**5-Minute Mysteries – Reading Comprehension**

\*In this assignment you are a detective who is assigned to solve a mystery. Read the mystery attached to this assignment. Highlight any parts that you think might be motives, clues, or an alibi. Using the table below you will write your notes on each of the suspects (to keep them organized). Once you have read, highlighted, and taken notes it is time to write your final answers. Let’s get going Sherlock!

**Vocabulary**:

* Suspects: people who may have committed the crime.
* Motive: the reason why someone may have committed the crime.
* Clues: evidence that a person may have committed the crime.
* Alibi: evidence that the person could not have committed the crime (eg: they were in another place at that time)

**Crime Scene Notes:**

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| **Crime Scene Notes** | | | |
| **Suspects** | **Motive** | **Evidence/Clues** | **Alibi** |
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**Final Questions to Answer (Solving the Crime):**

1. Who do you think committed the crime?

1. Why do you think that person is guilty (be sure to include their motive, clues, and why they don’t have an alibi)?

1. Who do you think could definitely not be guilty?

1. Why (explain)?

**Rubric:**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Crime Scene Mystery Solving Rubric | | | | |
|  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| Reading Comprehension | The detective shows little evidence of understanding the story. They may have missed important facts or are unable to make a strong prediction for solving the case. |  |  | The detective has shown a great level of understanding of the mystery. They share direct details from the story and have used those details to correctly solve the mystery. |
| Written representation of the facts | The detective’s written work shares few facts. It is not clear that the detective has found most of the clues in the story. |  |  | The detective’s written work shows a high level of understanding of the story. All important facts are highlighted and mentioned in their final solving of the mystery. |
| Critical Thinking | The detective is not connecting the facts/clues with the solving of the crime. |  |  | The detective is able to consider the facts and uses them to argue their answer to the mystery. |

**Diamond Deception**

Written by [Stefanina Hill](http://www.5minutemystery.com/author/shill)

When Madam Rosler’s priceless red diamond, the Star of Hearts, was stolen, the staff at her country house was not unduly concerned that the police could not be at the scene of the robbery until much later that day. Mr. Seppings, the butler, announced that he would take charge of things at the house and such was the faith of the household in his keen intelligence and calm self-assurance. No one questioned his instructions when he arranged for the four people suspected of taking the diamond to be assembled in the room from which the valuable item had been taken.

Mrs. Rosler was away for a short hospital stay and Mr. Seppings insisted that she should not be informed of what had occurred until everything was resolved. It certainly sent an uneasy ripple of tension through the four suspects gathered in the living room when Mr. Seppings seemed so sure that the matter would be fixed and settled before the police even arrived. Only Mr. Seppings had been told of the diamond’s whereabouts, although it seemed that someone else must have discerned the hiding place. The living room cabinet, which had contained the jewel, had been found smashed open with the refreshment trolley. The cabinet stood in a corner by the window, the refreshment trolley had collided with it resulting in the colored glass shattering and no doubt revealing the diamond inside.

Mr. Seppings and the housekeeper, Mrs. Smith, had gone to visit Mrs. Rosler in the hospital, leaving four workmen in charge of the house and grounds while the other staff had a day off. It was these four men: John, Horace, Lewis and Jake who were gathered together in the living room accused of being the thief. John and Jake stood next to each other on one side of the room anxiously discussing the mud on John’s boots. Meanwhile, Lewis was seated in a chair trying to keep from standing out, something his well over six-foot frame made difficult. At slightly over five feet, Horace found it much easier to shrink into the background.

Mrs. Smith thought that the matter was a very clear-cut one. She pointed out to Mr. Seppings how a line of muddy footprints matching the tread of John’s boots could be seen plainly on the carpet of the living room. The footprints entered from the doorway and led up to the center of the room where the trolley had been and then out again. John insisted that he hadn’t taken the diamond but when asked by the housekeeper how he explained the presence of the footprints, he fell silent.

“They certainly were John’s boots weren’t they?” Mr. Seppings said as he looked down at the wide tread, grubby working boots John was wearing and then observed the matching marks on the carpet.

“I’ve had a bad feeling about there being a thief in the house since some small things went missing from one of the dining room cupboards last month,” said Mrs. Smith. “This is poor Mrs. Rosler’s favorite room, she’s usually in and out of here all day. I put a note up on the kitchen fridge at midday to say that she was gone but I didn’t speak to anyone about it. Mrs. Rosler insists on managing some of the deliveries herself so I wanted any couriers dropping supplies off in the kitchen to know not to wait for her.”

Mr. Seppings then turned his attention to the sitting room window, which was standing open. “This window was in need of repair. I gave instructions that it should remain shut at all times until it was fixed,” Mr. Seppings said. “It’s broken in such a way that opening it damages the wood on whichever side it is opened from. Everyone who works here knows that if they were to open this window and so cause additional damage they could be fired.

Mr. Seppings balanced on a chair and made a quick examination of the window by lightly running his fingers along the splintered outer frame while Mrs. Smith anxiously urged him to be careful. “Now Mr. Seppings, Sir, that’s six feet off the ground on the outside. If you fall, you’ll have an awful bang.”

“Let me see, the window is nearly fully open and no ladder marks to be seen.” Mr. Seppings muttered to himself. “All right Mrs. Smith, I am quite finished now,” he said as he climbed stiffly down.

“Now,” he commanded, “who was working where today?”

After a few moments of silence, Jake spoke up. “John was working in the back yard on some loose plumbing and I was in the cellar putting in some new wiring.Lewis and Horace worked outside together. Horace and I had our break together at eleven; Lewis and John had a break together at two thirty.”

“You have your breaks here in the kitchen?” Mr. Seppings asked.

“Yes that’s right,” Jake replied.

“Well” Mr. Seppings started, “looking at the footprints on the carpet, it is pretty clear who stole the diamond.”