

The Cypher Wheel Adventure Treasure Hunts

Wide eyed kids come running into the living room and start searching for the clue. Derek finds a note stuck under the coffee table and peels it off. They quickly notice it's written in code. Susan pulls out the Cypher Wheel, a pad and pencil and they begin to decode the message. It looks like this:

OEK'BB VYDT JXU SBKU, YJ'I YD JXU RUT,
YD JXU FBQSU MXUHU CQCQ BQOI XUH XUQT.

Set the second wheel to #17 on the arrow on the outer wheel to decode.

The decoded message reads:

You'll find the clue, it's in the bed,
In the place where mama lays her head.

The next clue must be in mom and dad's room, and the first place to look would be under mom's pillow (where she lays her head.) When the kids check under the pillow they find another piece of paper with another clue toward finding the illusive treasure. This one says:

MX'W MR XLI YSSQ ALINI CSY ASYPH IEX,
CSY FIXXIV PSSO EVSYRH CSYV WIEX.

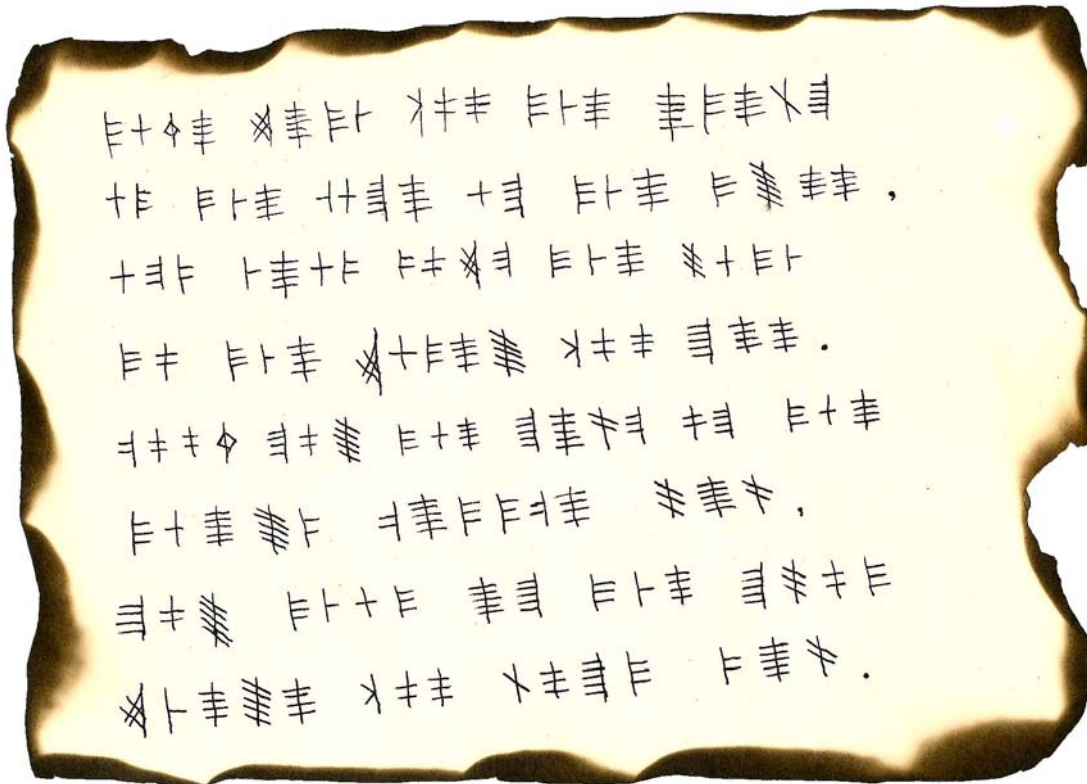
Set the second wheel to #5 on the arrow on the outer wheel to decode.

They quickly decode the message using the Cypher Wheel and find that it reads:

It's in the room where you would eat,
you better look around your seat.

With this information the kids know to rush to the dining room and begin looking around the chairs until they find the next clue.

Kids love an adventure treasure hunt! And for that matter so do most adults... All it takes to set one up is a little imagination and a few scraps of paper. You can create your own limericks to fit the environment, around your house and yard or if you want to go a little bigger, they can even include your city park or your whole town. The clues can be made to suit anyone from simple clues for kids, as the ones above, to more difficult ones that stretch the brains of teenagers and adults. Treasure Hunts can be great mental exercise for the whole family. Here are some clues from a recent treasure hunt at my house, which was designed for teenagers and/or adults, so these clues will be a little harder.



It is not necessary to adjust the wheel settings as this message is in Ogham, which is on the second ring and is adjacent to the modern Latin letters. To decipher the code simply match the symbol in Ogham to the Latin letter within the same section.

After you decipher the message it reads:

Take with you the items,
At the base of the tree,
And head down the path
To the water you see.
Look for the sign of the third little pig
For that is the spot
Where you must dig.

What is the sign of the third little pig? Well, when you see a stack of “bricks” along the path that’s a pretty good sign. The next clue was buried under the bricks.

Here is another clue from the same Treasure Hunt.

* CYRILIC WHEEL POSITION 17 *

MYJX SECFQII YD XQDT
 QDT HKBUH IJHUISXUT EKJ,
 WE JXYHJO JME SKRYJI IJHQYWXJ
 MUIJ, EX DE TEKRJ.
 JXUD IJEF QDT WE DEHJX
 ZKIJ JMUDJO SKRYJI CEHU,
 BEEA KF YD JXU JHUU
 VEH Q REN, MXQJ Q SXEHU.
 (IJQHT QJ JXU RQIU EV JXU HEFU JHUU)

In order to decode this message set the second wheel to #17 on the arrow on the outer wheel. When the message is decoded it should read:

With compass in hand and ruler stretched out,
 Go 32 cubits straight west, oh no doubt.
 Then stop and go north just 20 cubits more,
 Look up in the tree for a box, what a chore.
 (Start at the base of the rope tree)

You can make the trappings of the hunt as simple or elaborate as you like. Fancy parchment paper can be used for the clues. You can crumple up the paper to make them look as old as the treasure. You can burn the edges to suggest this clue barely made it into their grubby little hands. Tattoos of dragons or other exotic pictures can be transferred to the borders of the paper, and a calligraphy pen or dip well pen could be used to enhance the notes and make them more authentic.

And of course the treasure at the end of the hunt is the climax of the event. A treasure chest of gold and jewels (costume jewelry and play money), or just a simple prize of a candy bar or a gift card to McDonalds is all that is really necessary to delight even the most fearsome treasure hunter. For it's not really the treasure they're after but merely the thrill of the hunt.