

1960s Spy Escape Room

Contents

1960s Spy Escape Room.....	1
Links.....	1
Materials and Printables for Puzzles.....	1
Setup Guide	2

Links

- [Creation and Set-up](#): A Google slide presentation that provides a story narrative, brainstorms, maps out the room, and shows the puzzles and their solutions. Quick tip: Print out all the solution slides to bring to the event just in case there are issues.
- [60's Spy Escape Room Guide](#): A Google document that provides everything needed to set up the puzzles for the event. Listing what you need to do and what the students are expected to do for each puzzle.
- [60's Spy Escape Room Pictures](#): A look at the physical set up of the room.
- [60's Spy Escape Room - Riddles](#): All of the puzzles have riddles for the locks, but you only have to print out some of them since some of the riddles are on the puzzle worksheets.
- [60's Spy Escape Room - Agents & Villains](#): Pictures of our four librarians, fellow agents and villains. Not all fellow agent and villain pictures need to be used in the game. You can choose any fellow agent or any villain for the pouches except for the four villains on the newsletters. Their pictures should be placed on the mission board (optional) as they have already been captured. Fellow agents and villain pictures were created via AI generation software for the narrative.

Materials and Printables for Puzzles

- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #1](#) - Processing local holds (Directional lock)
- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #2](#) - Criminal organization pictures (5 letter lock)
- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #3](#) - Department knowledge (4 digit lock)
- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #4](#) - Crossword puzzle #1 (4 letter lock)
 - [Google document](#) - Used to be a placeholder for the crosswords in order to copy and paste them into the Canva document.

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- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #5](#) - Librarians, research help, & office staff (3 digit lock)
- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #6](#) - Call number sorting (4 digit lock)
- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #7](#) - Spy pictures and Morse code (4 digit lock)
- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #8](#) - Crossword puzzle #2 (5 letter lock)
 - [Google document](#) - Used to be a placeholder for the crosswords in order to copy and paste them into the Canva document.
- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #9](#) - Primo searches (5 letter lock)
- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #10](#) - Shelf reading procedure (Directional lock)
- [60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #11](#) - Library knowledge (5 letter lock)
- 60's Spy Escape Room Puzzle #12 - Map (5 alphanumeric character lock)
 - Part #1 - [Plane tickets](#). The order of the destinations is key. The dates and times don't have real significance.
 - Part #2 - [Newsletters](#). The italicized number in the main article of each newsletter is key. The dates don't have real significance. The advertisements, the agent of the month, and the captured villain are just for fun and to make the newsletters more interesting.

Setup Guide

Things to know

- There are 12 puzzles. Some are very quick and some will need more time. The two testing groups were able to finish the escape room in less than an hour.
- 9 puzzles involve department or library knowledge and 3 are strictly theme related.
- Students can do puzzles 1-11 in any order. However, they will need the plane tickets (found inside some of the pouches) along with the newsletters to solve the final puzzle (#12).
- Mission board (optional): You can create a mission board to place the pictures of the 4 villains who were captured (See the newsletters), so when the students come into the escape room, they will already see 4 villains captured and posted on the mission board.
 - If a mission board is not used, students can give the pictures to the escape room gamemaster.
- Pictures of the librarians, fellow agents, and villains can be increased in size before printing if you want the students to post them on the "mission board"
- The riddle cards are a fun way to explain the puzzle and keep the students engaged.

Pre event - day before

- Test locks one last time.
- Make sure you have all of your supplies and print out everything you need.
- Place all items on a book cart for easy transport.

Pre event - day of

- Print out this guide and the Google slide presentation with answer keys to bring to the event just in case you need the codes for the locks.
- Set up puzzles and props in the event room.
- Set up laptop or PC to display your library's catalog for puzzle #9 (Primo Searches).
 - Note: Students may want to use their cell phones, but have a laptop or PC ready just in case.
- Start instrumental "spy" music to play low in the background. (optional)

At the event

- Welcome the group & briefly make introductions
- Review rules with participants
- Start the event (optional: countdown timeclock)
- Read mission (or optional: play mission video you created)
- Take pictures of the students (ask permission) throughout the event. (optional)

After the event

- Take pictures of the group with fun signs like "We escaped," "We did it!" and "We saved the day!" Students usually finish before the time runs out.
- Conduct debrief after the session. Optional questions:
 - Which puzzle did you find the hardest, and how did your team figure it out?
 - Which puzzles did you think were the easiest to solve?
 - How was communication in your group? What communication strategies worked well? What could your group do better next time?
 - Did everyone in your group get a chance to participate? How did you divide tasks or roles within the group?
 - Do you think the puzzles matched the theme?
 - Do you think your library knowledge was tested?

1. Puzzle #1 - Processing local holds (Directional lock) Code: → ↑ ← → ↓

***Local holds, your daily task,
Retrieve the books when patrons ask.
North, East, South, and West
Work together and do your best!***

- Staff print out the template and cut out strips to place randomly on a table.
- Staff place the riddle card near strips. The riddle can be cut "as is" from the riddle template or the text can be copied and pasted to create your own themed design riddle card.
- Students arrange the strips in the correct order, then use the directions on the strips to open the directional lock.

- The pouch contains pictures of a rescued librarian and fellow agent - Students post pictures on the mission board.
2. Puzzle #2 - Criminal organization pictures (5-letter lock) Code: **SPEED**
***Five factions of POISON, their plots to unmask,
 In photos, the hints will reveal your next task.
 Find the letters they've hidden, their plans to construe,
 Combine them just right, and you'll find the next clue!***
- Create pictures with an AI generation program.
 - Print 5 criminal organization pictures in color (11x8.5in)
 - You can either use display stands or post the pictures around the room.
 - If using display stands, add construction paper to the back of the pictures to provide stiffness so the pictures can stand properly.
 - Staff place 5 pictures around the room using display stands (or the pictures can be placed in a group close together).
 - The riddle can be cut "as is" from the riddle template or the text can be copied and pasted to create your own themed design riddle card.
 - Supplies needed: Display stands and (pencil and pad just in case)
 - There are 5 pictures of factions of the head criminal organization, POISON. Each picture has missing letters of the name of the faction. Students note which letters are missing to form a word which is the code to open the lock.
 - The pouch contains pictures of a rescued librarian and fellow agent and a **plane ticket** - Students post pictures on the mission board.
3. Puzzle #3 - Department knowledge - "Numbers" (4-digit letter lock) Code: **4043**
***Your department knowledge will show you the way,
 Answer together without delay.
 Add up the numbers, the total's the key,
 Open the lock and set agents free!***
- No riddle card needed since it's on the puzzle.
 - Staff place the puzzle on a table OR place it inside a prop.
 - Supplies needed: 1 pencil, 1 calculator (students can could also use their cell phone calculator)
 - There is a list of questions about the library. All the answers are numbers. Students will add the numbers and the total is the code to open the lock.
 - The pouch contains pictures of a rescued librarian and fellow agent - Students post pictures on the mission board.
4. Puzzle #4 - Crossword puzzle #1 (4-letter lock) Code: **DUCK**
***Complete the crossword, each answer's a guide,
 The letters you need are cleverly tied.
 Use the black light, the secret will glow,***

Spell out the clue for the next place to go!


- No riddle card needed since it's on the puzzle.
- Staff print out the puzzle and use an invisible highlighter to mark the boxes with the important letters. Quick tip: Make sure you highlight the correct boxes! Highlighting the wrong box will cause the students to get stuck and be frustrated.
- Staff place the puzzle on a table OR place it inside a prop.
- This is the first of two crossword puzzles with library and department questions. After students complete it, they will use a black light to highlight specific letters in the crossword. The letters form a word that will open the lock.
- Supplies needed: 1 pencil and 1 black light.
- The pouch contains pictures of a rescued librarian and fellow agent and a **plane ticket** - Students post pictures on the mission board.

5. Puzzle #5 - Answer or refer (3-digit lock) Code: **546**

***Decide who can help, the answers you'll weigh,
Yourself, a librarian, or office staff today.
Add up the totals, the numbers will talk,
Use them just right to open the lock!***


- No riddle card needed since it's on the puzzle.
- Staff print out the puzzle and place the puzzle on a table OR place it inside a prop.
- Students will answer by circling whether they would answer themselves, refer to librarians, or refer to office staff. Students add up the number answered for each column. The total is the code to open the lock.
- Supplies needed: 1 pencil.
- The pouch contains pictures of 2 fellow agents - Students post pictures on the mission board.

6. Puzzle #6 - Call number sorting (4-digit lock) Code: **7839**

No time to lose so quicken the pace 

Organize the books in their rightful place 

Flip them over and you will see 

The code you need to set them free 

- **Please note:** Originally, each line of the riddle was paired with the spine color of a small collection to help students determine the correct order for their discovered numbers. Based on feedback regarding accessibility for color blindness, icons were added as an additional visual aid so you can print the riddle card in color or not. Both ways work.

- Staff place the riddle card near strips. The riddle can be cut “as is” from the riddle template or the text can be copied and pasted to create your own themed design riddle card.
- Staff take pictures of real books in your collection. A set of 8-12 books from 4 different collections.
- Staff print out the template on both sides in color.
 - Print them with the option "Flip on Long Side"
- Staff cut out the call number spine strips to place randomly on a table.
- Students will sort the “books” in call number order, then flip them over to uncover the number in word form. Please Note: Students need to pinch the bottom of each strip and flip it like they’re flipping a strip of bacon. Bottom to top. This is the only way to view the numbers correctly. Flipping them left to right or right to left won’t work.
- Students should realize that there are 4 small collections to sort because of the differences in the spine overlays. Each collection has about 8-12 books. The colors (or icons) in the riddle will tell them how to order the numbers.
 - Pink = Life skills
 - Black & white = Reference
 - Orange = Pacific Northwest room
 - Blue & red = Reserves
- The pouch contains pictures of 2 fellow agents and a **plane ticket**- Students post pictures on the mission board.

7. Puzzle #7 - Morse code cipher w/4 pictures Code: **5917**

Four secret pictures hide the clues

In Morse code lies the path to choose.

Numbers hide in secret guise,

Order them right to claim the prize.

- The riddle can be cut “as is” from the riddle template or the text can be copied and pasted to create your own themed design riddle card.
- Each camera has a lid and 3 secret compartments. Place a picture of the villains in the 1st compartment, a copy of the riddle in the 2nd compartment, and a Morse code answer sheet in the 3rd compartment.
- Staff will place 3 of 4 prop cameras with secret compartments around the room and 3 of 4 “spy rendezvous” pictures next to a corresponding camera. Inside each camera is a mini Morse code chart.
- Staff will place the 4th prop camera on the table to add variety. Quick tip: You can place all the cameras on one table if you like.
- Students will locate 4 pictures. Each with a number in Morse code. Each message contains a number. A clue in each picture will let them know which order to put the numbers in to open the lock.

- Supplies needed: 4 AI pictures created in Canva, Midjourney, or any other AI generation program, [4 mini 3D cameras](#) (created in our Makerspace and just used the bare minimum of its components so we could create “secret compartments”), any free online Morse code cheat sheet, and 4 pencils and 4 pieces of scratch paper to place near the cameras.
- The pouch contains pictures of 2 villains - Students post pictures on the mission board.

8. Puzzle #8 - Crossword puzzle #2 (5-letter lock) Code: **PERKY**

***Use library knowledge to solve every clue,
The facts you have learned will guide you through.
Shine the black light, let the letters appear,
Spell out the clue to make your path clear!***

- No riddle card needed since it’s on the puzzle.
- Staff print out the puzzle and use an invisible highlighter to mark the boxes with the important letters. Quick tip: Make sure you highlight the correct boxes! Highlighting the wrong box will cause the students to get stuck and be frustrated.
- Staff place the puzzle on a table OR place it inside a prop.
- This is the second of two crossword puzzles with library and department questions. After students complete it, they will use a black light to highlight specific letters in the crossword. The letters form a word that will open the lock.
- Supplies needed: 1 invisible highlighter, 1 pencil, and 1 black light.
- The pouch contains pictures of 2 villains and a **plane ticket** - Students post pictures on the mission board.

9. Puzzle #9 - Primo Searches (5-letter lock) Code: **DARTS**

***Search for the books, let Primo reveal,
Highlighted letters will seal the deal.
Arrange them just right, the code will unfold,
Crack the solution, let the secret be told!***

- No riddle card needed since it’s on the puzzle.
- Staff use an invisible highlighter to mark where the special letters and numbers of the call number will be. Quick tip: Make sure you highlight the correct lines! Highlighting the wrong line will cause the students to get stuck.
- Staff place the puzzle on a table OR place it inside a prop.
- Supplies needed: 1 laptop & internet access and 1 pencil.
- Students will use the laptop to look up books via our library’s online catalog, Primo. Students will write down the call numbers for each book. Then use the black light to find the special letters and rearrange them to create the code word that will open the lock.

- The pouch contains pictures of 2 villains - Students post pictures on the mission board.

10. Puzzle #10 - Shelf reading (long procedure) (Directional lock) Code: ← ↑ → ↓ → ← →

***Dust the shelves and align the books,
Solve the sequence, outwit the crooks.
Up, down, left, or right
Solve it before the bomb ignites!***

- Staff print out the template and cut out strips to place randomly on a table.
- Staff place the riddle card near strips. The riddle can be cut “as is” from the riddle template or the text can be copied and pasted to create your own themed design riddle card.
- Students arrange the strips in the correct order, then use the directions on the strips to open the directional lock.
- The pouch contains pictures of 2 villains - Students post pictures on the mission board.

11. Puzzle #11 - Matchbooks - library questions (5-letter lock) Code: **MONEY**

***Five villainous dens, matchbooks left behind,
Each one a trap for the clever to find.
Unlock their secrets, collect every clue,
The code to the lock depends all on you!***

- Staff print out the puzzle template with questions, matchbook covers (in color), and matches (in color).
- Staff use colored paper, the matchbook covers, and “matches” to create a matchbook for each hideout. View examples online—they’re easy to create. A few simple folds and a staple will do.
- Staff places fake cigarettes and the riddle in the cigarette case. Then place the open cigarette case on a table.
- Staff cut and place 1 of the 5 questions into each matchbook so each matchbook has its own question.
- Staff place the 5 matchbooks near the cigarette case.
- Supplies needed: [1 fake cigarette](#), 1 cigarette case, 5 matchboxes created with design software, craft paper, and 1 pencil.
- Students answer each question. They can circle the answer on the slip. The letter corresponding to the answer will form a word when arranged correctly.
- The pouch contains pictures of 2 villains - Students post pictures on the mission board.

12. Puzzle #12 - Map with plane tickets (5-alpha numeric lock) Code: **W6573**

***Four plane tickets and a map in hand,
A single letter will help you stand.***

***Search the newsletters, the numbers will tell,
Defuse the bomb and all ends well!***

- Staff can print a [map](#) in color then laminate.
- Staff will place the map on a table.
- Supplies needed: 1 map, 1 dry erase marker, 1 dry eraser, 4 plane tickets from previous puzzles (created by design software), 4 newsletters (or newspapers).
- This is the final puzzle. Students need the 4 plane tickets from the other puzzles to determine the 1st letter of the code. **The students then need to revisit the newsletters to determine the last 4 numbers of the code.**
- **The pouch contains pictures of the 2 villains and a newsletter congratulating the student agents on defusing the bomb and saving the Library World!**