The Great Escape

Mission: the thief sealed the mascot behind a three-part code, and no one can crack it alone. Win each game to earn a piece, pool the pieces as a room, assemble the password on the whiteboard, open the box, free the mascot together. Today's code: piece 1 **TE** + piece 2 **AM** = **TEAM**. Character trait today: **Relationship Skills**.

1 · The First Lock / Four Corners (5–16 min) — the surviving corner reveals code piece 1

Setup Point out four corners, give each a letter block: **TE**, LO, RA, PX. Only TE is the real piece 1. Everyone scatters to a corner.

Play The Lock (eyes closed) calls one corner, that corner is out. Spread out and repeat 4–6 rounds. Last corner standing reveals its letters; only TE "clicks." Decoy survives? "That lock jammed," replay until TE stands.

Coach "We survive as a room, not as a corner. Where should we spread so we don't lose everyone?"

Diff TK–2: fewer rounds, nobody really out, coach the spreading-out aloud. 3–8: student Lock on a 5-second timer, sudden-death to one survivor, score across fixed teams; a squad that clumps and gets wiped forfeits its point.

2 · The Second Lock / Guide the Explorer (16–31 min) — groups pool letters for code piece 2

Setup Small groups, one eyes-closed Explorer each. Piece 2 = **AM**. Two groups: one earns A, one earns M. More groups: hand out A and M across them, room assembles AM in order.

Paths Letter A (simple): from the door, 3 steps forward, turn to the whiteboard, 2 steps, reach up and press. Letter M (trickier): from the box table, 2 forward, right, 2, left, reach out and press the wall. Voices only, no touching.

Diff TK–2: short straight paths, one voice only, no clock. 3–8: 2–3 turns, 60-sec clock, head-to-head on identical paths, student referee calls fouls. No team banks its point until every group has pressed its lock.

3 · The Vault / Code Breakers (31–45 min) — combine the two pieces into the password

TEAM Write TE and AM on the board. Riddle: "Put the two halves together to name the one thing that got you through every lock." Answer: TEAM. Combine in order, piece 1 first. First team to whisper it opens the box.

Swap any 4-letter word that splits cleanly (PLAN, WINS, OPEN): first two letters = piece 1, last two = piece 2, one riddle whose answer is the word.

Diff TK–2: blank lines for four letters, fill TE then AM so the word appears. 3–8: encipher the halves (Caesar +1: UF and BN), decode then combine, beat-the-clock (3 pts fastest, 1 pt second); crackers design a two-piece lock for a rival team and referee it.

4 · Finale + Wristband (45–60 min)

Open The whole room announces the password together, coach turns the key, mascot lifts out, big cheer. Optional "thief's note" inside: "I built a lock no one could crack alone. I forgot you would work together. I surrender!"

Award the **Relationship Skills** trait wristband to detectives who cooperated and communicated well (shared a clue, guided calmly, went to help a stuck group).

3–8 For older kids and the two middle schools, run the whole hour competitive: fixed teams, score every game on the whiteboard, visible timer each round, crown a champion here, but the box only opens when the room pools all three pieces. Games bank adds **Detective Mafia** (2–3 Culprits + a Detective, 5–7 min rounds) — the one middle schoolers ask to replay.

Detective's Oath (say together, magnifiers up): I am a detective. / My brain is my best tool. / I don't guess, I reason. / I follow the clues to the truth.