

The Blood-Curdling Case of The Buried Treasure

by Andrew West
with contributions from Jack Pachuta



An outdoor interactive mystery game (approx. 12-15 years old)

Here's how to organize the investigation:

Before the party:

1. Print off one copy of the suspect roles (pages 11-20).
2. Print off enough copies of the notes pages and answer sheet (pages 4-9) so that everyone who is investigating the mystery has a set. You can, at your discretion, make "clipboards" by stapling these pages to sheets of cardboard.
3. Print off the solution (pages 21 & 22) and keep it hidden.

At the party:

1. Plant the "Evidence" as described on page 10.
2. Assign the roles to 10 kids. Everybody, including the suspects, can attempt to solve the case. No information needs to be memorized because each suspect has notes containing the answers to questions.
3. Read "Treasure!" and "Rules of the Game" (pages 2 & 3) out loud to everyone.
4. Distribute the note pages and answer sheets. The investigators will need to make notes to collect information. If the suspects are investigating the events, they'll also need clipboards.
5. Tell the kids to talk with each other to find out what everyone knows about the events. You can organize this if you want to, or you can just let it happen.
6. When time's up (after about 90 minutes or so) gather everybody together and, one at a time, ask them the questions on the answer sheet. Have them give their solutions out loud so that everyone can hear them.
7. Read the solution to the case. You may want to award a prize to the person who came closest to the correct answers.



Treasure!

Many, many years ago, when the town of Buccaneer Valley was just a tiny settlement, a band of pirates and thieves pulled off the most daring theft of its time. The men got away with a fortune in jewels. With the enraged citizens hot on their trail, they had no choice but to split up. Arguments quickly started. What would they do with the loot? When would they each get their shares? The leader of the group, a dangerous man named Dylan Quint, decided to bury it. Everyone agreed to meet 5 years later later to dig it up and divide it. Legend says that Quint had strange powers and was able to place a scary monster nearby to guard the spot until they were back together again. Yet, nobody ever returned. The Quint treasure is rumored to be buried still somewhere in the woods near Buccaneer Valley - and the monster is keeping watch over it even today.

Everyone in town knows this story and dreams of finding the treasure. The woods where it is supposedly hidden is now a nature reserve, Buccaneer Park - and a local tradition has sprung up. Every six months, school teachers run a treasure hunt there as classes compete for the chance to work together to find the buried jewels. Teachers organize the event as a learning experience and each selected class is given a trail to follow around the park. The students are asked questions and, if they're able to answer them correctly, are led to a secret location where a "treasure" is found. It's always a lot of fun - and a great history lesson.

But today something has gone wrong. The school's minivan arrived at 11 o'clock, and the students anxiously went into the park to follow the trail. Then, at 2:30, Mr. Save, the teacher, and Miss Fance, his teaching assistant, heard a loud blood-curdling scream. Within minutes, they were surrounded by the students telling tales of treasure and of a strange creature in the woods.

It was quickly decided that the class should report what happened to the park rangers and leave. But - it looks like someone (or someTHING) wants the class to stay in the park. The keys to the minivan are missing! Nobody knows what happened to them. Since no one else is around, the minivan is the only way for the class to escape what could be a bad situation. The only hope seems to be to unravel the events of the afternoon.

What was the scream that caused everyone to shiver? And, what's happening in the deep, dark woods of Buccaneer Park? Is Quint's monster still guarding the buried treasure? Or, is there more to the story? Only sound detective work will unravel what's going on!

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Be sure to ask:

1. Who are you?
2. What were you doing today?
3. Who do you think is responsible?

Notes about Scrimpin Save



Notes about Ella Fance





Scrimpin Save,

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

Who are you?

I'm the teacher, Scrimpin Save. I hope we can figure this out soon. I've got to get them back to school in a couple of hours. Do you have any idea what's been going on? Nothing like this has ever happened before, I can't believe it's all such a mess.

What were you doing today?

I came down to the park this morning to hide the treasure. Ella wanted to do it, but I like the peace of the early morning. The park is a protected area and the rangers only allow groups of schoolchildren in here once every six months, so we have to follow their rules very carefully. They let me in and I quickly buried the 'treasure' - just some chocolate coins - then drove back to the school. The kids arrived and we left the school at ten-thirty. I'd had enough driving for today so Ella took the keys and I tried to read my book. The kids all seemed excited. There was a lot of whispering going on. We arrived at eleven o'clock and I gathered everybody in front of the minivan to hand out the question sheets and trail maps. After that they all headed off. I told them to stay in pairs, and that either Miss Fance or I would be at the minivan if they had any problems.

I took the morning shift in the woods and was walking around, keeping an eye on the kids while Miss Fance waited at the minivan. There were no problems in the morning, and at one o'clock I had some lunch and Miss Fance took over in the woods while I stayed with the minivan. Then, at two-thirty, there was a very loud scream and SOPHIE came running out of the woods, quickly followed by Jewel. Ella appeared a few seconds later and rounded up the other children while I tried to calm SOPHIE down. Len was last, coming out of the trees near where SOPHIE had been. Then we discovered the keys were missing.

Who do you think is responsible?

I don't have a clue. I've been eavesdropping on the kids and there's clearly a lot going on that I don't know about. On the bus this morning I did notice that Eddie kept staring at SOPHIE and looking grumpy. I don't know if that means anything . . . She's such a nice, clever girl, I can't think why anyone would want to scare her.

Do you have money problems?

How did you know about that? Yes, I do. The bank won't give me a loan. I'd sure like to find the Quint treasure!

Were you searching for the Quint treasure?

Did somebody see me? I admit I was. I know I should have been watching the kids, but I really need the money. Finding the treasure would solve all my problems! There's a story about it being buried near a very old tree stump, so I was trying to find one in the woods. I had to hide when I.C. and WANDA walked by. They were talking about her mother's jewelry, for some reason. They didn't know I was there. I didn't find any treasure, and I'm not having a good day - I meant to bring a picnic with me. I had a nice green blanket, sandwiches, jars of jam and everything all packed, but it wasn't there when I got to the minivan. I must have left it at home.



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