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Activity Guide

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The Case of the Troublesome Turtle

ABOUT THE STORY

Someone is taking the green and yellow balloons from Mr. Paris's toy store. Every Friday the balloons disappear — but only in the fall. Mr. Paris calls on Bunny and Jack, Private Eyes, to solve the mystery. Who is stealing the balloons — and why are they only taken on Friday afternoons in the autumn?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Cynthia Rylant has written several other books about the High-Rise Private Eyes, including *The Case of the Missing Monkey* and *The Case of the Climbing Cat*, both Live Oak Readalongs. Her books have won dozens of awards; in 1993 she received the Newbery Award for her novel *Missing May*. She is also the author of the Henry and Mudge books. She lives with her family in Washington State.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

G. Brian Karas has illustrated more than 50 books. His first lessons in illustration came when he was five, and his sister taught him how to draw pilgrims. He went on to study art at the Paier School of Art in Connecticut. He lives in Rhinebeck, New York, with his family.

INTRODUCING THE STORY

Ask children if they know the team colors of any football teams. Explain that the book they are about to read and hear is a mystery, and one of the clues is a football team's colors.

READING ACTIVITIES

Comprehension/Thinking Skills

- “What happens to Bunny's painting of Jack?”
- “What clues does Bunny write down?”
- “What does Jack ask Mr. Paris about? Why?”
- “Who took the balloons from Mr. Paris's store? Why?”
- “Did you predict who the thief was? Explain your answer.” (*Make Predictions*)
- “Do you think the thief meant to cause trouble? Explain your answer.” (*Draw Conclusions*)

Vocabulary

Write these words and sentences on the chalkboard. Have children copy the sentences, using context clues to fill in each blank with a word from the box.

private fantastic concentrate accessories disappear

- Bunny is a detective, or _____ eye.
- Bunny wants to find out why the balloons _____ on Fridays.
- Mr. Paris sells action figures and their _____ in his store.
- The detectives write down clues and _____ on their meanings.
- When they solve the mystery, Mr. Paris thinks they are _____.

CROSS-CURRICULAR ACTIVITIES

Art: School Colors

The Tarrytown Turtles' school colors are green and yellow. Talk with children about their school colors. If the school has official colors, discuss where and how they are displayed and think of other places they might be displayed. If the school does not have official colors, pick two colors that the group feels would be suitable. If possible, find a way to display the colors — a banner, signs, balloons, and so on.

Math: Football Numbers

Have students use a Monday newspaper to find the scores of ten professional football teams and create a chart using these headings: Team; Game Score; Total Points Scored. Then ask them these questions:

- What was the highest scoring game?
- What was the lowest scoring game?
- What was the difference in number of points between the highest and lowest scoring games?

Language Arts: Compounds

Have children match each word in column A with a word in column B to make a compound word from the story.

A	B
Home	ball
cook	corn
foot	gull
pop	work
sea	pad
note	out

Art: Painting a Portrait

Bunny paints Jack's portrait at the beginning of the book. Have children work in pairs to paint each other's portraits. If possible, have examples of portraits from various artists and styles for children to observe, such as Leonardo da Vinci, Hans Holbein, and Pablo Picasso. Children can copy an artist's style or use their own style for their portraits.

INTERNET ACTIVITY

Before you send children to do research using any of the keywords suggested below, you may wish to try them yourself to make sure the sites are suitable.

Team Colors

Have children go online using the name of a football team of their choice as a keyword to find out about its colors. If possible, children can print out a color picture of the team helmet. Hang the helmet pictures around the classroom to show the variety of colors and decorations.