Your guide to the clue workshop

ADULT ONLY - contains answers. Keep this guide separate from the nine player sheets.

What this pack includes

Six independent puzzles: two codes, two logic tasks and a forest investigation and a switch circuit puzzle. They can be used separately or in any order. This is not a complete story-based escape room; there are no physical locks, timer or required room search.

Print and prepare

Print the nine player pages single-sided at 100% on matching A4 paper. One complete player set per team is a starting point. Read this twelve-page guide on screen, or print it once. Prepare pencils and scissors. For puzzle 3, cut the eleven crates from player page 5 and place them on player page 4. Print both at 100%; each square is 23 mm. No colour-dependent clue is used.

Choose a starting point

The puzzles are designed for children aged 6-12 with adult help as needed. Reading and experience vary. Inspect the sheets first. The forest patrol is a route-planning challenge; consider adult help. Puzzle 1 now involves inferring a code from four old records before combining five records to reconstruct a five-stop delivery route. It uses two player pages.

Share the information

For puzzle 4, distinguish the four verified records (all true) from the three copied notes (two true, one false). Recipients and contents each occur once. Choose the compass parcel AND the false note. Keep all evidence visible. No cutting is needed. Full reasoning is on guide page 7.

Help without giving everything away

Ask players to explain their thinking before checking the answer. Give one hint at a time; allow another attempt before the next hint. The last hint can be very direct. If the group wants to stop, read the explained solution together.

How you may use these files

Print for your own household or the classes you teach. Retain the Paper Adventure credit. Do not resell or republish these PDF files; share the public page link instead. These are original Paper Adventure puzzle materials.

The post office: two-stage solution

01 - The rain-soaked post office

Stage 1 - restore the key

Hint 1: Compare lengths first: a three-shape record needs a three-letter label; a four-shape record needs four letters.

Hint 2: Try a label on A, then use the same shape-letter matches to read B. Does B become one of the other labels?

Hint 3: If A were PALM, B would read MAPL, which is not a label. Try the other four-letter label, then restore the key.

Stage 2 - reconstruct the route

Route hint 1: Find the two stops that must be consecutive. Keep them together when trying different orders; then test PALM two positions before or after POOL.

Route hint 2: PALM cannot be two positions before POOL while satisfying records 1 and 4. The continuous group is POOL, LOOM, PALM.

Route hint 3: The three-stop group must occupy positions 3-5. Compare OAK and MALL in positions 1-2 with record 5 to choose their direction.

Answer: OAK MALL POOL LOOM PALM

Stage 1: A=LAMP, B=PALM, C=MAP, D=OAK. If A were PALM, B would read MAPL, which is not a label. The restored key is diamond=L, triangle=A, star=M, cross=P, circle=O, square=K. Stage 2: record 1 decodes to MALL before PALM; record 3 says POOL immediately before LOOM. Combine POOL-LOOM with record 2. If PALM is two positions before POOL, records 1 and 4 cannot both hold. Therefore the group is POOL-LOOM-PALM. It cannot occupy positions 1-3 because MALL must precede PALM, nor positions 2-4 because OAK and MALL could not be neighbours. It occupies positions 3-5. Record 5 excludes MALL-OAK-POOL-LOOM-PALM. The only route is OAK MALL POOL LOOM PALM. Deliver the final letter to PALM.

The moon-station message

02 - The moon-station message

Hint 1: Try a simple explanation for record 1. Does it also work on record 2? Your rule must explain all three records.

Hint 2: Moving the letters in QXV back three places gives NUS. Compare its order with SUN. Does the same idea explain STAR and UDWV?

Hint 3: Move each received letter back three places, then reverse the whole word. For NFRG, the first step gives KCOD. Reverse those letters to find the meeting point.

Answer: DOCK

The sender reverses a word, then moves every letter forward three places. NOON is unchanged by reversal, so its QRRQ record alone also fits a simple shift. SUN becomes NUS, then QXV, disproving a shift alone. STAR becomes RATS, then UDWV; merely swapping its end letters would instead give UWDV. To decode NFRG, move each letter back three places: N to K, F to C, R to O and G to D. KCOD reversed is DOCK. Enter DOCK to restore communication; the rescue ship will meet you at the dock.

The loading bay: explained moves

03 - The blocked loading bay

Hint 1: X needs a clear lane to the right. D and A are in its way. Think about which empty spaces they need.

Hint 2: From your current position, start by making space with crate A. Follow its printed arrows.

Hint 3: Move A down 1 square.

Answer: X reaches EXIT

One solution from the printed starting layout follows. Each slide may cover several empty squares; the last slide delivers X automatically online. Other legal solutions are accepted.

1. A down 1 square
2. C down 1 square
3. B right 1 square
4. D up 1 square
5. G right 1 square
6. F right 1 square
7. J down 3 squares
8. X left 2 squares
9. F left 1 square
10. I up 4 squares
11. E left 1 square
12. G left 1 square
13. D down 2 squares
14. X right 3 squares
15. I down 1 square
16. B left 1 square
17. C up 1 square
18. X right 1 square

Why it works: some crates must move away and later return. X first moves left so I can travel upward, then returns right. B and C later move back to open the exit. Online hints start from the current layout; these printed moves start from player page 4.

Evidence and trails

04 - The miscopied parcel records

Hint 1: Start with the map. Ava's parcel must have exactly one more stamp. Which map locations are possible?

Hint 2: Try the map in A. That puts Ava in C and Cleo in A. Cleo would hold the map. How many copied notes would then be false?

Hint 3: The map can only be in B, putting Ava in A. Notes I and II are true, so III is false. Now combine Cleo's possible parcel with the clock and Drew records.

Answer: A / note III

A / note III. Parcel A holds Ava's compass. B holds Ben's map, C holds Cleo's key, and D holds Drew's clock. Copied notes I and II are true; III is false because the compass belongs to Ava, not Cleo.

Complete seven-step reasoning and restored ledger: guide page 7.

05 - The missing ranger footprints

Hint 1: Observe the boot sample depth and map terrain badges.

Hint 2: Match the sketch landmarks; use the absence of grass in the complete sample.

Hint 3: The map and evidence together identify terrain order, consecutive sketches and a bridge crossing after rescue.

Answer: S B R A X C D T Z W E

S B R A X C D T Z W E. Match the traces to the map, interpret the sketches and identify the photographed bridge. Full reasoning follows.

The fog harbour circuit

06 - The fog harbour circuit

Hint 1: Look at overlapping switch effects, not just dark lights.

Hint 2: Two presses of one switch cancel. Record a tentative press plan.

Hint 3: The complete guide shows an initial-board restoration plan, with the affected lights at every step.

Answer: All 36 navigation lights ON

Track switch parity and overlapping effects. The four worked stages show a complete restoration from the printed initial board.

04 / reasoning The parcel ledger

Answer: A / note III. Follow each deduction below; the verified records are all true and only one copied note is false.

1. The map cannot be in D. D has four stamps. Ava would need five stamps, but none of the parcels has five.

2. The map cannot be in C. C has three stamps, so Ava would receive D with four. D has a red ribbon: note I would be false. The map would not be in B, so note II would also be false. Two false notes break the rule.

3. The map cannot be in A. A has two stamps, so Ava would receive C with three. Cleo can only receive A or C; with C taken, Cleo would receive A and hold the map. Notes II and III would both be false. Again, that breaks the rule.

4. The map is in B, and Ava receives A. B has one stamp; Ava needs exactly one more, so Ava receives A. A has a blue ribbon: note I is true. Note II is true too. Exactly one copied note is false, so note III is false: Cleo does not hold the compass.

5. Cleo receives C and holds the key. Cleo can only receive A or C, and Ava already has A. C is dotted, so it cannot hold the clock. The map is in B, and the compass does not belong to Cleo. That leaves the key in C.

6. Drew receives D and holds the clock. Drew holds the key or clock. Cleo has the key, so Drew has the clock. The clock needs striped wrapping: A or D. Ava has A, so Drew receives D.

7. The compass is in A. The map is in B, the key in C and the clock in D. Each item occurs once, leaving the compass in A. The remaining recipient, Ben, receives B.

THE RESTORED LEDGER

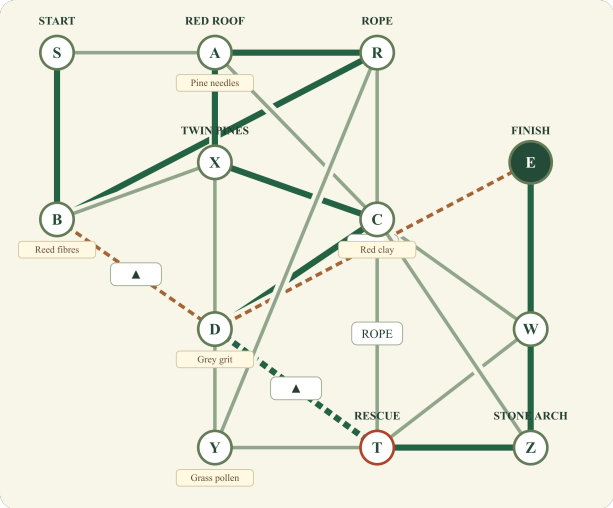
A / Ava / compass

B / Ben / map

C / Cleo / key

D / Drew / clock

Forest patrol / explained route



Decode the boot sample: The deepest layer is oldest. Map badges match reed fibres to B, pine needles to A, red clay to C, and grey grit to D. Therefore those four places were visited in that order. Neutral places may lie between.

Use absence as evidence: Only Y has grass pollen. Every crossing would leave it, and the complete sample lost nothing. Its absence excludes Y. Other places are not automatically excluded simply because they leave no trace.

Identify the sketches: The red-roof landmark is A and the twin-pine lookout is X. One drawing was made at each stop and no page is missing, so A was followed directly by X.

Place the bridge photograph: The stone arch belongs to Z. The extra dragged footprints appear only after pickup at T. Thus the route must reach T before Z, without using a steep road afterwards.

Reconstruct the approach: S > A would leave no way to visit the earlier reed bank B without revisiting A or breaking the recovered sketch pair. Start S > B, continue via R to A, then X. From X, C must precede D; Y is excluded. Continue C > D > T.

Finish and reject the decoy: From T, go Z > W > E. Going T > W > E misses the photographed stone bridge. Going through the grass clearing contradicts the complete trace sample. The full answer is S > B > R > A > X > C > D > T > Z > W > E. Of 1064 non-repeating S-to-E routes, exactly one explains all exhibits and road rules.

Harbour circuit / stage 1 of 4

Rows A-F, columns 1-6. Start from the original player board. Each stage includes all preceding presses. Brown borders identify switches pressed in this stage. ON and OFF labels show the resulting state.



1. A1 / press. Press A1. Flip A1, A2, B1; all other lights stay unchanged.

2. A3 / press. Press A3. Flip A3, A2, A4, B3; all other lights stay unchanged.

3. A4 / press. Press A4. Flip A4, A3, A5, B4; all other lights stay unchanged.

4. A5 / press. Press A5. Flip A5, A4, A6, B5; all other lights stay unchanged.

5. B1 / press. Press B1. Flip B1, B2, A1, C1; all other lights stay unchanged.

6. B2 / press. Press B2. Flip B2, B1, B3, A2, C2; all other lights stay unchanged.

Harbour circuit / stage 2 of 4

Rows A-F, columns 1-6. Start from the original player board. Each stage includes all preceding presses. Brown borders identify switches pressed in this stage. ON and OFF labels show the resulting state.



7. B4 / press. Press B4. Flip B4, B3, B5, A4, C4; all other lights stay unchanged.

8. B5 / press. Press B5. Flip B5, B4, B6, A5, C5; all other lights stay unchanged.

9. B6 / press. Press B6. Flip B6, B5, A6, C6; all other lights stay unchanged.

10. C1 / press. Press C1. Flip C1, C2, B1, D1; all other lights stay unchanged.

11. C5 / press. Press C5. Flip C5, C4, C6, B5, D5; all other lights stay unchanged.

12. D1 / press. Press D1. Flip D1, D2, C1, E1; all other lights stay unchanged.

Harbour circuit / stage 3 of 4

Rows A-F, columns 1-6. Start from the original player board. Each stage includes all preceding presses. Brown borders identify switches pressed in this stage. ON and OFF labels show the resulting state.



13. D2 / press. Press D2. Flip D2, D1, D3, C2, E2; all other lights stay unchanged.

14. D3 / press. Press D3. Flip D3, D2, D4, C3, E3; all other lights stay unchanged.

15. D4 / press. Press D4. Flip D4, D3, D5, C4, E4; all other lights stay unchanged.

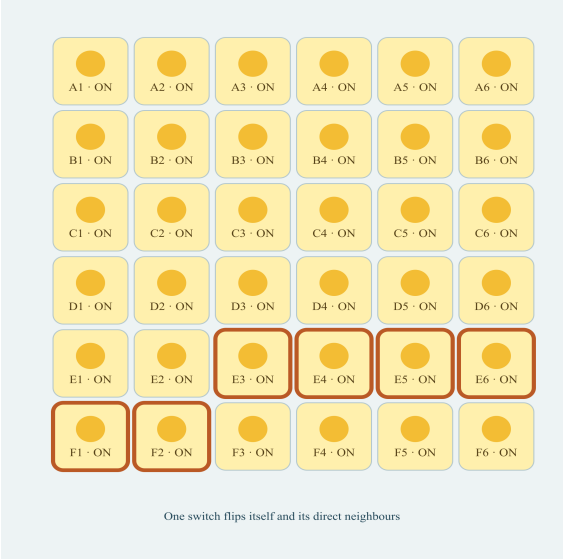
16. D6 / press. Press D6. Flip D6, D5, C6, E6; all other lights stay unchanged.

17. E1 / press. Press E1. Flip E1, E2, D1, F1; all other lights stay unchanged.

18. E2 / press. Press E2. Flip E2, E1, E3, D2, F2; all other lights stay unchanged.

Harbour circuit / stage 4 of 4

Rows A-F, columns 1-6. Start from the original player board. Each stage includes all preceding presses. Brown borders identify switches pressed in this stage. ON and OFF labels show the resulting state.



19. E3 / press. Press E3. Flip E3, E2, E4, D3, F3; all other lights stay unchanged.

20. E4 / press. Press E4. Flip E4, E3, E5, D4, F4; all other lights stay unchanged.

21. E5 / press. Press E5. Flip E5, E4, E6, D5, F5; all other lights stay unchanged.

22. E6 / press. Press E6. Flip E6, E5, D6, F6; all other lights stay unchanged.

23. F1 / press. Press F1. Flip F1, F2, E1; all other lights stay unchanged.

24. F2 / press. Press F2. Flip F2, F1, F3, E2; all other lights stay unchanged.