

Online Book Club

The Mystery at Big Ben

Bring It To Life!

1. Build a clock tower! Get some boxes, glue, scissors, and an alarm clock. Make a design on paper first, and then create your own miniature Big Ben!
2. Create a British tourist attraction game! Assign a tourist attraction (Big Ben, The Eye, Tower of London, etc.) to each book club member. Ask that person to find a picture of his or her attraction, and research three facts about it. Ask each member to present his picture and information to the group. At the end of the presentations, see who can remember the most about each attraction. Award two points for remembering the name of the attraction and one point for remembering a fact. The person with the most points wins (of course)!
3. Hide some clues! Pass out one piece of different-colored paper to each book club member. Let each person individually hide their piece of paper in the room somewhere while everyone else has their eyes closed. Search for the papers, and decide who had the best hiding place!
4. Bring in a guest speaker! Do you know anyone who has visited England? If so, ask him or her to come in and share their photographs and stories with your group. If they have some British money, ask your speaker to bring it, too. Be sure to listen closely and ask lots of questions! That's the best way to learn!
5. Make up a story! Everyone gets involved in this one. Ask club members to sit in a circle. One club member starts a story about a prisoner who escapes from the Tower of London. He or she can say two sentences. Then, the next member to the right adds more information—but just two sentences. Keep going around until the prisoner finally escapes to freedom!



Online Information

The Mystery at Big Ben

Fascinating Facts

England

- The British consume more tea per person than any other country in the world!
- The British police do not carry guns except in emergencies!
- England is 59 times smaller than Australia, but has 2.5 times more people!
- Heathrow Airport in London handles more international passengers than any other airport in the world. What is the most popular destination for flights from Heathrow Airport? The United States, of course!
- Tea time has been a British tradition for more than 150 years. The custom was started in 1830 by a duchess who wanted a little something to eat between lunch and dinner.
- It is lucky to come across a black cat in England (unlike the superstition in the United States). Black cats are often seen on birthday and good luck greeting cards!
- London has more people than any other city in Europe!
- British author J.K. Rowling, who wrote the Harry Potter series of books, is the first person to become a billionaire from writing books!



Online Quiz

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Fact or Fiction?

Write Fact or Fiction next to each question below.

- _____ 1. Maggie and George's father worked as a doorman at the Ritz Hotel.
- _____ 2. Mr. Byron's nephew was very responsible and took good care of the children when they rode on his bus.
- _____ 3. "Big Ben" is the name of the big bell that chimes in the famous London clock tower.
- _____ 4. "The Eye" is a fast-moving, roller coaster ride in London.
- _____ 5. Grant helped figure out the code found on a note in the British Museum.
- _____ 6. No one paid much attention when Christina yelled "Fire!" in the Harrod's department store.
- _____ 7. The original London Bridge is now in Arizona.
- _____ 8. Torture and beheadings took place at the Tower of London.
- _____ 9. The two men with backpacks and shaggy hair never spoke to the children or warned them to stay away from them.
- _____ 10. Grant was right about the shaggy-haired men planning to set off a bomb inside Big Ben's clock tower.



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Talk About It!

1. Have you ever visited a foreign country? Which one did you visit, and what was it like?
2. Were you surprised to learn that people drive on the other side of the road in England? What kind of problems would that cause for Americans driving in England?
3. Why do teenagers like Mr. Byron's nephew Gilbert sometimes dye their hair crazy colors and wear clothing that's very different from the clothes their parents wear?
4. Grant's curiosity led the children to the first clue in their mystery. What did Grant find on the bricks at Big Ben? How do you think that clue got there?
5. Would you enjoy shopping at a huge department store like Harrod's? Why or why not? Why do people like to shop when they visit new places?
6. Why did Christina yell "FIRE!" in Harrod's? Why is yelling "FIRE" in a crowded place a serious thing, especially when there is no fire?
7. Of all the tourist attractions that Christina and Grant visited in London, what was your favorite? Why?
8. Did you think Grant was right when he suspected that someone was going to set off a bomb in Big Ben?
9. Christina was nervous meeting the Queen of England. How would you have felt in her place?
10. Would you like to have grandparents like Mimi and Papa who took you around the world to solve mysteries? Do you think Mimi, Papa, Christina, and Grant are real or fictional characters, or both?

