The Riddle Room

Mission: the thief locked the mascot again behind a riddle, and the obvious answer is a trap. Win the games, crack the riddle lock on the whiteboard, whisper the password, open the box, free the mascot. Character trait today: **Responsible Decisions**.

1 · Riddle Relay (5–16 min) — solve the station riddle to move on, think sideways

Warm-up "What has to be broken before you use it?" → egg. Coach: "not a tool, think what breaking is good for."

Trick "What has hands but cannot clap?" → clock. The word "hands" pulls toward a person. Ask why the obvious answer is wrong.

Two-step "The more you take, the more you leave behind?" → footsteps. Reward reasoning past the trick over just running fast.

Diff TK–2: 2 easy stations, hints, no one out. 3–8: 5–6 harder lateral riddles, visible timer, wrong-answer penalty lap before a retry, first team through takes 3 pts. Older kids write and judge their own riddles.

2 · Four Corners: Riddle Me This (16–31 min) — run to the corner with the right answer

Setup Name 4 corners = 4 possible answers, read the riddle, say "run!", reveal the answer, wrong corners out that round. Play several rounds.

Rounds "Hands but cannot clap?" baby/clock/glove/monkey → clock. "Wetter the more it dries?" sponge/towel/sun/fish → towel. "Neck but no head?" giraffe/bottle/turtle/shirt → bottle.

Diff TK–2: 2–3 corners, easy riddles, no one really out, coach reasons aloud. 3–8: close decoy answers, 5-sec shot clock, sudden-death, last detective standing takes the point. Older kids read the riddles and run the round themselves.

3 · The Riddle Lock (31–45 min) — first letters of the answers spell the password

OWL Orange (round orange fruit) / Watch (has hands, worn on a wrist) / Lion (king of the jungle). First letters O-W-L. Add a decoy riddle whose obvious answer gives a wrong letter.

GO Giraffe (tall, long neck) / Owl (bird that says "hoo"). First letters G-O. Two riddles, no decoy. Good for a first round or younger team.

Diff TK–2: short GO lock, coach helps, blank line per letter. 3–8: longer password (RIDDLE, DETECT, SIDEWAYS), harder riddles, added cipher step (shift or reverse), beat-the-clock with a 30-sec wrong-guess penalty, fastest whisper takes 3 pts. Older kids write a lock for a rival and judge the crack.

4 · Finale + Wristband (45–60 min)

Open Winning team announces the password to the room, coach turns the key, mascot lifts out, big cheer. Optional "thief's note" inside: "You out-riddled my lock. I surrender!"

Award the **Responsible Decisions** trait wristband to detectives who paused to reason before answering ("I checked the trap first", "I thought sideways before I ran").

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. 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.