Open the Box

Autumn Edition · Instructions for the game master

An escape game for teams: two puzzles lead to two number codes, and the codes open the box.

What you need

- One or more boxes that lock, for example a toolbox with a hasp for a padlock
- Two four-digit combination locks, ideally in two colors
- Prizes for the winning team, to match the team size
- Pens for everyone and some scratch paper

Teams of 4 to 6 players work best; with a small group, teams of three work too.

The codes

Tree Scavenger Hunt	Crossword
1311	2923

What you print

Once	Tree Scavenger Hunt, part 1: the ten tree posters
For each team	Tree Scavenger Hunt, part 2, and Crossword, part 1 and part 2, plus a few spare copies. Crossword part 2 comes in an easy version (with yellow circles for collecting the letters and four given letters) and a hard version.
Just for you	the three solution sheets

Getting ready

- Spread the word about the game. Tell your teens you're going to play it, and encourage them to bring friends.
- Hang the ten tree posters on the walls: in the room where you play or spread out over other rooms in the building.
- Set the combination locks: Tree Scavenger Hunt to **1311**, Crossword to **2923**.
- Put the prizes or a note saying "Congratulations, you opened the box!" in the box.
- Lock the box and test the locks one last time.
- Place the box at the front of the room in the middle, ideally on a table.
- Get the materials ready so you can hand them out to the teams quickly, for example with paper clips or in plastic sleeves.
- Decide whether phones are allowed. If they are, put them to use: a team only wins once it has posted a photo of the open box on social media. That way more people hear about your youth group.

How to play

- Welcome the teens and have them form teams of 4 to 6 players or, with a small group, teams of three. Bigger teams have an advantage, so make sure the teams are about the same size.
- Hand out the game kits: pens, Crossword part 1 and part 2, Tree Scavenger Hunt part 2 and scratch paper if needed.
- One game master stays with the box for the whole game to keep things fair.
- Explain the goal:

> *"Your goal is to open the box as a team. Your kit has puzzles in it that you'll solve together. You need two four-digit codes to open the box. If your code is wrong and another team is already waiting, that team goes next. If you win, … is waiting for you. Ready, set, open the box!"*

- Then the teams spread out and solve the puzzles.

When a team gets stuck

You can give hints during the game, for example:

> *"Look closely at the letters highlighted in yellow on the tree posters."*

> *"The four-word message turns into a four-digit code."*

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