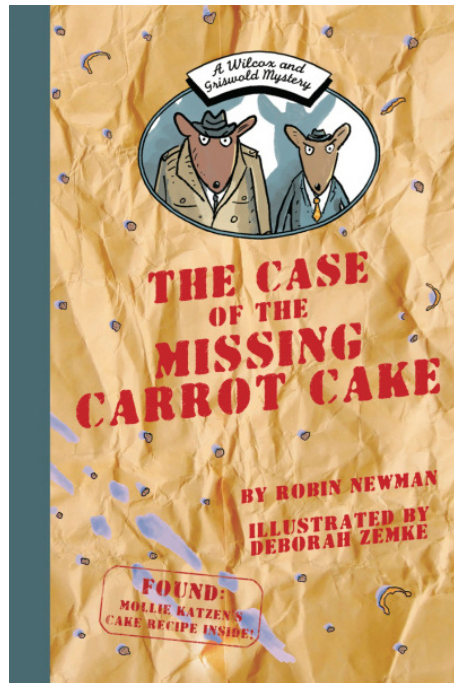




ACTIVITY GUIDE

ACTIVITIES RECOMMENDED FOR CHILDREN AGES 7 - 9



THE CASE OF THE MISSING CARROT CAKE

WRITTEN BY ROBIN NEWMAN
ILLUSTRATED BY DEBORAH ZEMKE

Watch the video of actor
Wanda Sykes
reading this story at
storylineonline.net



ABOUT THIS STORY

SYNOPSIS

When crime happens, especially when food goes missing on Ed's farm, mouse crime fighters and food detectives Wilcox and Griswold are the animals to call. When Miss Rabbit's carrot cake goes missing, they do what it takes to track down the thieves.

THEMES IN THE STORY

Problem-Solving, Patience, Community, Friendship

TALK IT UP!

Use the following questions to discuss the themes of the story:

- Miss Rabbit is frantic that she cannot find her carrot cake. Talk about a time that you misplaced an important item. How did it make you feel when you lost this item?
- An idiom is a phrase or a group of words that has a figurative meaning. Example: *Frankly, this case was moving slower than molasses.* (Meaning: The case was moving extremely slowly, like when you pour molasses out of a jar.) What are the other idioms that you find in the story? Do you know the meaning of each idiom?
- The MFI's are interviewing several "suspects" to discover who stole Miss Rabbit's carrot cake. Do you think any of the suspects were acting suspicious? If you were a detective on the case, how would you tell if a suspect was lying?
- Pretend that you want to solve a mystery in your community. For example, your mystery may be to discover which animal or insect is eating plant leaves in your neighborhood. Discuss where you may hide and what surveillance tools you would use to capture the thief.
- Hot Dog baked a carrot cake for Miss Rabbit's party because he felt bad that her cake went missing. Talk about a time when you did something nice for a friend.

WRITING

Ready for some detective work? Turn classic nurse rhymes into a mystery!

MATERIALS —

Laptop/tablet/mobile device, internet access

Pencil/paper


PREPARATION TIME —

None

LENGTH OF ACTIVITY —

30 minutes

DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIVITY —

 **Google It!**: Search “nursery rhymes” to review your favorite stories. Then, create a list of questions that add mystery to the rhyme.

For example,

*Little Jack Horner sat in the corner
Eating his Christmas pie,
He put in his thumb and pulled out a plum
And said “What a good boy am I!”*

Why did Little Jack Horner eat his pie in the corner? Did he get in trouble? What did he do to get in trouble?

NEWSCAST

At the close of the story, it states, “Every day food goes missing from the farm. Sometimes it’s lost. Sometimes it’s stolen. Sometimes it just runs away. With all these animals, you can be sure of one thing; trouble is sure to hatch. These are the cases for MFIs.”

MATERIALS —

Pencil/paper

Phone/tablet/camera

Video editing app or software (like iMovie)

DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIVITY —

Create a newscast about a mystery of missing food on Ed’s farm. Write a script and invite friends and/or family to help. While you take on the role of anchor and on-site reporters, have others act as camera crew, suspects and eyewitnesses to the crime. Use video editing app or software to edit the footage, if needed.

HANDS ON MATH: COOKING ACTIVITY | CARROT CAKE CUPCAKES

At the party, Miss Rabbit says, “Having all my friends gathered together is the icing on the cake!” Share your carrot cake cupcakes with your friends.

CUPCAKE INGREDIENTS —

1 cup flour
2 cups grated carrots
2/3 cup oil
2/3 cup sugar
2 eggs
1 teaspoon cinnamon
½ teaspoon baking powder
¼ teaspoon salt
Muffin tin & cupcake liner
Optional: walnuts, pecans, bananas



CREAM CHEESE FROSTING INGREDIENTS —

½ cup cream cheese, room temperature
½ cup butter, room temperature
1 ½ cups powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Optional: 2 tablespoons heavy cream

DIRECTIONS —

- Step 1:** Heat oven to 350 degrees F. Grease 12 muffin tins or line with cupcake liners and set aside.
- Step 2:** In a large bowl, add 2 eggs and beat for a few seconds. Gently stir in the grated carrots and oil. Add the rest of the ingredients and stir to combine - be careful not to over mix!
- Step 3:** Fill cupcake tins about 2/3 full. Bake for 18-20 minutes or until golden brown. Remove from oven and allow cupcakes to cool before frosting.
- Step 4:** Make frosting while waiting for cupcakes to cool. Use a blender (or by hand) to beat the butter, cream cheese, and vanilla until fluffy. Gradually add the powdered sugar and cream until light and fluffy.

SCIENCE EXPERIMENTS

SCIENCE EXPERIMENT: DUSTING FOR PRINTS

Dactyloscopy [dak-tuh-los-kuh-pee] is the study of fingerprints. Fingerprints are made of series of ridges and grooves on the surface of a finger; the loops, twists, and arches formed by those ridges and grooves generally follow a number of distinct patterns. The police, detectives and FBI use fingerprints to investigate crime scenes.

Wilcox and Griswold study prints, too, but they are usually paw prints!

MATERIALS —

Hand lotion
Powder
Scotch tape
Small brush

DIRECTIONS FOR ACTIVITY —

- Step 1:** Rub a small amount of lotion on hands to help make prints easier to find.
- Step 2:** Find a small surface area (i.e. kitchen counter) to press your fingers and leave your prints.
- Step 3:** Sprinkle a small amount of powder onto the surface that you touched.
- Step 4:** Using a brush, GENTLY, brush away the excess powder. Be sure to leave the prints intact!
- Step 5:** Place a piece of scotch tape on top of the powdery print, then lift the tape. Place the tape onto black construction paper for closer observation.

Optional Challenge: Have each family member rub pencil or washable marker on his/her fingers and press fingers onto a piece of white paper. Label each set of prints with the family members' name.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

Detective work is hard! You have to have a keen eye and memory. How good are your observation skills?

CLUE

EQUIPMENT —

None

PARTICIPANTS —

Minimum of 2

GAME DIRECTIONS —

Choose a room in the house as a “crime scene”. Assign the roles of “thief” and “detective(s)” to participants. Allow the “detective(s)” to observe the “crime scene” for a few moments. After they leave, the “thief” takes away an item from the room. The detective(s) return to the room to decide what item is missing. Switch roles.

Wilcox and Griswold follow the suspects and clues all around the farm. How well can you follow the trail of a suspect?

FOLLOW THE TRAIL

EQUIPMENT —

Ball of Yarn

PARTICIPANTS —

Minimum of 2

GAME DIRECTIONS —

Assign a participant the role of “suspect” and another the role of “detective”. The suspect will make a trail with the yarn. Start the trail by tying to a stable base, i.e. tree, chair leg, mailbox, etc. Then, the suspect goes over, under and around obstacles in the yard. Once the trail is complete, the “detective” follows the exact pattern of the suspect – over, under and around the obstacles. Switch roles.

FIELD TRIPS

Field trips are a great way to make a real world connection to the story.

VISIT A POLICE STATION

Visit your local police station to learn crime prevention tips, see how a police department functions and to see how police equipment is used. Find out if detectives go on stakeouts and set up video surveillance like Wilcox and Griswold.

VISIT A LOCAL FARM

The story takes place on Ed's farm. Visit your local farm and see if the animals are similar to those in *The Case of the Missing Carrot Cake*.

DO SOMETHING

Miss Fowler, the owl, may be part of an endangered species! Google It: Search “endangered owl species” to learn which species are endangered or at risk. Visit a local wildlife refuge to learn more about native wildlife, birds, fish and plants. Do your part in the community to save endangered species.

ABOUT US

ABOUT STORYLINE ONLINE

The SAG-AFTRA Foundation's children's literacy website *Storyline Online*® streams imaginatively produced videos featuring celebrated actors to help inspire a love of reading. Storyline Online receives millions of views every month in hundreds of countries. Visit Storyline Online® at storylineonline.net.

ABOUT THE SAG-AFTRA FOUNDATION

The SAG-AFTRA Foundation provides vital assistance and educational programming to the professionals of SAG-AFTRA while serving the public at large through its signature children's literacy program. Founded in 1985, the Foundation is a national non-profit organization that relies solely on support from grants, corporate sponsorships, and individual contributions to fund our programs. Visit sagaftra.foundation.

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