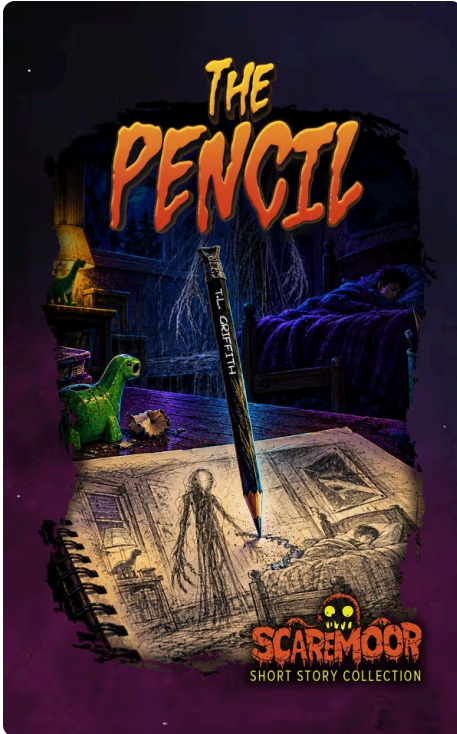




EDUCATOR PACKET · GRADES 3–5

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Wyatt finds a strange pencil in the Lost & Found. Everything he draws comes true: a black cat at the window, a spilled water bottle, a spider on the class bully. Then the pencil starts drawing on its own, and it's drawing something at the foot of his bed.

Read-aloud time: about 20 minutes · **Themes:** Cause and effect, Responsibility, Anger and its consequences, Courage

WHAT'S INSIDE

The story

Grade 3: Story Elements, What Happened First?, Word Detective, Draw It True

Grade 4: Cause and Effect, Theme Detective, Who Is Wyatt?, Your Turn With the Pencil

Grade 5: Read Between the Lines, Plot Mountain, Figurative Language Hunt, Write a New Ending

Puzzles: Word Search, Crossword, Secret Codes, Word Scramble, Escape Room, Who Said It?, Hidden Message
Answer keys for everything

HOW TO USE IT

Read the story aloud. It's spooky, not gory, and safe for school.

Pick the worksheets for your grade. Each one takes 10–30 minutes and needs no prep.

The puzzles are great for early finishers. Story Bingo for the read-aloud is a separate download, with a different card for every student.

Students can also do every worksheet online at scaremoor.com/worksheets. Answer keys are at the back.





READ-ALoud STORY • GRADES 3–5

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

CHAPTER 1: NO ERASER

"No pencil, Wyatt? Again?"

That's what Mrs. Shaw is going to say. I can hear it already.

I dump my whole backpack out on the hallway floor. Notebook. Granola bar. Three markers with no caps. A sock.

Why is there a sock?

No pencil.

If I walk into class without one, I have to use the Cup. Everybody knows about the Cup. It's a coffee mug on the corner of Mrs. Shaw's desk, full of pencils nobody wanted. Chewed ones. Wet ones. One with a wad of old gum stuck where the eraser should be.

I'd rather write with my finger.

The Lost & Found box sits outside the office, under the bulletin board. It smells like old lunch. I dig. Hoodies. A water bottle with something green growing in it. One light-up sneaker, still blinking.

And at the very bottom, a pencil.

I pull it out.

It isn't yellow. It's dark wood, almost black. When I tip it, the grain shimmers silver, like it got dipped in glitter and wiped off. The point is perfect. Sharp enough to poke a hole in the air.

There's no eraser. The little metal band at the top is empty and pinched flat.

Like somebody bit it shut.

And it's warm.

Not sitting-in-the-sun warm. Warm like somebody was holding it a second ago.

My skin prickles. I look up and down the hall.

"Is this anybody's?" I ask.

Nobody answers.

"Put that back."

I jump so hard I drop the sock.

A girl is standing in the office doorway with a stack of folders. Fifth grade, but not my class. She has the office helper lanyard on, and she's looking at me like I just licked the floor.

"It's just a pencil," I say.

"Put it back." Her voice gets quiet. "Please."

"Why? It was in the Lost & Found. Finders keepers."

She looks at the pencil. Then at me.

"That's what I said," she whispers.

What is that supposed to mean?

The bell rings.

I shove everything in my backpack, stick the pencil in my pocket, and run.

At the corner, I look back.

The girl is still in the office doorway. She's rubbing her fingertips on her jeans, hard, like there's something on them she can't get off.

Her fingertips are gray.

I slide into my seat right as the announcements end.

"Pencil, Wyatt?" Mrs. Shaw says. She already has her hand on the Cup.

I hold it up.

She raises her eyebrows. "Well. Look at you. Fancy."

"Found it," I say.

"Then don't lose it."

Morning work is synonyms. Big, large. Small, tiny. Happy, glad.

I do two.

Then my hand does what it always does.

It draws.

I draw on everything. Margins. Desks. The back of my hand. Mostly monsters. Mom says I'm going to be famous someday. Mrs. Shaw says "Eyes up, Wyatt" so much it might as well be my name.

The new pencil feels good. Smooth. Like it already knows my hand.

I draw the window next to my desk. Then a cat on the outside sill. A black cat, standing up, one paw flat on the glass like it wants in. Big round eyes. Little tufts on the tips of its ears.

Kayden leans over. "What are you drawing, Monster Boy?"

I cover the page with my arm. "Nothing."

He goes back to his worksheet. I move my arm.

Last, the tail. I curl the tip of it. One quick flick.

Done.

"THERE'S A CAT!"

Every head snaps toward the window.

I freeze.

There's a cat on the windowsill.

A black cat. Standing up. One paw flat on the glass.

My stomach drops.

Big round eyes. Little tufts on its ears. Its tail curls at the very tip, right where I curled it.

The whole class goes nuts. Chairs scrape. Kids crowd the window.

"Is it a Halloween cat?"

"It's a WITCH'S cat!"

"Can we keep it? Mrs. Shaw, can we keep it?"

Somebody meows at it. Somebody else meows back.

I look at my notebook.

I look at the cat.

Same paw. Same tail. Same everything.

"Did you see its ears?" I whisper to Kayden, who sits next to me. "Did you see the little tufts?"

Kayden snorts. "Monster Boy's scared of a cat."

"All right, all right." Mrs. Shaw squeezes through the crowd. "Does anybody know whose cat that is?"

Nobody does.

Except me. And I'm not saying.

She taps the glass. "Shoo, kitty. Go on."

The cat doesn't run. It doesn't even look at her.

It looks at me.

Then it hops down, and it's gone.

"Seats," Mrs. Shaw says. "Eyes up. Synonyms."

Everybody sits. In about one minute, everybody forgets.

Not me.

Did I draw it because I saw it?

No. I drew it first. I drew it, and then it was there.

I lean over to Kayden. "Was that cat there before? Before somebody yelled?"

"How should I know?" He rolls his eyes. "Why do you care so much about a cat?"

I don't answer. I look down at my notebook. The drawing is still there. The cat. The tail. The

paw on the glass.

I hold the pencil over the page, and the pencil feels warmer than before.

My heart slams against my ribs. I look at the window again.

On the glass, right where its nose was, there's a smudge. Gray and shiny. Like pencil.

CHAPTER 2: MONSTER BOY

I don't want to draw anymore.

I tell my hand that all through math.

My hand doesn't listen.

There's a water bottle on the desk in front of me. A blue one with a dented cap. Before I even decide to, I'm drawing it. Tipped over. Water pouring off the edge of the desk. Splash lines on the floor.

One more splash line and it's done.

"Eyes up, Wyatt."

I freeze. Mrs. Shaw walks past my desk. I hold the pencil still, one line short.

The water bottle sits there. Blue. Dented. Totally normal.

Nothing happens.

I let my breath out. See? It was a stray cat. Cats are everywhere. I'm being a baby.

I look at the drawing.

I look at the bottle.

I shouldn't. I know I shouldn't.

I draw the last splash line.

The bottle tips.

It rolls off the desk, hits the floor, and the cap pops. Water pours across the tile, right toward a backpack.

The girl in front of me spins around in her seat. "Did you knock my bottle?"

"I didn't touch it."

"So it just jumped off my desk by itself?"

I look at the pencil in my hand.

"Kind of," I say.

"Seriously?" Mrs. Shaw groans. "Paper towels, please."

Everybody jumps up. Half the class turns into a mop crew.

I don't move.

I can't.

The puddle on the floor is the same shape as the puddle in my notebook. Exactly the same.

It doesn't happen while I'm drawing.

It happens when I finish.

At lunch I sit at the end of the table, away from everybody. I open my notebook on my knees.

Just a test. One little test.

I draw a quarter on the floor next to my sneaker. A plain quarter, heads up. I draw the last line of the rim.

Something clinks.

I look down.

There's a quarter next to my sneaker.

I pick it up. It's heavy. Too heavy. It isn't silver. It's gray, the shiny gray of a pencil scribble, and it's warm in my hand. I stick it in my jacket pocket. My fingers come out smudged gray.

I stare at my fingers. My heart is going a hundred miles an hour, but not the scared way.

One more test.

I draw a cookie on my napkin. A big chocolate chip one. I draw the last chip.

There's a cookie on my napkin.

It's gray. The whole thing. Gray dough, gray chips. It smells like the inside of a pencil sharpener.

"Whoa, where'd you get a cookie?" says a kid across the table.

"Uh. I brought it."

He squints at it. "Why is it gray?"

"It's..." I wrap it up in the napkin fast. "Whole wheat."

I don't eat it. I shove it in my lunch bag.

What else could I draw?

A dog. A new bike. A snow day. A trampoline in my backyard.

I'm still thinking about the trampoline when we line up for class.

It happens right after lunch.

I come back from the bathroom, and Kayden has my notebook.

He's standing on his chair with it open over his head. "Hey, everybody, look. Monster Boy drew his girlfriend."

It's my best monster. The one with the three rows of teeth.

Everybody laughs.

"Give it BACK!"

I grab for it. He holds it higher. Then Mrs. Shaw says "Kayden, sit," and he drops it on my desk and sits, grinning.

My face is on fire.

I flip to a clean page. My hand is shaking. I'm not even thinking. I'm just mad.

I draw Kayden's shoulder. And on it, a spider. A big, fat, hairy one, the size of a cookie. Eight legs.

Seven legs.

I stop with the pencil on the paper.

Don't, says the smart part of me.

Kayden looks over at me and mouths, *Monster Boy*.

I draw the eighth leg.

Kayden screams.

There's a spider on his shoulder. Big. Fat. Hairy. It scuttles across his collar and down the back of his shirt.

"Get it off, get it OFF ME!"

Kayden is out of his chair, spinning, slapping at his own back. Kids are screaming. Somebody climbs onto a desk. Kayden yanks his shirt up over his head, and the spider drops to the floor.

Mrs. Shaw grabs the dictionary off her desk.

WHAM.

The whole room goes quiet.

She lifts the dictionary.

There's no spider. No legs. No guts.

Just a smear on the tile. Gray and shiny. Like somebody scribbled hard with a pencil.

Mrs. Shaw frowns at it. She frowns at the dictionary.

"It's gone, Kayden," she says. "It's squashed. See?"

"It was IN MY SHIRT!"

Kayden is crying. Not fake crying. Real crying, with his shirt still half over his head.

I gasp. I didn't know I was holding my breath.

It isn't funny.

It isn't funny at all.

I close my notebook and jam it in my backpack. Then I take the pencil and shove it all the way to the bottom, under the sock, and I zip it shut.

I'm done.

I can't eat dinner.

"You love tacos," Mom says. She puts her hand on my forehead. "Are you getting sick?"

"I'm just tired."

"Bed, then. Early."

I don't argue.

My backpack hangs on the back of my desk chair. Zipped.

I lie in the dark and look at it.

It's just a backpack.

I close my eyes.

I don't know how long I sleep. When I wake up, the house is dead quiet. The clock on my dresser says it's the middle of the night.

Then I hear it.

Scratch. Scratch. Scratch.

It's coming from inside my backpack.

CHAPTER 3: TWO MORE NIGHTS

In the morning, the backpack is still zipped.

I unzip it slowly. Like something might jump out.

Nothing jumps out. The pencil is right where I left it, under the sock.

My notebook is not.

My notebook is sitting on top, open.

I didn't open it.

There's a drawing on the page. A drawing I didn't make.

It's my room. My dinosaur lamp. My window with the broken blind. My poster of the shark. My bed, with a boy asleep in it, his hair sticking up in the back.

Me.

And standing at the foot of my bed, there's something else.

Tall. Thin. Just an outline. No arms. No face.

The lines look like mine. Only better. Sharper. Like the best drawing I ever made.

My skin prickles all over.

I pick up the pencil. It's warm. And it's shorter than it was yesterday. Shorter by a whole fingernail.

I grab my eraser, the good pink one from my desk drawer, and I rub the tall thing as hard as I can.

It doesn't come off.

It smears.

The lines go darker. Fatter. Blurrier. The tall thing gets bigger, like it's leaning closer to the bed.

I stop. I can't breathe.

At the bus stop, I throw the pencil in the trash can. I push it all the way down, under a banana peel.

I get on the bus. I don't look back.

In class, I reach in my pocket for a tissue.

The pencil is in my pocket.

Warm.

My stomach drops.

Under my desk, I try to snap it. I put both thumbs in the middle and push.

It bends.

It bends like a rubber pencil. Like that dumb trick where you wiggle it and it looks floppy. Except this isn't a trick. It's really bending.

I let go.

It springs back perfectly straight.

Next to me, Kayden keeps checking his collar. Every few minutes, he slaps the back of his neck.

"Sorry about the spider," I whisper.

He looks at me like I'm crazy. "Why are YOU sorry? You didn't put it there."

My face gets hot.

"Yeah," I say. "Still. Sorry."

At recess, I don't go outside. I go to the office.

She's there, stapling papers at the front counter. The girl with the lanyard. Her name tag says SADIE.

She sees the pencil in my hand, and every bit of color drains out of her face.

"You picked it up," she says.

"You said to put it back."

"I know." She puts the stapler down. Her hands are shaking. "It was mine. I found it in that box too. It drew stuff. Little stuff at first."

"Then it drew your room," I say.

She nods.

"Three nights," she says. "It draws a little more every night. On the third night, it finishes. So yesterday morning, before my third night, I put it back in the box." She swallows. "And yesterday, you picked it up. And it stopped drawing me. I felt it stop."

The office is very quiet.

"What happens when it finishes?" I ask.

"I don't know. I never let it."

"How do I get rid of it?"

"You can't throw it out. You can't break it. You can't erase it." Sadie looks past me, at the Lost & Found box. "You put it back. And somebody else picks it up."

I turn around.

A little first grader is digging through the box. She's looking for a mitten. She's humming.

"No," I say.

Sadie closes her eyes.

"Then you have two more nights."

After school, I lock my bedroom door.

I have a little plastic sharpener shaped like a dinosaur. You stick the pencil in its mouth and twist.

It's a pencil, right? Pencils get used up.

I stick it in and twist.

The pencil SHRIEKS.

A thin, high squeal, like a balloon letting out air. Smoke curls out of the dinosaur's mouth. My fingertips burn like I grabbed a hot pan.

One curl of shaving drops onto my desk. It's silver.

I look at the drawing.

One line of the tall thing's foot has gone faint. There's a little gap in it.

It worked!

I twist again.

Nothing. The blade won't bite. It's like trying to sharpen a rock. The pencil gets so hot I drop it, and it rolls across the desk, and the dinosaur's mouth is clogged with sticky silver gunk.

I suck on my burned fingers and stare at the pencil.

It's shorter than it was this morning. But not from me.

It got shorter all by itself. Last night.

While it was drawing.

It only gets used up when it draws.

I try to stay awake. I really do.

I sit up in bed with the lamp on and the pencil in my fist and the notebook on my desk, all the way across the room.

At some point, my eyes close.

Scratch. Scratch. Scratch.

My eyes fly open. The lamp is off. Mom must have turned it off when she checked on me. Moonlight comes through the broken blind. The clock on my dresser says 12:01.

My fist is empty.

On my desk, the notebook is open. The pencil is standing straight up on its point.

Drawing.

All by itself.

I throw off my blanket and lunge across the room and grab it. It's hot. It jerks in my hand like a fish. Then it goes still.

The dinosaur sharpener is still clogged with silver gunk. I can't do anything but hold on.

I look at the page.

The tall thing has arms now. Long, thin arms, reaching toward the bed. Toward the boy.

Toward me.

Slowly, I turn around and look at the foot of my real bed.

In the dark, there are lines. Faint gray lines, hanging in the air like somebody sketched them there.

Tall. Thin.

And it has arms now.

CHAPTER 4: THE LAST LINE

I hold the pencil the rest of the night.

When the sun comes up, I can't see the gray lines anymore. That doesn't mean they're gone.

At school, I can barely keep my eyes open. Mrs. Shaw is talking about fractions. Her voice sounds far away.

"Eyes up, Wyatt."

I look down.

There's a drawing in the margin of my worksheet. A tall, thin shape.

I'm holding a regular school pencil. Yellow, with an eraser. I don't remember drawing anything.

I erase it fast. It comes right off.

Regular pencil. Regular eraser.

I tell myself that's all it is.

At recess, Sadie finds me by the bike rack.

She looks around. Then she pulls something out of her hoodie pocket and pushes it into my hands. A battery sharpener. Black and heavy, with a little window to see the shavings.

"It's from the office," she whispers. "Mrs. Kemp has two. She won't notice till Friday. It has new batteries."

I stare at her.

"It only gets used up when it draws," I tell her.

"So tonight, when it tries to draw the face, I grind it down while it's drawing."

Sadie looks at the sharpener. Then at me.

"What if it finishes first?"

"It won't."

"Wyatt." Her voice cracks. "I'm sorry. I'm really, really sorry."

"I know," I say.

That night, I'm ready.

Lamp on. Mom's flowered garden gloves on my hands. The battery sharpener in my lap. The dinosaur sharpener next to me, scraped clean with a paper clip, just in case.

The pencil is in my fist.

The notebook lies open on the floor. Everything is drawn. My room. Me. The tall thing at the foot of the bed, arms out, hands almost touching the boy's face.

Everything but its face.

The clock on my dresser says 11:58.

11:59.

12:00.

The pencil goes hot.

Not warm. Hot. I can feel it through the glove.
And it goes soft, like a crayon left in a car. It
strains in my fist, pulling toward the notebook
like a dog on a leash.

POP.

The lamp bulb blows. The room goes black.

At the foot of my bed, something stands up.
It isn't faint anymore. It's gray lines piled on
gray lines, so many that it's almost solid. Tall.
Thin. Its head bends against my ceiling.

Where its face should be, there's nothing. Just
smooth, blank gray.

It turns that nothing toward me.

My heart slams. I can't breathe. I can't move.

Then I can.

I jam the pencil into the battery sharpener.

WHIRRRRR.

The pencil SCREAMS. Not a squeal this time. A
scream. Silver shavings pour into the little
window. Smoke fills my nose.

The tall thing lunges.

Its hand closes on my wrist. It's cold, so cold it
burns. Gray smudges bloom on my skin. It pulls
my hand toward the notebook. Toward the
blank place where its face goes.

"NO!"

I pull back. I keep the pencil in the sharpener.
WHIRRRRR.

The arm holding me starts to come apart.
Gray dust falls off it like dirty snow.

It's working. It's WORKING!

Then the sharpener slows down.

Whirrr.

Whirrr.

The batteries. The brand-new batteries are
dying. It's eating them.

"No, no, no, no."

The sharpener stops.

The pencil rips free. It drags my hand down to
the paper, and the point touches the page,
right where the face goes.

Scratch.

A line. The start of a mouth.

I yank my hand back. I grab the dinosaur
sharpener off the floor and stuff the pencil in
its mouth and TWIST.

The pencil screams.

The glove smokes. My fingers burn right
through it. I keep twisting.

The tall thing's other hand finds my face.

It's cold. It smells like pencil shavings. Its blank
gray nothing leans down, close, closer, right in
front of my eyes.

I twist.

And twist.

The pencil is a stub. Then a nub. Then just the
little metal band.

I twist one more time.

Crunch.

The metal band drops out of the dinosaur's
mouth and bounces on the carpet.

The hand on my face goes soft.

Then it falls. The whole tall thing comes down,
from the top, like a sandcastle when the wave
hits it. Gray dust. Gray shavings. They pour
onto my carpet in a pile as high as my knees.

Then it's quiet.

I'm sitting on my bedroom floor in the dark,
breathing so hard it hurts.

The notebook is still open next to me. The drawing is gone. No room. No boy. No tall thing. Just a gray smear.

"Wyatt?" Mom calls from down the hall. "Are you okay?"

"I'm fine!" My voice cracks. "I just dropped something."

Before the bus comes, I sweep up every bit of gray dust, and the metal band, and the shavings, into a trash bag. I tie it in a double knot and carry it all the way out to the curb.

The gray cookie in my lunch bag is gone. So is the gray quarter in my jacket pocket.

At school, the smudge on the window is gone.

Sadie waves at me from the office. Kayden doesn't call me Monster Boy, not even once.

It's over.

It's over.

In math, Mrs. Shaw is talking about decimals. I'm so tired I could sleep on my desk.

"Eyes up, Wyatt."

I look down.

There's a drawing in the margin of my worksheet. In my regular yellow pencil. In my own lines.

A bed. A boy asleep in it.

And something tall standing at the foot of it.

It doesn't have a face yet.



GRADE 3 · STORY ELEMENTS

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

STORY ELEMENTS

Every story has characters, a setting, a problem, and a solution. Fill in each box with details from The Pencil.

CHARACTERS

Who is in the story?

SETTING

Where and when does it happen?

PROBLEM

What goes wrong?

SOLUTION

How does it end?





GRADE 3 · WHAT HAPPENED FIRST?

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

WHAT HAPPENED FIRST?

These events are mixed up. Number them 1 to 7 in the order they happened in the story.

☐

Wyatt draws a black cat, and a real one appears on the windowsill.

☐

The pencil draws arms on the tall thing while Wyatt sleeps.

☐

Sadie tells Wyatt the pencil finishes on the third night.

☐

Wyatt grinds the pencil down to its metal band, and the tall thing falls into gray dust.

☐

Wyatt draws a spider on Kayden's shoulder, and Kayden screams.

☐

Wyatt finds a drawing of his room in his notebook that he didn't make.

☐

Wyatt finds a dark, warm pencil with no eraser in the Lost & Found box.





GRADE 3 • WORD DETECTIVE

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

WORD DETECTIVE

Read each sentence from the story. Use the clues around the bold word to figure out what it means.

1. Morning work is **synonyms**. Big, large. Small, tiny. Happy, glad.

I think **synonyms** means:

2. When I tip it, the grain **shimmers** silver, like it got dipped in glitter and wiped off.

I think **shimmers** means:

3. It **scuttles** across his collar and down the back of his shirt.

I think **scuttles** means:

4. It **strains** in my fist, pulling toward the notebook like a dog on a leash.

I think **strains** means:





GRADE 3 • DRAW IT TRUE

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

DRAW IT TRUE

Draw it. Then write about it.

Wyatt's drawings come true when he finishes the last line. He thinks about drawing a dog, a new bike, a snow day, or a trampoline. Draw one thing you would want to come true. Then write 2–3 sentences: what could go wrong with it?

Draw here





GRADE 4 · CAUSE AND EFFECT

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

CAUSE AND EFFECT

Each thing that happens causes something else. Read each cause, then write the effect.

CAUSE

Wyatt draws the last splash line on his drawing of the water bottle.



Kayden holds up Wyatt's notebook and calls him Monster Boy.



Wyatt rubs the tall thing with his pink eraser.



The batteries in the office sharpener die.



EFFECT





GRADE 4 • THEME DETECTIVE

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

THEME DETECTIVE

The theme is the big lesson of a story. Answer each question to find the theme of The Pencil.

1. Wyatt draws the spider because he is mad at Kayden. How does Wyatt feel after the spider attack? Use a detail.

2. Sadie says Wyatt can get rid of the pencil by putting it back for someone else to find. Why does Wyatt say no?

3. What lesson does the author want readers to learn? Use one detail from the story to explain.





GRADE 4 · WHO IS WYATT?

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

WHO IS WYATT?

A trait is a word that describes what someone is like. Write three of Wyatt's traits and the evidence from the story that proves each one.

TRAIT 1 _____

EVIDENCE FROM THE STORY

TRAIT 2 _____

EVIDENCE FROM THE STORY

TRAIT 3 _____

EVIDENCE FROM THE STORY





GRADE 5 · READ BETWEEN THE LINES

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

READ BETWEEN THE LINES

An inference is a smart guess that uses clues from the story. Answer each question and include your clue.

1. When Wyatt says "Finders keepers," Sadie whispers, "That's what I said." What does she mean? What clue helps you?

2. Everything the pencil makes is gray: the quarter, the cookie, the smudge, the squashed spider. What does that tell you about the things it makes?

3. At the end, Wyatt's regular yellow pencil draws a bed, a boy, and a tall thing that "doesn't have a face yet." What does this suggest?





GRADE 5 • PLOT MOUNTAIN

THE PENCIL

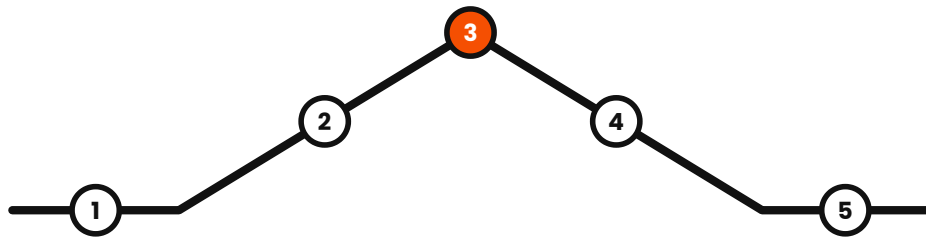
Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

PLOT MOUNTAIN

Every plot climbs to a climax and comes back down. Write what happens at each part of the mountain.



1. EXPOSITION (The beginning)

2. RISING ACTION (Trouble builds)

3. CLIMAX (The scariest moment)

4. FALLING ACTION (Things calm down)

5. RESOLUTION (How it ends)





GRADE 5 • FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE HUNT

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE HUNT

Authors compare things to help us picture them. For each quote, write the type (simile, metaphor, or personification) and what it means.

QUOTE FROM THE STORY	TYPE	WHAT IT MEANS
<i>"When I tip it, the grain shimmers silver, like it got dipped in glitter and wiped off."</i>	_____	_____ _____ _____
<i>"My hand doesn't listen."</i>	_____	_____ _____ _____
<i>"My face is on fire."</i>	_____	_____ _____ _____
<i>"The whole tall thing comes down, from the top, like a sandcastle when the wave hits it."</i>	_____	_____ _____ _____





Some things draw themselves.

Date:

Rewrite the ending. Keep Wyatt and the pencil, but change what he chooses.

CHECK YOUR WORK

-



WORD SEARCH · VERSION A

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Find the 13 words from the story. They go across, down, and diagonally. **2.** Circle each word and cross out its letters. **3.** The letters left over, read in order, spell a line from the story.



FIND THESE

- ☐ Cat
- ☐ Cookie
- ☐ Dinosaur
- ☐ Eraser
- ☐ Gray
- ☐ Kayden
- ☐ Lanyard
- ☐ Notebook
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Quarter
- ☐ Sadie
- ☐ Sharpener
- ☐ Spider

SECRET MESSAGE





CROSSWORD · VERSION A

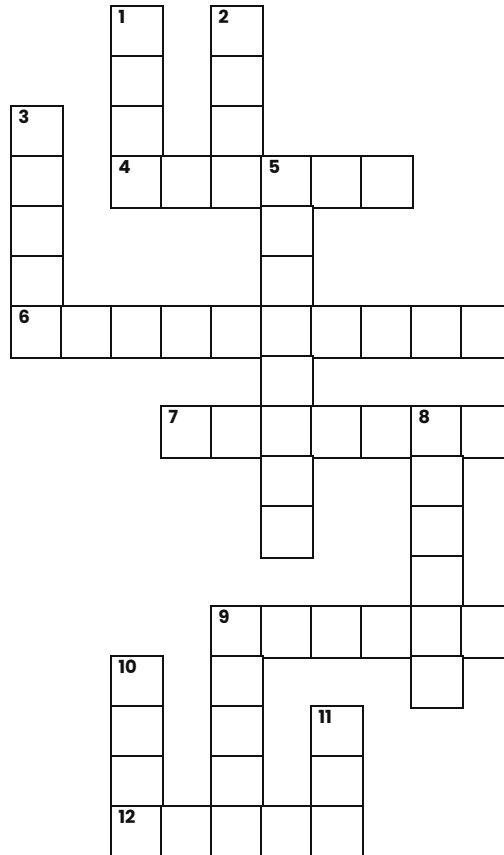
THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Read each clue. 2. Write one letter in each square. Every answer comes from the story.



ACROSS

4. The boy who calls Wyatt "Monster Boy"
6. Mrs. Shaw squashes the spider with this book
7. The gray coin Wyatt draws at lunch
9. Wyatt draws one on Kayden's shoulder
12. Wyatt says his gray cookie is whole ____

DOWN

1. "Why is there a ____?" It's in Wyatt's backpack
2. Everything the pencil makes is this color
3. Wyatt finds the pencil in the Lost & ____
5. Wyatt's little plastic sharpener is shaped like this
8. The strange pencil doesn't have one
9. The office helper with the lanyard
10. Wyatt's teacher, Mrs. ____
11. The black animal Wyatt draws on the windowsill





SECRET CODES

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Three messages from the story are written in code. Use each code's key to crack it, one letter at a time.

CODE 1: SHIFT CODE

Every letter moved 3 places forward in the alphabet. Find each code letter in the top row and write the letter under it.

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

H B H V X S Z B D W W

CODE 2: MIRROR CODE

The alphabet is flipped: A swaps with Z, B with Y, and so on. Find each code letter in the top row and write the letter under it.

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

R G L M O B T V G H F H V W F K D S V M R G

W I Z D H

CODE 3: BACKWARDS CODE

Each word is written backwards. Read every word from right to left.

E E R H T S T H G I N





WORD SCRAMBLE · VERSION A

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Each word from the story got scrambled. Use the clue to put the letters back in order.

C I N P L E

1. Clue: Wyatt finds it in the Lost & Found

E S R E R A

2. Clue: The strange pencil doesn't have one

N E O M S R T

3. Clue: Kayden calls Wyatt ____ Boy

P E H A S E R R N

4. Clue: Sadie brings a battery one from the office

S S Y Y N N O M

5. Clue: Morning work: big, large; small, tiny

N B O E K O O T

6. Clue: Where Wyatt draws

A D L A N Y R

7. Clue: Sadie wears an office helper ____

N I S D R U A O

8. Clue: The shape of Wyatt's little sharpener





HIDDEN MESSAGE

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Answer each question from the story. **2.** Write the **first letter** of each answer in the matching numbered blank below. **3.** Read the hidden message!

1. The strange pencil has no ____ on top.

2. What color is Wyatt's regular school pencil?

Kayden screams when Wyatt draws the spider's

3. ____ leg.

4. What is the office helper's name?

At the bus stop, Wyatt pushes the pencil down in the trash, ____ a banana peel.

5.

What sound does the lamp bulb make when it blows?

6.

7. Wyatt says his gray cookie is whole ____.

In the morning, the pencil is shorter than it was

8. ____.

On the second night, the tall thing gets long, thin

9. ____.

10. What is for dinner the night Wyatt can't eat?

11. Wyatt's best monster has three rows of ____.

HIDDEN MESSAGE

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11





ESCAPE ROOM

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Team: _____

Date: _____

ESCAPE THE MIDNIGHT DRAWING

It's 11:58. The pencil is hot in your fist, and the tall thing at the foot of the bed is missing only its face. Work as a team. Open all four locks to escape.

LOCK 1: THE NUMBER LOCK

Answer each question with a number from the story. Put the three numbers together, in order, to make the code.

1. How many legs does Wyatt draw on the spider?
2. How many nights does Sadie say it takes the pencil to finish?
3. The clock says 12:0__ when Wyatt wakes up and the pencil is drawing by itself.

CODE

LOCK 2: THE WORD LOCK

This word from the story is in Mirror Code: A swaps with Z, B with Y, and so on. Find each code letter in the top row and write the letter under it. Hint: What the cat leaves on the window glass.

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

IN CODE: **H N F W T V**

CODE





ESCAPE ROOM · PART 2

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

LOCK 3: THE ORDER LOCK

These events are mixed up. Put them in story order, then read the letters in that order to get the code word.

- (R)** Sadie tells Wyatt about the three nights. _____
- (Y)** Wyatt grinds the pencil down to its metal band. _____
- (C)** A black cat appears on the windowsill. _____
- (S)** Wyatt finds a warm pencil in the Lost & Found. _____
- (A)** A spider lands on Kayden's shoulder. _____

CODE

LOCK 4: THE FAKE FACT LOCK

Five of these happened in the story. One is made up. The number of the fake one opens the lock.

1. Wyatt finds a light-up sneaker in the Lost & Found.
2. Wyatt tells a kid his gray cookie is whole wheat.
3. Mrs. Shaw squashes the spider with a dictionary.
4. Wyatt can't eat his mom's spaghetti for dinner.
5. Sadie wears an office helper lanyard.
6. Wyatt's little sharpener is shaped like a dinosaur.

CODE

All four locks open? Bring your codes to your teacher. If they're right, you escaped!





WHO SAID IT?

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Name: _____

Date: _____

1. Read each line from the story. 2. Write the name of the character who said it. Some characters say more than one line.

CHARACTERS

Kayden Mom Mrs. Shaw Sadie Wyatt

1. *"Put that back."*

2. *"Then don't lose it."*

3. *"What are you drawing, Monster Boy?"*

4. *"Whole wheat."*

5. *"You love tacos."*

6. *"Sorry about the spider."*

7. *"Why are YOU sorry? You didn't put it there."*

8. *"You can't throw it out. You can't break it. You can't erase it."*





GRADE 3 • ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

STORY ELEMENTS

CCSS RL.3.1, RL.3.3 • VA SOL 3.5

Characters: Wyatt, Sadie, Kayden, Mrs. Shaw, and Wyatt's mom

Setting: Wyatt's school (Mrs. Shaw's classroom and the office) and Wyatt's bedroom at night

Problem: Wyatt finds a pencil that makes his drawings come true. Then it starts drawing a tall thing with no face at the foot of his bed, and it will finish on the third night.

Solution: Wyatt won't pass the pencil on to a first grader. At midnight, he grinds it down in his dinosaur sharpener until only the metal band is left, and the tall thing falls into gray dust.

WHAT HAPPENED FIRST?

CCSS RL.3.2, RL.3.3 • VA SOL 3.5

- 1:** Wyatt finds a dark, warm pencil with no eraser in the Lost & Found box.
- 2:** Wyatt draws a black cat, and a real one appears on the windowsill.
- 3:** Wyatt draws a spider on Kayden's shoulder, and Kayden screams.
- 4:** Wyatt finds a drawing of his room in his notebook that he didn't make.
- 5:** Sadie tells Wyatt the pencil finishes on the third night.
- 6:** The pencil draws arms on the tall thing while Wyatt sleeps.
- 7:** Wyatt grinds the pencil down to its metal band, and the tall thing falls into gray dust.

WORD DETECTIVE

CCSS RL.3.4, L.3.4a • VA SOL 3.4

- synonyms:** words that mean the same thing, or almost the same thing
- shimmers:** shines with a soft, flickering light
- scuttles:** runs with quick, short steps
- strains:** pulls or pushes very hard

DRAW IT TRUE

CCSS RL.3.7, W.3.3 • VA SOL 3.5, 3.7

Answers will vary. Look for: The drawing shows one clear thing. The sentences tell what could go wrong. The writing uses at least one detail from the drawing.





GRADE 4 · ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

CAUSE AND EFFECT

CCSS RL.4.1, RL.4.3 · VA SOL 4.5

Wyatt draws the last splash line on his drawing of the water bottle.: The bottle tips off the desk, and water pours across the floor.

Kayden holds up Wyatt's notebook and calls him Monster Boy.: Wyatt gets mad and draws a spider on Kayden's shoulder.

Wyatt rubs the tall thing with his pink eraser.: The lines get darker and bigger instead of coming off.

The batteries in the office sharpener die.: The pencil rips free and starts drawing a mouth, so Wyatt grabs the dinosaur sharpener.

THEME DETECTIVE

CCSS RL.4.2 · VA SOL 4.5

1. Wyatt draws the spider because he is mad at Kayden. How does Wyatt feel after the spider attack? Use a detail.: He feels terrible. "It isn't funny at all." He hides the pencil, and the next day he tells Kayden, "Sorry about the spider."

2. Sadie says Wyatt can get rid of the pencil by putting it back for someone else to find. Why does Wyatt say no?: A little first grader is digging in the Lost & Found box. Wyatt won't pass the danger on to a little kid, even though it means he has two more nights.

3. What lesson does the author want readers to learn? Use one detail from the story to explain.: Possible answers: Acting when you're angry can hurt people (the spider makes Kayden cry). Or: doing the right thing can be hard, but it matters (Wyatt keeps the pencil instead of leaving it for the first grader).

WHO IS WYATT?

CCSS RL.4.1, RL.4.3 · VA SOL 4.5

creative: He draws on everything: margins, desks, the back of his hand. Mostly monsters.

caring: He won't put the pencil back where a little first grader could find it.

brave: At midnight, he keeps twisting the pencil in the sharpener even while the tall thing grabs him.

Other traits are fine if the evidence supports them.

YOUR TURN WITH THE PENCIL

CCSS W.4.3 · VA SOL 4.7

Answers will vary. Look for: Has a clear beginning, middle, and end. Describes what the narrator sees, hears, or feels. The drawing comes true, and the narrator deals with the result.





GRADE 5 • ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

READ BETWEEN THE LINES

CCSS RL.5.1 • VA SOL 5.5

1. When Wyatt says “Finders keepers,” Sadie whispers, “That’s what I said.” What does she mean? What clue helps you?: **She found the pencil first and kept it too. Clues: her fingertips are gray, and later she says, “It was mine. I found it in that box too.”**
2. Everything the pencil makes is gray: the quarter, the cookie, the smudge, the squashed spider. What does that tell you about the things it makes?: **They are made of pencil. They look real, but they are really drawings that came to life. When the spider is squashed, it turns into a pencil smear.**
3. At the end, Wyatt’s regular yellow pencil draws a bed, a boy, and a tall thing that “doesn’t have a face yet.” What does this suggest?: **The tall thing isn’t really gone. Now it can be drawn by Wyatt’s own hand with any pencil, so it may be coming for him again.**

PLOT MOUNTAIN

CCSS RL.5.2, RL.5.5 • VA SOL 5.5

Exposition: Wyatt, a fifth grader who draws all the time, finds a warm, dark pencil with no eraser in the Lost & Found.

Rising action: His drawings come true: a cat, a spilled bottle, a gray quarter and cookie, and a spider on Kayden. Then the pencil draws his room with a tall thing at the foot of his bed, and Sadie tells him it finishes on the third night.

Climax: At midnight, the tall thing stands up and grabs Wyatt. The battery sharpener dies, and the pencil starts drawing its mouth.

Falling action: Wyatt twists the pencil in the dinosaur sharpener until only the metal band is left, and the tall thing falls into a pile of gray dust.



Resolution: Wyatt throws the dust away, and Kayden stops calling him Monster Boy. But in math, his regular pencil draws the tall thing

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE HUNT

CCSS RL.5.4, L.5.5a • VA SOL 5.4

- “When I tip it, the grain shimmers silver, like it got dipped in glitter and wiped off.”: **simile: The pencil sparkles a little, in a strange, pretty way.**
- “My hand doesn’t listen.”: **personification: Wyatt can’t stop drawing. His hand acts like it has a mind of its own.**
- “My face is on fire.”: **metaphor: Wyatt is so embarrassed and mad that his face feels hot and red.**
- “The whole tall thing comes down, from the top, like a sandcastle when the wave hits it.”: **simile: The tall thing falls apart all at once into a soft pile.**

WRITE A NEW ENDING

CCSS W.5.3 • VA SOL 5.7

Answers will vary. Look for: Starts in the office with Sadie. Wyatt makes a different choice than in the story. The new ending shows the result of that choice. Keeps the story’s spooky mood.

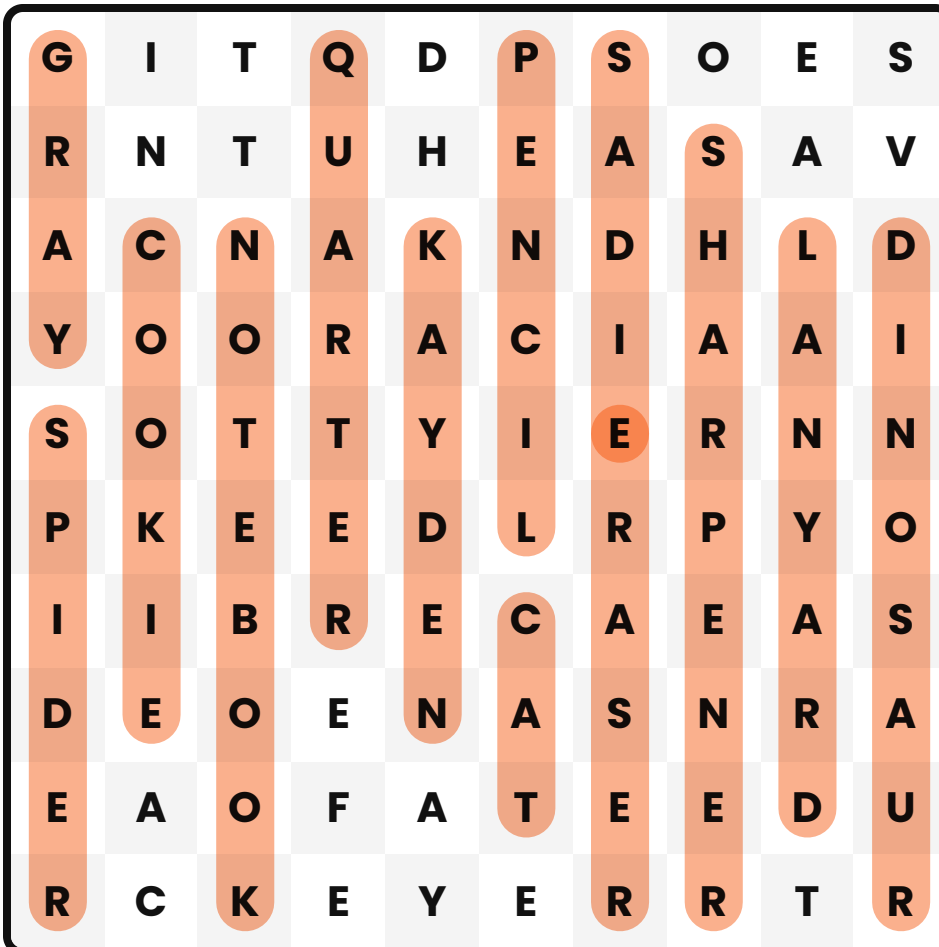


WORD SEARCH · VERSION A · ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

1. Find the 13 words from the story. They go across, down, and diagonally. 2. Circle each word and cross out its letters. 3. The letters left over, read in order, spell a line from the story.



FIND THESE

- ☐ Cat
- ☐ Cookie
- ☐ Dinosaur
- ☐ Eraser
- ☐ Gray
- ☐ Kayden
- ☐ Lanyard
- ☐ Notebook
- ☐ Pencil
- ☐ Quarter
- ☐ Sadie
- ☐ Sharpener
- ☐ Spider

SECRET MESSAGE

I T D O E S N T H A V E A F A C E Y E T



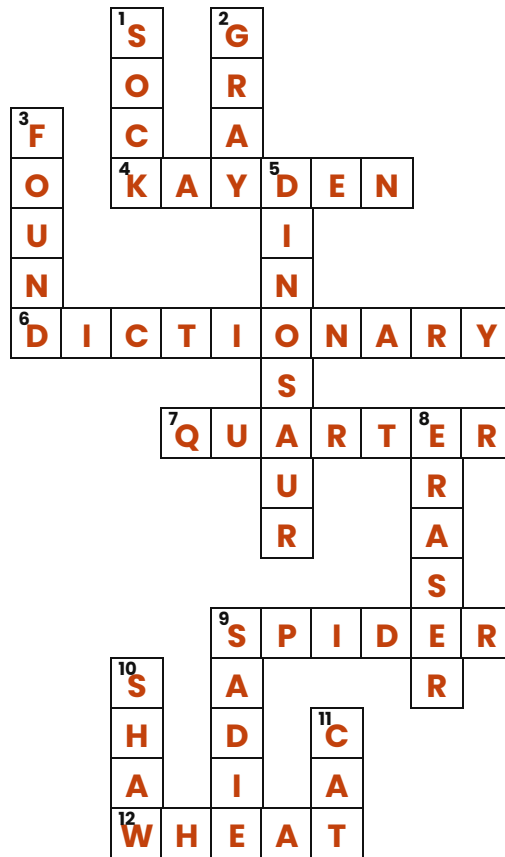


CROSSWORD · VERSION A · ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

1. Read each clue. 2. Write one letter in each square. Every answer comes from the story.



ACROSS

4. The boy who calls Wyatt "Monster Boy" **KAYDEN**
6. Mrs. Shaw squashes the spider with this book **DICTIONARY**
7. The gray coin Wyatt draws at lunch **QUARTER**
9. Wyatt draws one on Kayden's shoulder **SPIDER**
12. Wyatt says his gray cookie is whole ____ **WHEAT**

DOWN

1. "Why is there a ____?" It's in Wyatt's backpack **SOCK**
2. Everything the pencil makes is this color **GRAY**
3. Wyatt finds the pencil in the Lost & ____ **FOUND**
5. Wyatt's little plastic sharpener is shaped like this **DINOSAUR**
8. The strange pencil doesn't have one **ERASER**
9. The office helper with the lanyard **SADIE**
10. Wyatt's teacher, Mrs. ____ **SHAW**
11. The black animal Wyatt draws on the windowsill **CAT**





SECRET CODES · ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Three messages from the story are written in code. Use each code's key to crack it, one letter at a time.

CODE 1: SHIFT CODE

Every letter moved 3 places forward in the alphabet. Find each code letter in the top row and write the letter under it.

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

H B H V X S Z B D W W

E Y E S U P W Y A T T

CODE 2: MIRROR CODE

The alphabet is flipped: A swaps with Z, B with Y, and so on. Find each code letter in the top row and write the letter under it.

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

R G L M O B T V G H F H V W F K D S V M R G

I T O N L Y G E T S U S E D U P W H E N I T

W I Z D H

D R A W S

CODE 3: BACKWARDS CODE

Each word is written backwards. Read every word from right to left.

E E R H T S T H G I N

T H R E E N I G H T S





WORD SCRAMBLE · VERSION A · ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

Each word from the story got scrambled. Use the clue to put the letters back in order.

1. C I N P L E
Clue: Wyatt finds it in the Lost & Found

PENCIL

2. E S R E R A
Clue: The strange pencil doesn't have one

ERASER

3. N E O M S R T
Clue: Kayden calls Wyatt ____ Boy

MONSTER

4. P E H A S E R R N
Clue: Sadie brings a battery one from the office

SHARPENER

5. S S Y Y N N O M
Clue: Morning work: big, large; small, tiny

SYNONYMS

6. N B O E K O O T
Clue: Where Wyatt draws

NOTEBOOK

7. A D L A N Y R
Clue: Sadie wears an office helper ____

LANYARD

8. N I S D R U A O
Clue: The shape of Wyatt's little sharpener

DINOSAUR





HIDDEN MESSAGE • ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

1. Answer each question from the story. 2. Write the **first letter** of each answer in the matching numbered blank below. 3. Read the hidden message!

1. The strange pencil has no ____ on top.
2. What color is Wyatt's regular school pencil?
Kayden screams when Wyatt draws the spider's
3. ____ leg.
4. What is the office helper's name?
At the bus stop, Wyatt pushes the pencil down in
5. the trash, ____ a banana peel.
What sound does the lamp bulb make when it
6. blows?
7. Wyatt says his gray cookie is whole ____.
8. In the morning, the pencil is shorter than it was ____.
9. On the second night, the tall thing gets long, thin ____.
10. What is for dinner the night Wyatt can't eat?
11. Wyatt's best monster has three rows of ____.

ERASER

YELLOW

EIGHTH

SADIE

UNDER

POP

WHEAT

YESTERDAY

ARMS

TACOS

TEETH

HIDDEN MESSAGE

E Y E S U P W Y A T T
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11





ESCAPE ROOM · ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

ESCAPE THE MIDNIGHT DRAWING

It's 11:58. The pencil is hot in your fist, and the tall thing at the foot of the bed is missing only its face. Work as a team. Open all four locks to escape.

LOCK 1: THE NUMBER LOCK

Answer each question with a number from the story. Put the three numbers together, in order, to make the code.

1. How many legs does Wyatt draw on the spider? **8**
2. How many nights does Sadie say it takes the pencil to finish? **3**
3. The clock says 12:0__ when Wyatt wakes up and the pencil is drawing by itself. **1**

CODE

8

3

1

LOCK 2: THE WORD LOCK

This word from the story is in Mirror Code: A swaps with Z, B with Y, and so on. Find each code letter in the top row and write the letter under it. Hint: What the cat leaves on the window glass.

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

IN CODE: **H N F W T V**

CODE

S

M

U

D

G

E





ESCAPE ROOM · PART 2 · ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

LOCK 3: THE ORDER LOCK

These events are mixed up. Put them in story order, then read the letters in that order to get the code word.

- | | | |
|----------|---|----------|
| R | Sadie tells Wyatt about the three nights. | <u>4</u> |
| Y | Wyatt grinds the pencil down to its metal band. | <u>5</u> |
| C | A black cat appears on the windowsill. | <u>2</u> |
| S | Wyatt finds a warm pencil in the Lost & Found. | <u>1</u> |
| A | A spider lands on Kayden's shoulder. | <u>3</u> |

CODE

S C A R Y

LOCK 4: THE FAKE FACT LOCK

Five of these happened in the story. One is made up. The number of the fake one opens the lock.

- Wyatt finds a light-up sneaker in the Lost & Found.
- Wyatt tells a kid his gray cookie is whole wheat.
- Mrs. Shaw squashes the spider with a dictionary.
- 4. Wyatt can't eat his mom's spaghetti for dinner. (fake)**
- Sadie wears an office helper lanyard.
- Wyatt's little sharpener is shaped like a dinosaur.

CODE

4

When a team opens all four locks, they escape. Read them the last line: "It's over."





WHO SAID IT? • ANSWER KEY

THE PENCIL

Some things draw themselves.

1. Read each line from the story. 2. Write the name of the character who said it. Some characters say more than one line.

CHARACTERS

Kayden Mom Mrs. Shaw Sadie Wyatt

- | | | |
|----|--|------------------|
| 1. | <i>"Put that back."</i> | <i>Sadie</i> |
| 2. | <i>"Then don't lose it."</i> | <i>Mrs. Shaw</i> |
| 3. | <i>"What are you drawing, Monster Boy?"</i> | <i>Kayden</i> |
| 4. | <i>"Whole wheat."</i> | <i>Wyatt</i> |
| 5. | <i>"You love tacos."</i> | <i>Mom</i> |
| 6. | <i>"Sorry about the spider."</i> | <i>Wyatt</i> |
| 7. | <i>"Why are YOU sorry? You didn't put it there."</i> | <i>Kayden</i> |
| 8. | <i>"You can't throw it out. You can't break it. You can't erase it."</i> | <i>Sadie</i> |

