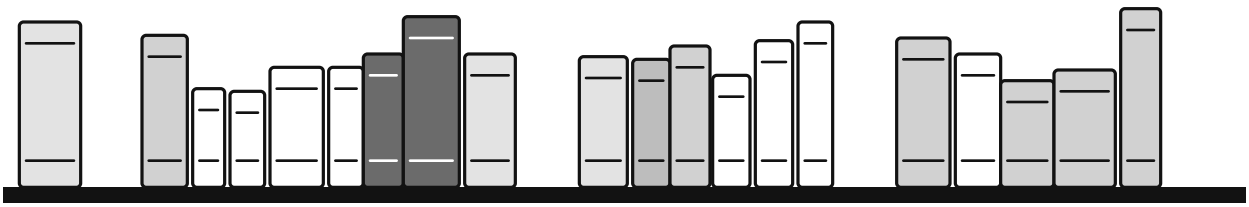


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The Lock Stays Shut

Nothing happens. Go back to page 24, then read the six letters on your pass again, slowly, from box 1 to box 6.

Hmm...



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Story Time · School Days

How did you get to school? What did you see on the way, and who walked with you?

Which teacher do you remember most? Why?

Did you ever get into trouble at school? Tell me what happened.

Told by: _____ Written down by: _____

Date: _____

When the story is told, go back to page 39 and carry on.

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Story Time · Becoming a Mother

What was my mom (or dad) like as a small child? Tell me one funny story.

When was being a mother hardest for you? How did you get through it?

Which song did you sing at bedtime? Sing it to me now, and I will write the words here.

Told by: _____ Written down by: _____

Date: _____

When the story is told, go back to page 8 and carry on.

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Story Time · The Wedding

Where did you first meet Grandpa? What did you think of him then?

What was your wedding day like? What do you remember best?

What did you love most about him? And what annoyed you most?

Told by: _____ Written down by: _____

Date: _____

When the story is told, go back to page 16 and carry on.

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Your Pass

Each time you solve a drawer, write its golden letter in the matching box.

GRANDMA'S MEMORY CHEST · PASS

1 Childhood	**2** School Days	**3** Twenty Years Old
4 The Wedding	**5** Becoming a Mother	**6** Becoming Grandma

Name: _____

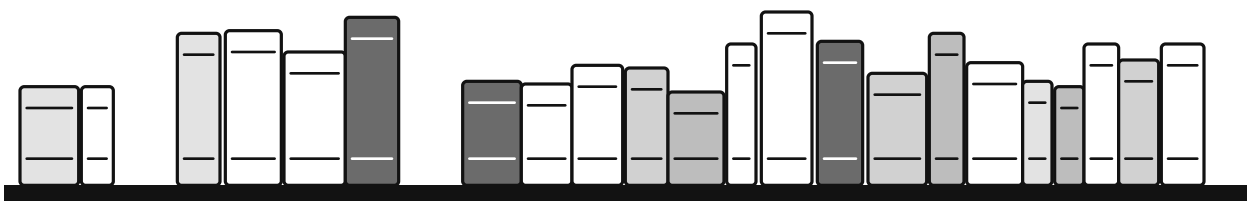
Come back to this page whenever you find a golden letter.

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So Close!

Nothing happens. Go back to page 24, then read the six letters on your pass again, slowly, from box 1 to box 6.

Hmm...



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A golden letter is waiting for you here. **Write it in box 2** of your pass on page 37.

LEAF

Drawer 3 · Twenty Years Old

In the third drawer there is a black-and-white photograph. A young woman with two braids stands beside a bicycle, laughing. You have to look for a long time before you see that it is Grandma.

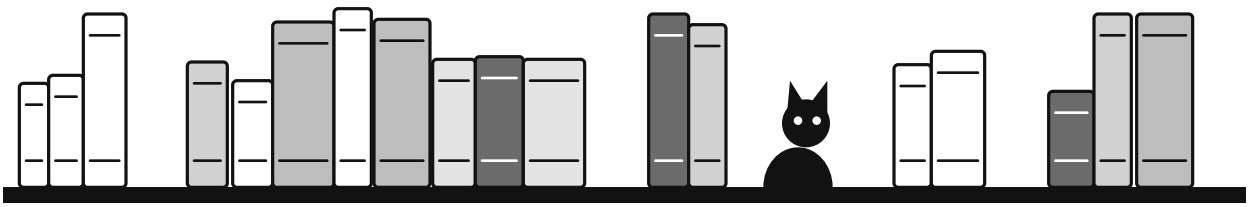
Next to the photo lie an old train ticket and a handkerchief with the embroidery only half finished. “I thought I would travel very far,” she says, looking out of the window.

A red thread is tied around the drawer like a ribbon on a present. The end of the thread leads to a piece of stiff card with something on it that needs to be solved.

On the back of the photo: “Twenty years old and afraid of nothing. Whoever opens this drawer, ask me about my dreams.”

Play together: before you go on, turn to page 34. The grown-up tells a story and you write it down.

Turn the page.



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Who Took What?

Dora, Ben and Eli each took one thing (Ribbons, Photos, Marbles) and hid it in one locker (7, 10, 13).

1. Ben took the Photos.

2. Eli did not use locker 7.

3. Eli's locker has a lower number than Dora's.

4. The Marbles are in a lower-numbered locker than the Ribbons.

Add **Dora's** locker number to **Ben's** locker number.

	Ribbons	Photos	Marbles	7	10	13
Dora						
Ben						
Eli						

Things on the left, locker numbers on the right. Mark X for "no" and a dot for "yes".

Dora's locker _____ + Ben's locker _____ = _____

Your answer is a page number. Turn to it. The right page has the **KEY** stamp in its top corner. No KEY? Wrong page: come back and try again.



PAGE

Stuck? Hints **C1** (page 44), **C2** (page 45), **C3** (page 46). Full answers on pages 47–48.

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The Letter at the Bottom

HOURGLASS

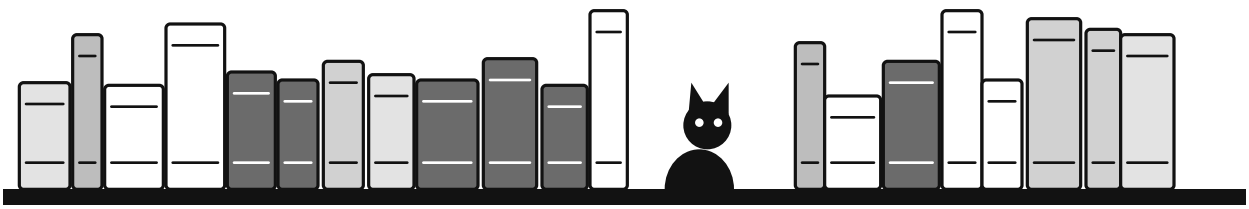
"Family," you read out loud.

The panel lifts. Underneath there is only an envelope. On the front it says: "For the grandchild who opens this chest." She wrote it long ago, before you were even born.

Grandma does not read the letter. She hands it to you. "You can read it later. You have heard enough for one day." Then she points at the book in your hands, at the pages you have filled with her words. "And for that, I am the one who should say thank you."

Outside, the rain has stopped. Biscuit climbs into the empty chest, curls up among six drawers of memories and falls fast asleep.

You escaped! Turn the page.



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I escaped!

Name: _____

Date: _____

Time it took: _____

Hints used: _____

Hardest room: _____

Next: Book 2

Under Grandpa's bed there is a locked metal box that nobody in the family has ever been allowed to open. He says it only holds pliers and a hammer. But why would pliers and a hammer need six locks? In Book 2 it is his turn to tell the stories.

Look for "Grandpa's Toolbox".

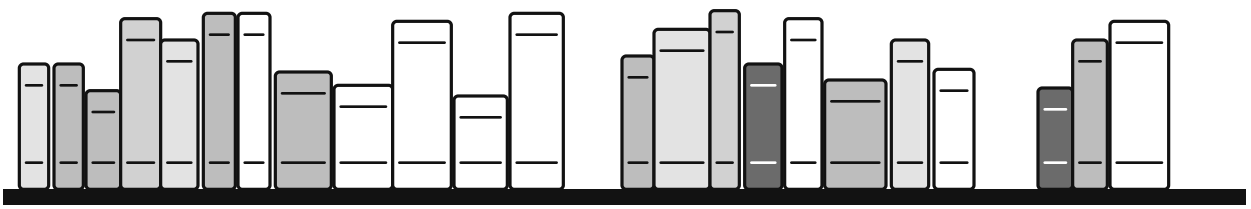
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Old Newspapers

A stack of newspapers as high as your chest. The newest headline is the price of bread thirty years ago. Interesting, but the wrong way.

Uh-oh!

This page does not have the stamp you need. Go back to the page you came from.



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Hints · level 1

Find your code and read only that one.

E1 Look at the key above the puzzle: every letter has its number under it.

G1 Write the golden letters on your pass in box order, 1 to 6. Did you miss a drawer?

F1 Circle lightly in pencil. Longer words are easier to spot first.

A1 Start at IN. When you hit a dead end, go back to the last fork and try the other way.

D1 Write the difference between each pair of neighbours under the row. Do you see a pattern in those?

C1 Start with the clue that tells you straight out who took what, and mark it in the grid.

B1 Find each shape from the door in the key, then write the letter under it in the box. Dots matter.

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Hints · level 2

Find your code and read only that one.

D2 Practice answers: row 1 is 50, row 2 is 21.

F2 When every word is circled, the letters left over make a short sentence.

C2 Cross out every "no" you can. Dora took the Ribbons.

B2 The first word has 6 letters and starts with T.

A2 Exactly 4 numbers sit on the one true path.

E2 The first number is 6. That is the letter F.

G2 Your word starts with F and ends with Y.

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Hints · level 3

Find your code and read only that one.

A3 The numbers on the true path are 5, 9, 6, 6.

C3 Dora's locker is 13.

F3 The sentence starts: GO TO PAGE ...

E3 The message starts with FIND and ends with a number.

G3 F-A-M-I-L-Y.

D3 In the last row, the final step is +3.

B3 Two words that make a number: THIRTY and then a small number.

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Answers

Only read these if you are really stuck!

Drawer 1 **Childhood.** The one true path from IN to OUT passes 5, 9, 6, 6. 5 + 9 + 6 + 6 = 26. Turn to page 26 (moon stamp).

Drawer 2 **School Days.** With the key, the shapes on the door read THIRTY NINE. Turn to page 39 (leaf stamp).

Drawer 3 **Twenty Years Old.** Dora: Ribbons, locker 13; Ben: Photos, locker 7; Eli: Marbles, locker 10. 13 + 7 = 20. Turn to page 20 (key stamp).

Drawer 4 **The Wedding.** Row 1: 50. Row 2: 21. Last row: 4, 7, 10, 13, then 16. Turn to page 16 (bell stamp).

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Answers

Drawer 5 **Becoming a Mother.** Using A = 1, B = 2, C = 3 ... Z = 26, the numbers spell FIND PAGE EIGHT. Turn to page 8 (star stamp).

Drawer 6 **Becoming Grandma.** The letters left over, read row by row, say GO TO PAGE TWENTY THREE. Turn to page 23 (candle stamp).

Last **The Last Lock.** The six golden letters, in box order, spell FAMILY. Turn to page 41 (hourglass stamp).