

# The Tantalizing Case of The High-Tech Flavor Heist

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with contributions from Jack Pachuta



## How to organize your Kid's Mystery

### Ahead of Time:

1. Print one copy of the Chief Investigator's Briefing (pg. 2), Investigation Rules (pg. 3), Evidence Room (p. 8), Suspect Roles (pgs. 9-17), and Solution to the Case (pgs. 18 and 19). Be sure to keep the solution hidden!
2. Print as many copies of the Notes and Answer Sheets (pgs. 4-7) as you need to match the number of participants.
3. Secure these Notes and Answer Sheets to a clipboard (you can make your own clipboards out of cardboard, then staple the sheets to them).
4. Post the Evidence Room in a place where the information can be easily read.

### On the day of the Investigation:

1. Give each kid a clipboard.
2. Assign nine kids to take roles of the suspects. All other players will be private investigators.
3. If you like, you can assign kids to work in teams to solve the case.
4. Read--or choose someone to read--the Chief Investigator's Introduction and the Investigation Rules to the assembled group. Then, post both in a central location.
5. The kids investigate the case by asking key questions of the suspects. You can either organize this or simply "let it happen."
6. End after an hour or so--you'll be able to tell when it's time because the kids will be winding down their activity.
7. Assemble the group and, one at a time, ask each kid (or team) the questions on the Answer Sheet. Have each kid or team read their answers one by one.
8. Read the Solution to the Case. Whoever comes the closest to the correct solution is given the designation "Super Sleuth!" If you want to, you can award prizes.



## Chief Investigator's Briefing

Today the Sweet Time ice cream factory is in an uproar. A day that was supposed to be very special has suddenly become one to make ice cream lovers weep. No money was stolen, but the company's secret new ice cream flavor recipe, Chocolate Toffee Crunch, is missing. Chocolate Toffee Crunch was to have been unveiled today. The first people to try it were to have been a select group of visiting students. The kids were all "flavor experts" who had gotten high scores during a Sweet Time-sponsored "taste-test challenge." Their tour of the factory was to have ended with a media "tasting" event in the auditorium.

Before it could happen, twenty gallons of Chocolate Toffee Crunch ice cream were taken--the entire batch of the new flavor. In addition to that, all written copies of the recipe were stolen from the safe of Franklin Rocks, the Sweet Time president. Finally, every electronic file related to the recipe was erased from the company network--this was done by someone who broke into Mr. Rocks's office. Mr. Rocks immediately pointed to a rival ice cream maker in the area, Fred Blookins.

Employees at the factory include Armando Lazerlarm, the security chief; Jenny Grumbles, the chief flavor technician; and LaToya Scooper, who does public relations for the company. The new dairy supplier, a Farmer Kreme, was just starting to deliver a day's worth of milk as the tour concluded. As Mr. Rocks took the stage to make a speech to the children, 14 Chickens escaped from Kreme's truck--or were let out by the thief. These Chickens ran into the nearby auditorium and caused a general ruckus.

At the same time, someone went upstairs, opened the safe and stole recipes, then erased the computer data. After forty-five minutes, the Chickens were caught. Mr. Rocks went back onstage, gave a short speech, and two of his employees, Grumbles and Scooper, went to retrieve the ice cream for the presentation to the visiting kids. In front of a group of TV crews and journalists, they came back to say every bit of Chocolate Toffee Crunch ice cream had been stolen from the freezer.

Two of the students, Ellie Typer, a computer expert, and Jack Shoveshard, a bully, have been identified as suspects. Authorities are also questioning their teacher and chaperone, a Mrs. Groatches.

All of these events occurred between 2:00 and 4:15 PM. It's important for you to question suspects to build a precise timeline. Remember, different people will give you different times. Try to figure out who's the most accurate. One more thing: authorities are convinced this job was done by *at least two people*. So try to connect likely suspects--and question those suspects several times. Keep 'em talking, and good luck!

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## Notes about LaToya Scooper



Be sure to ask: 1. Who are you; 2. What were you doing during the tour; 3. Did you see anything suspicious?; and 4. Who do you think stole the secret flavor?

## Notes about Jenny Grumbles



Be sure to ask: 1. Who are you; 2. What were you doing during the tour; 3. Did you see anything suspicious?; and 4. Who do you think stole the secret flavor?

## Notes about Armando Lazerlarm



Be sure to ask: 1. Who are you; 2. What were you doing during the tour; 3. Did you see anything suspicious?; and 4. Who do you think stole the secret flavor?



## LaToya Scooper

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

### Who are you?

My name? LaToya Scooper. I'm the public relations person for the Sweet Time Ice Cream company. That means it's my job to make this company, and everyone who works here, look good--like my wonderful boss, Mr. Rocks. He is just the sweetest man...I mean that. Everyone likes him--except for that awful Fred Blookins character who runs that *other ice cream company*. What kind of name is Blookins, anyway?



### What were you doing during the tour?

My job. See, this was a very important day for Sweet Time. The stores all around the country had their eyes on us. We really needed to show them a success--the ice cream business is tough, you know. There's no way we could put it off, even though Jenny Grumbles thought we should wait before releasing our big new product. I don't know why--maybe because she's generally unhappy. She and Mr. Rocks had an argument about it, after they got the results of the taste test. I don't understand why. I wasn't shown the comments, but I heard most of the kids loved it.

### Did you see anything suspicious?

Only that teacher Mrs. Groatches staring at me. I asked her what her favorite ice cream flavor was, and she turned red and wouldn't tell me. I can't imagine why. Maybe she'd tell you.

### Who do you think stole the secret flavor?

I wish I knew. Fred Blookins seems like a likely candidate to me. He knew that if he could make us look bad today he might be able to steal some business from us. He competes with us, you know, trying to sell his ice cream in stores that have sold our ice cream for years. Now we stand to lose a lot of money. Armando doesn't seem too worried about it. He says, "we have an insurance policy." I don't know if he's serious.

### Why were you crying?

Because Mr. Rocks is such a caring leader. He really takes care of every little detail. For instance, just after the tour ended, I ducked my head into the auditorium and saw him checking the clocks. I asked him why and he said he was making sure everyone knew what time it was so the children wouldn't be late getting back to school! What an unbelievable man!



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