

The Chocolatey Case of The Costume Conspiracy

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with contributions from Jack Pachuta



How to Organize the Investigation

Before the party:

1. Print off one cop of each suspect role (pp. 9- 16)
2. Print off a copy of the answer sheet for each participant (p. 7)
3. Print off the suspect cards (pp. 4-6)—you can cut them out if you like. You will need enough for each participant to have one of each so that each player can keep notes on each suspect. If you choose to do so, "clipboards" can be made out of cardboard and given to each player with the note cards and answer sheet attached. Each player will need a pen or pencil.
4. Print off the solution to the case (p. 17) and keep it hidden until the end of the party.

At the party:

1. Assign suspect roles to nine players. Everyone is allowed to investigate the case, even the other suspects.
2. Read "Where's the Cake?" (p. 2) and the Rules of the Game (p. 3) out loud to everyone.
3. Distribute the suspect cards and answer sheets (or prepared clipboards) with pens or pencils.
4. Give the kids adequate time to investigate the case. (45 minutes-1 hour, but you can decide this based on your group of kids.)
5. Call your "investigators" (all participants) back together and read the questions on the Answer Sheet. Have the investigators give their solutions one at a time.
6. Read the solution to the case out loud. If you wish, you can award prizes to the kids or teams with the correct solution. Something sweet might be fun and memorable.

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Where's the Cake?

Once a year at Sweet County Elementary School, everyone in the whole school—kids *and teachers alike* — *throw a party* in the school gym. None of the other schools has ever had a party that's as much fun as the party at Sweet County Elementary. That's because it's a costume party! Most of the kids prepare *weeks in advance*. They create all kinds of costumes — cats and dogs, clowns, pirates, and even *ghosts!*

Everyone in the first, second, and third grades makes their own costumes for the party — even the teachers! There's a best-costume contest, music, games, fruit punch, pizza and, best of all...*cake!* But not just any kind of cake - it's Mrs. McGreedy's homemade, warm and fluffy, sweet and yummy *double chocolaty-chocolate chip cake cake*. Most of the kids are scared of Mrs. McGreedy, but they'll do just about *anything for some of her double chocolaty-chocolate chip cake cake*. Mr. Snackums , the school principal, never lets anyone eat sweets at school — except at the costume party. So that makes the party even *more fun!*

This year's party began the same as every other year's party, with Mr. Snackums on the stage telling a joke...

"Hey kiddos! Do you know why the students ate their homework?" he asked.

"Because the teacher *said it was a piece of cake!*" he chuckled.

Nobody laughed. So, Mr. Snackums told Mrs. McGreedy it was time to start the games.

All the kids went crazy! *Game time!*

Everyone started to move toward Mrs. McGreedy, talking excitedly, when all of a sudden, the lights went out! In the dark, all the kids started yelling and laughing while the teachers tried to quiet them down. With a *swish-crash-clatter*, Mrs. McGreedy finally got to the switch and turned the lights back on, but oh what a mess!

Over at the snack table, the punch bowl had crashed to the floor and spilled fruit punch all over the floor. The white table cloth was gone, and Mrs. McGreedy's *double chocolaty-chocolate chip cake cake had disappeared—the whole thing!* All that was left was an empty cake pan! Who would ever dream of doing this and why would that person want to spoil the party?

A special team of investigators has been assembled to solve this mystery and figure out what happened to Mrs. McGreedy's warm and fluffy, sweet and yummy *double chocolaty-chocolate chip cake cake!* They won't leave until they solve the case.

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Be sure to ask:

1. Who are you and what are you dressed as?
2. Have you noticed anything strange that might help solve the case?
3. What do you think happened to the *double chocolaty-chocolate chip cake cake*?



Notes about Maggie Mouser

What were you doing underneath the snack table?



Notes about Mrs. McGreedy

Do you mind sharing your double chocolaty-chocolate chip cake cake with the school every year?



Notes about Mr. Snackums

What were you doing out in the hallway?



Billy Barker

You are a suspect. Always tell the truth when people ask you questions.

Who are you and what are you dressed as?

Woof, woof! I'm Billy, and I bet you can't guess what I am! Need a hint? I'm big and lovable, and I love to chase cats! I will also eat just about anything I can get my hands—I mean, my paws on. Woof, woof! I'm a dog. This is the best costume party ever. There's pizza and games and I even have my own cat to chase! Too bad there's no *double chocolaty-chocolate chip cake cake*. Then it would be just perfect!

Have you noticed anything strange that might help solve the case?

Grrr...woof, woof! Before the lights went out I was just doing what a dog should do—chasing a cat! Maggie was snooping around the stage and I started the chase. I had almost caught the sneaky thing when the lights went out and that silly pirate got in the way. I bumped into the clown and Franklin fell on the floor. What were they doing by the snack table anyway? I didn't want to waste time, so I ran off. By the time the lights came back on I was under the prize table, trying to sniff down the cat. I looked up to see that Maggie was under the snack table, looking very surprised.

What do you think happened to the *double chocolaty-chocolate chip cake cake*?

Grrrrr...the cat did it of course! Cats are sneaky and always get into trouble. Not like us dogs. We're good and strong and loyal. Why else would Maggie have been under the table and looking so surprised?

What were you doing with Davie by the snack table?

Davie and I were planning to go get some snacks while no one was watching. I think Davie wanted to try and get some of Mrs. McGreedy's cake. I didn't really want to get in trouble, though, so I looked around for something else to do. That's when I saw that cat over by the stage and ran off to catch it!



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