FREE HALLOWEEN PRINT-&-PLAY PACK

CASE FILE

★ BRAIN BUSTERS · AGES 8–10

Brain-Bending Halloween Mystery Pack

Who stole Cosmo's treats? A puzzle-book mystery with Nova & Cosmo



Print it • Grab a pen • Crack the case thebrainbus.fm

CHALLENGE ACCEPTED

Ready to crack a case?



This pack is a proper puzzle-book mystery. Someone has stolen Cosmo's treats and your detective has to work out who. The case is solved by completing four puzzles, each of which earns one clue. It's silly-spooky: friendly party guests, no frights, and every puzzle has exactly one answer. Answers are at the foot of each page, but no peeking until you've had a real go!



Detective Nova here. Four puzzles, four clues, one thief. Bring me the evidence!



Cosmo, reporting a crime! My treats VANISHED. Bet you can't crack the case. Beep boop!

1



Print it

One copy each if you're racing your crew.

2



Grab a pen

And maybe a timer to beat your best.

3



Solve to earn clues

Open the Case File (page 3), then solve pages 4 to 7. Each one gives a clue to fill in on page 3.



Grown-up tip: Slip the pages into a sleeve and use a whiteboard marker, and the whole family can replay on every trip. Team up: give each detective a page, then meet back at the Case File to share clues. Puzzles are a passenger game, so drivers keep eyes on the road.

What's inside

- The Case File: Who Stole Cosmo's Treats?
- Number Ninja (6×6 Sudoku)
- Halloween Word Search
- Cosmo's Secret Code
- Spooky Science Quiz
- Master Detective Award

For grown-ups: The Brain Bus is a screen-free road-trip podcast for kids, split into four age bands so every child rides at their level. Brain Busters is made for ages 8–10: science, history, maths and big questions, with "think about it for a second before we tell you" moments from Nova and Cosmo. This pack is our gift: print it as often as you like. Fresh episodes drop free at **thebrainbus.fm**.



CASE FILE

Who Stole Cosmo's Treats?



READ IT FIRST. It's the Brain Bus Halloween party! Cosmo put his big bucket of treats on the snack table and turned his back for ONE minute. When he turned round, the bucket was empty. All that was left was a trail of glittery wrapper crumbs. Five guests were at the party, and one of them took the treats. Your job: earn four clues by solving the puzzles on pages 4 to 7, use them to clear the innocent guests, and name the thief.

THE CAST SHEET five suspects

SEAT 1



Hoot

an owl

HAT green party hat
LEGS 2

SEAT 2



Bella

a bat

HAT purple party hat
LEGS 2

SEAT 3



Webster

a spider

HAT orange party hat
LEGS 8

SEAT 4



Gus

a ghost

HAT gold paper crown
LEGS 0 (he floats)

SEAT 5



Smokey

a cat

HAT red party hat
LEGS 4

THE CLUE VAULT fill in each blank using the answer from the page named, then cross a guest off the Suspect Board

CLUE 1 page 4 · Number Ninja

The number in the shaded square is ___. The guest sitting in seat ___ was with Nova all night. Cleared!

CLUE 2 page 5 · Word Search

The bonus word hiding in the grid is _____. The guest in the _____ hat was busy bobbing for apples. Cleared!

CLUE 3 page 6 · Secret Code

Copy Cosmo's decoded message here:

_____

_____

Which guest does it clear? _____

CLUE 4 page 7 · Spooky Science Quiz

I got ___ answers TRUE. The guest whose name has that many letters was juggling pumpkins in the corner. Cleared!

THE SUSPECT BOARD tick when cleared, and write which clue cleared them



Hoot
☐ cleared
by clue ___



Bella
☐ cleared
by clue ___



Webster
☐ cleared
by clue ___



Gus
☐ cleared
by clue ___



Smokey
☐ cleared
by clue ___



The thief is _____

Nova says: Four clues clear four guests. Whoever is left is your thief. Elementary!

Cosmo says: No guessing allowed! If you cleared the wrong guest, check your puzzle. LOADING JUSTICE...



Answer (read upside-down): Clue 1: shaded square = 2, so seat 2 (Bella) is cleared. Clue 2: bonus word GREEN, so the green-hat guest (Hoot) is cleared. Clue 3: "The eight legged suspect was dancing with Nova all night", so the spider (Webster) is cleared. Clue 4: 6 TRUE answers, so the six-letter name (Smokey) is cleared. That leaves GUS THE GHOST! Cosmo's scanner found no footprints in the crumbs, and Gus has no legs to leave any. Gus had never had a Halloween treat before and was too shy to ask. Cosmo gave him the biggest one, and they all shared the rest. Case closed!

NUMBERS 1–6

Number Ninja



Fill the grid so every row, every column and every 2×3 box (two rows tall, three columns wide) has the numbers 1 to 6, each used once.

		6	3		
3	4				
	5			6	
4	6				1
5		2	6		4
	3		5		

CLUE 1

Solve it, then look at the **shaded square**. The number in it is your Clue 1 number. Take it back to the Case File.

Nova's tip

Look for a number that already appears four or five times. Where can the last one go?



Cosmo says: There is exactly one answer. No guessing! FACT CONFIRMED.

ANSWER Rows read 1·2·6·3·4·5 / 3·4·5·1·2·6 / 2·5·1·4·6·3 / 4·6·3·2·5·1 / 5·1·2·6·3·4 / 6·3·4·5·1·2. **Clue 1 number: 2.**

EYES SHARP

Halloween Word Search



There are 10 words hidden in the 12×12 grid. They run across (left to right), down (top to bottom) and diagonally (down and to the right). Circle each one as you find it.



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

Find these

- ☐ PUMPKIN
- ☐ COSTUME
- ☐ LANTERN
- ☐ SCARECROW
- ☐ MOONLIGHT
- ☐ SPIDER
- ☐ TREATS
- ☐ GHOST
- ☐ COSMO
- ☐ BATS

Bonus: 1 hidden colour

One sneaky extra word is hiding in the grid that is NOT on the list. It is a **5-letter colour** and it reads **across**. Find it and write it on the Case File. **(Clue 2)**



Cosmo says: Pro tip: look for the rare letters first. Scan for the K in PUMPKIN!

ANSWER

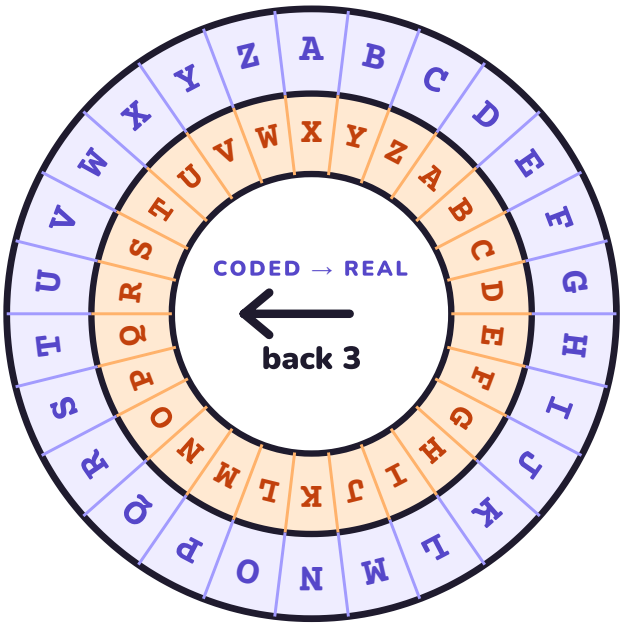
PUMPKIN R5C12 down · COSTUME R11C4 across · LANTERN R3C2 down · SCARECROW R1C3 diagonal · MOONLIGHT R1C1 down · SPIDER R6C6 diagonal · TREATS R12C2 across · GHOST R1C10 down · COSMO R8C3 across · BATS R10C2 across.

Bonus word: GREEN (row 1, columns 4–8).

DECODE IT

Cosmo's Slide Cipher

Cosmo has hidden a message with a slide cipher. Every letter has been slid 3 steps forward in the alphabet: A became D, B became E, and so on (X, Y, Z wrap round to A, B, C). To decode it, slide each letter 3 steps BACK.



WORKED EXAMPLE

CANDY becomes FDQGB.

So FDQGB means CANDY.



Nova says: Find the coded letter on the outer ring. The letter beneath it is the real one.

CODED	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z	A	B	C
REAL	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



COSMO'S CODED MESSAGE words keep their gaps

W K H H L J K W O H J J H G V X V S H F W

Z D V G D Q F L Q J Z L W K Q R Y D D O O

Q L J K W

Clue 3: write the decoded message in the boxes above. Then work out which guest on the Cast Sheet it clears, and write it on the Case File.



Cosmo says: Beep boop! Slide it back, slide it back, then read it out loud.

Bonus challenge

Write your own coded message for a friend. Use a slide of 3, and no names or addresses, please!

ANSWER **THE EIGHT LEGGED SUSPECT WAS DANCING WITH NOVA ALL NIGHT.** It clears the guest with eight legs: Webster the spider (Clue 3).

QUIZ THE CAR

Spooky Science

Read Cosmo's five fact cards, then decide whether each of the ten statements below is TRUE (T) or FALSE (F). Count your TRUE answers. That number is your Clue 4.



Pumpkins

A pumpkin grows from a flower on a vine along the ground, and it has seeds inside, which makes it a fruit. A pumpkin is also mostly water (roughly nine-tenths).



Bats

Bats are the only mammals that can truly fly. (Other animals, like flying squirrels, only glide.) Many bats find insects in the dark by squeaking and listening for the echo, which is called echolocation. And no bat is blind!



Spiders

A spider has eight legs and two body parts, so it is an arachnid, not an insect (insects have six legs). Spiders are cousins of scorpions. Every spider makes silk, but not every spider spins a web to catch dinner. Some chase and pounce!



Owls

An owl's eyes are shaped like tubes and can't swivel, so an owl turns its whole head, up to about 270 degrees (three-quarters of the way round). Soft feather edges help it fly almost silently.



The Moon

The Moon doesn't make its own light. It shines by reflecting sunlight. Its gravity also tugs on our oceans and helps cause the tides.



True or False? Circle T or F.

1	Bats are the only mammals that can truly fly.	T	F
2	Bats are blind.	T	F
3	A pumpkin is a fruit.	T	F
4	Pumpkins grow on vines along the ground.	T	F
5	Spiders are arachnids, in the same group as scorpions.	T	F
6	Every spider spins a web to catch its food.	T	F
7	An owl can turn its head about three-quarters of the way round.	T	F
8	Owls can roll their eyes around like we do.	T	F
9	The Moon makes its own light.	T	F
10	The Moon's pull helps cause ocean tides.	T	F

My TRUE answers: _____ (this is Clue 4; take it back to the Case File)

Nova says: Stuck? Re-read the fact cards. Every answer is hiding in there.

Cosmo says: Quiz the whole car! Whoever gets the most right wins a beep-boop high five.

ANSWERS

1 T · 2 F (bats can see; many also use echoes) · 3 T · 4 T · 5 T · 6 F (many spiders hunt without a web) · 7 T · 8 F (owls' eyes are fixed in place, so they turn their heads) · 9 F (it reflects sunlight) · 10 T.

Number of TRUE answers: 6. Clue 4 clears the guest whose name has 6 letters: Smokey the cat.

OFFICIAL CERTIFICATE

Master Detective

This certificate is proudly awarded to

.....

(first name only)

For cracking Cosmo's secret code, hunting down every hidden word, taming the sudoku, acing the spooky-science quiz and solving the case of the missing treats. **A true Brain Buster: welcome to the crew!**



CASE CLOSED







Nova
Driver

Cosmo
Chief Fact Robot