Escape the Island

Mission: the thief stranded the mascot on a deserted island and locked the box with three timed locks. Read the map, time the tides, crack the bottle, assemble the code, open the box, free the mascot. No one escapes alone. Character trait today: **Relationship Skills**.

1 · Read the Map (5–16 min) — count the squares to the landmark (part 1)

Grid 5 by 5. Compass rose: N up, E right, S down, W left. START at the bottom-left cell (the shipwreck).

Landmarks CAVE 3 up and 2 right of start; PALM 1 up 1 right; REEF 2 up; ROCK top-right corner (PALM, REEF, ROCK are decoys).

Steps North 3, then East 2. You land on CAVE. **Part 1 = CAVE.**

Diff TK–2: 3-by-3 grid, path North 1 then East 1 to CAVE, coach counts aloud. 3–8: 6-by-6 grid, six steps with a "turn right and go 2" twist, head-to-head, a wrong guess loses your next turn, then teams design a route for a rival team to trace.

2 · Time the Tides (16–31 min) — find the rule, fill the blank (part 2)

Write 2, 4, 6, 8, ___. Rule: add 2 each hour. Next height 10. **Part 2 = 10.**

Round 2 if fast: 5, 10, 15, 20, ___ (add 5; next is 25).

Diff TK–2: 2, 4, 6, ___ (answer 8), count the jumps together. 3–8: two-step rule 2, 5, 4, 7, 6, 9, ___ (add 3 then subtract 1; next is 8), 30-second shot clock per guess, then teams design a two-step sequence for a rival to crack and referee.

3 · Message in a Bottle + Escape (31–45 min) — decode, then assemble (part 3)

Numbers 18 - 1 - 6 - 20. Key: 1=A, 2=B ... 26=Z. Decode 18=R, 1=A, 6=F, 20=T = RAFT. **Part 3 = RAFT.**

Full code **CAVE 10 RAFT** (part 1 + part 2 + part 3). First team to whisper the whole code opens the box.

Diff TK–2: two-letter bottle 7 - 15 = GO, key written big, coach helps assemble the parts. 3–8: mixed cipher (numbers plus letters shifted back one, decode forward one), 18 - 1 - E - S = RAFT, sudden-death whisper, wrong whisper eliminates that team, winner verifies each part aloud while a rival checks.

4 · Finale + Wristband (45–60 min)

Open Winning team announces the full code (CAVE 10 RAFT) to the room, coach turns the key, mascot lifts out, big cheer. Optional "thief's note" inside: "You needed each other to beat my island. I surrender!"

Award the **Relationship Skills** trait wristband to detectives who listened, shared a clue, and made sure the whole team agreed before calling the answer ("I heard your idea", "let's check it together").

3–8 For older kids and the two middle schools, run the whole hour competitive: fixed teams, score every lock 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.