BONUS ACTIVITIES

Tales from the Neighborhood, Book One

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BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Want to keep your book nice and clean? Ask an adult to make photocopies of the activity pages before you write on them. That way, you can complete them more than once, share them with friends, or challenge someone else to see who can finish first.

Some activities test how well you remember Book One. Others return to a particular adventure, celebration, or creepy neighborhood legend.

TALES FROM THE NEIGHBORHOOD WORD SEARCH

Find all 20 words. They may run forward, backward, up, down, or diagonally.

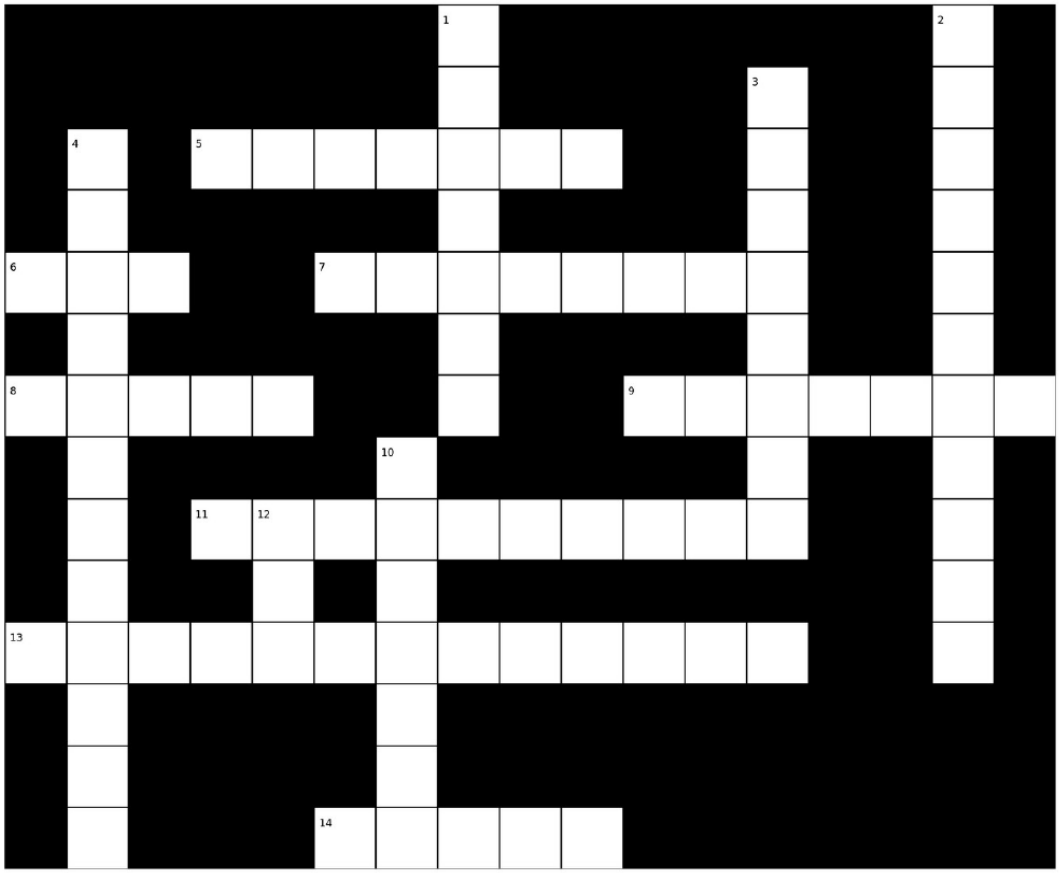
G B K C D I B U J T U W F X E U N E W X
C R L W A X R E Q N E Y U L E C A T G A
J P D O O H R O B H G I E N Q C M F F D
W O L L A M H S R A M T I Q M R G V J E
M K F M B N A I V A J Z S G E N C F D M
T N O R A H H R A B P W R O I R F O X O
W V W M K F Q S L G D E N V H P T L J R
U N T X M B U A G I E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

BABY BLUE	**BECKY**	**PUMPKIN**	**JOLABOKAFLOD**
ANDROMEDA	**SAM**	**HALLOWEEN**	**YULE CAT**
MARSHMALLOW	**BLAKE**	**GHOST**	**BOK CHOY**
DANNY	**RON**	**ASH ALLEY**	**OFRENDA**
JESSICA	**GREENHOUSE**	**FRIENDSGIVING**	**NEIGHBORHOOD**

BOOK ONE CROSSWORD

Use what you remember from the neighborhood to complete the crossword.

BOOK ONE CROSSWORD



ACROSS

5. The Halloween item that may grow again the following year.
6. The friend who wants to learn to cook and may become a chef someday.
7. The alley supposedly haunted by a ghost.
8. The girl known for her signature frames.
9. The enormous Icelandic cat from Mama B's Christmas story.
11. The place where Mama B grows vegetables during the colder months.
13. The Thanksgiving gathering shared with friends.
14. One of the original neighborhood ghost hunters.

DOWN

1. The vegetable the children learn how to regrow.
2. The old black cat behind the Ghost of Ash Alley legend.
3. Sister G's little dog and one of the stars of the neighborhood.
4. The celebration that includes an ofrenda.
10. The girl with the bright pink rain jacket.
12. Blake's protective brother.

HOW WELL DO YOU KNOW THE NEIGHBORHOOD?

No peeking back at the story unless you absolutely have to.

1. Who is really responsible for the Ghost of Ash Alley?

A. Danny B. Marshmallow C. Baby Blue D. Mama B

2. What does Sam say he may want to become someday?

A. A veterinarian B. A gardener C. A chef D. A teacher

3. True or False: Jessica believes in the Ghost of Ash Alley from the beginning.

True False

4. What happens to Blake's smashed Halloween pumpkin?

A. Mama B cooks it. B. Baby Blue eats it. C. It is left to decompose and possibly grow new pumpkins. D. It is thrown away.

5. What vegetable does Jessica learn to regrow?

A. Spinach B. Bok choy C. Lettuce D. Cabbage

6. Who is Blake's brother?

A. Sam B. Danny C. Ron D. James

7. What is Jessica wearing when Danny sees her come outside in the rain?

A. A yellow coat B. A purple sweater C. A bright pink rain jacket D. A blue hoodie

8. What does Mama B give Sam to help him learn to cook?

A. A set of knives B. A beginner cookbook C. A mixing bowl D. A recipe box

9. What holiday celebration involves creating an ofrenda?

A. Thanksgiving B. Christmas C. Halloween D. Day of the Dead

10. What does Becky think about the plan to hunt the Ghost of Ash Alley?

A. It is brilliant. B. It sounds like a terrible plan. C. She refuses to go. D. She thinks the ghost should be left alone.

11. What does Mama B spray paint teal?

A. Her porch B. A Christmas tree C. Her greenhouse D. A garden bench

12. True or False: Ron enjoys researching things and learning new information.

True False

13. What frightening Icelandic creature does Mama B tell the children about?

A. The Yule Cat B. The Snow Witch C. The Winter Raven D. The Christmas Wolf

14. What is Jólabókaflóð?

A. An Icelandic feast B. A winter gardening tradition C. A tradition involving giving books at Christmas D. A ghost story contest

15. What kind of celebration does Mama B host around Thanksgiving?

A. Friendsgiving B. Harvest Day C. Winter Feast D. Neighborhood Supper

WHO SAID IT?

Match each statement or idea to the character who fits it best.

A. Danny B. Jessica C. Becky D. Sam E. Mama B F. Marshmallow

1. I think everyone should know how to cook for themselves. _____

2. That sounds like a terrible plan. _____

3. I have been playing the Ghost of Ash Alley for fifteen years. It is my thing! _____

4. Fine. We are ghost hunting. _____

5. The person who regularly turns ordinary neighborhood days into something special. _____

6. The person who claims not to believe in ghosts but still agrees to hunt one at midnight. _____

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NEIGHBORHOOD MYSTERY CHALLENGE

WHO STOLE THE MUFFIN?

Mama B baked one enormous blueberry muffin and left it cooling on the kitchen counter. Ten minutes later, the muffin was gone. Everyone claimed innocence. Your job is to figure out who took it.

Suspects: Baby Blue, Andromeda, Marshmallow, Danny, Sam

1. The thief was inside the house when the muffin disappeared.
2. Danny and Sam were both outside helping Mama B carry gardening supplies.
3. Andromeda was asleep under a blanket and did not move until Mama B came back inside.
4. Baby Blue had blueberry crumbs on his nose, but Sister G admitted she had already given him a small bite earlier.
5. A trail of crumbs led from the kitchen toward the basement stairs.
6. A certain elderly resident of the basement was later discovered pretending to be asleep.

Who stole the muffin? _____

What clue gave it away? _____

BABY BLUE'S FUNNY FILL IN

Baby Blue knew something was wrong the moment he walked into the greenhouse and found a _____ (animal) sitting in Mama B's favorite chair eating _____ (noun). Marshmallow was in the corner (verb ending in ing) and pretending not to notice. Suddenly, Andromeda came charging into the room looking extremely (adjective) and barking at her own (noun). Sister G rushed in wearing a (colored noun) on her head and announced that (noun) squirrels (number) had somehow gotten into the kitchen. Things got worse when Marshmallow knocked over a bowl that smelled like rottin (noun) causing Baby Blue to (verb) across the room and land in a pile of _____ (adjective) laundry. Mama B walked in carrying a _____ (noun), looked around at the disaster, and calmly asked why there was a _____ (animal) inside her refrigerator. Nobody had an answer. Then Marshmallow jumped onto the table, stepped directly into a plate of _____ (noun), and let out a tremendous _____ (sound effect). Andromeda immediately began growling at a _____ (vegetable). Sister G shouted, "_____ (exclamation)!" Baby Blue looked at the squirrels, the refrigerator, the sticky cat, and the angry vegetable, then decided it would probably be safer to go back to bed.

ASH ALLEY SPOOKY FILL IN

The children had been hiding in Ash Alley for _____ minutes when Danny heard a
(number)
_____ sound coming from behind the fence. He grabbed _____
(adjective) (noun)
and whispered, "Did you hear that?" Jessica stared into the darkness just as something began
_____ behind the garbage cans. Suddenly, the entire alley smelled like
(verb ending in ing)
_____. Becky covered her nose and whispered, "That is absolutely
(terrible smell)
_____." A moment later, a _____ figure appeared at
(adjective) (color)
the end of the alley wearing a _____ on its head and carrying a
(clothing)
_____. It let out a terrifying "_____!" Everyone screamed
(noun) (strange sound)
and started _____ toward the street. Danny tripped over a_____.
(verb ending in ing) (noun)
and landed face first in a pile of _____. Sam pointed toward the mysterious
(plural noun)
figure and shouted, "It has _____ eyes!" The creature stepped slowly into
(number)
the light. It was Marshmallow. He was carrying a _____in his mouth and
(noun)
looked extremely _____ about the entire situation. Jessica yelled,
(adjective)
"_____!" Marshmallow dropped the food, stared at everyone for several
(exclamation)
uncomfortable seconds, and disappeared back into the darkness. Somewhere behind them, a
_____ made a strange noise. Nobody stayed around long enough to
(animal)
investigate.

FRIENDSGIVING FOOD FIASCO

After Friendsgiving, Mama B packed five different leftovers. Danny, Jessica, Sam, Becky, and Ron each chose one container to take home. Use the clues to figure out who took what.

	Turkey	Green Bean Casserole	Cranberry Sauce	Mashed Potatoes	Pumpkin Pie
Danny					
Jessica					
Sam					
Becky					
Ron					

CLUES

1. Sam did not choose a side dish or dessert.
2. Becky chose the only dessert.
3. Ron chose the dish Becky said she did not like during Friendsgiving.
4. Jessica did not choose cranberry sauce or green bean casserole.
5. Danny did not choose mashed potatoes.

Write your final answers:

Danny: _____

Jessica: _____

Sam: _____

Becky: _____

Ron: _____

DAY OF THE DEAD HIDDEN OBJECT CHALLENGE

Take another look at the celebration. Can you find all 12 items in the scene?



- ☐ a small dog
- ☐ a black cat
- ☐ a candle in a glass
- ☐ a platter of tamales
- ☐ Pan de Muerto
- ☐ papel picado
- ☐ a framed photograph on the ofrenda
- ☐ a skull decoration above the ofrenda
- ☐ a skull tapestry
- ☐ a bowl of beads
- ☐ a marker on the table
- ☐ a vase of flowers

OFRENDA MYSTERY MESSAGE

Answer each question using what you learned during the Day of the Dead celebration. Then take the numbered letter from each answer. Put the eight letters together to reveal the mystery message.

1. What is the special offering placed on a home altar during the celebration?
Answer: _____ Take letter 3.

2. What is placed in a pitcher to quench the spirits' thirst?
Answer: _____ Take letter 4.

3. What familiar food did Mama B serve with vegetarian and chicken fillings?
Answer: _____ Take letter 3.

4. What represents fire and helps guide spirits to the altar?
Answer: _____ Take letter 6.

5. Besides cayenne pepper, what spice flavored Mama B's Mexican hot chocolate?
Answer: _____ Take letter 6.

6. Name one item the children could use to decorate their sugar skulls.
Answer: _____ Take letter 3.

7. Pan de Muerto is a traditional sweet what?
Answer: _____ Take letter 3.

8. Blake and Ron left a Christmas card on the ofrenda to honor their whom?
Answer: _____ Take letter 2.

MYSTERY MESSAGE: ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐ ☐

Hint: It is one of the most important ideas behind the celebration.

SCRAMBLED SKEIN

The Yule Cat is prowling through the snow, and you are definitely not dressed for this.

In Mama B's story, people who finished their work received new clothing for Christmas. Unscramble these survival items before the Yule Cat finds you.

1. WRSTEAE _____
2. FCRAS _____
3. KSOSC _____
4. OBTSO _____
5. TITMESN _____
6. OCAT _____
7. THA _____
8. SEJAN _____
9. RSIHT _____
10. AAMSJAP _____

DID YOU ESCAPE?

If you unscrambled all ten items, congratulations. You are properly dressed and may safely enjoy Christmas.

If not, you may want to stay away from the windows tonight.

WEAVER’S CRYPTOGRAM

The wool is finished, the winter night is closing in, and someone has left a warning. Each coded letter always stands for the same real letter. Decode the message before the Yule Cat reaches the house.

A FEW THREADS TO GET YOU STARTED

Z = T I = H T = E

YOFOLI NGXK VGKA WTYGKT ZIT VOFZTK FOUIZ.

VTQK LGDTZIOFU FTV QFR ATTH ZIT YOKT WKOUIZ.

VITF UKTQZ HQVL EKGLL ZIT LFGV GXZLORT,

IGHT ZIT NXST EQZ HQLLTL WN.

Use this space to work out your letter key:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____