

The two-minute case

A small mystery to solve on paper, with the solution.

Inside

Page 2 The case: a short story, fourteen guests and five clues. Cross out every guest a clue rules out until one is left.

Page 3 The solution, clue by clue.

Printing

Print at Actual size (100%).

Print as many copies as you like for your home or your group.

The Unsigned Birthday Card

Grandma Rose turned 80 at the family picnic by the lake, and fourteen guests signed the picnic book. Among her birthday cards was one with no name on it, only a pressed daisy and a single line: Thank you for teaching me to whistle.

Who wrote the card?

Take the clues in order. Cross out each guest a clue rules out and write its number in the box.

Out	Guest	Age	Rose's	Brought	Table
☐	June Finch	45	niece	deviled eggs	1
☐	Walter Finch	74	brother	banana pudding	2
☐	Mabel Greene	82	church friend	deviled eggs	4
☐	Grace Hollis	24	granddaughter	lemonade	3
☐	Nina Hollis	50	daughter-in-law	fried chicken	2
☐	Paul Hollis	52	son	banana pudding	1
☐	Theo Hollis	27	grandson	lemon bars	3
☐	Ruth Kowalski	68	neighbor	sugar cookies	2
☐	Sam Ortiz	34	neighbor	lemon bars	3
☐	Dale Pruitt	57	son-in-law	peach cobbler	1
☐	Lily Pruitt	16	granddaughter	peach cobbler	2
☐	Linda Pruitt	55	daughter	coleslaw	4
☐	Owen Pruitt	21	grandson	fried chicken	4
☐	Irene Shaw	77	sister	coleslaw	1

Clues

- 1 The card writer is 60 or younger.
- 2 The card writer's last name begins with a letter from A to O.
- 3 The card writer sat at picnic table 2 or 3.
- 4 The card writer brought a dessert: peach cobbler, lemon bars, sugar cookies, or banana pudding.
- 5 The card writer is family, not a neighbor or a church friend.

Who wrote the card?

Clue 1 rules out everyone older than 60: Walter Finch (74), Mabel Greene (82), Ruth Kowalski (68), and Irene Shaw (77).

Clue 2 rules out the last names that begin outside A to O: Dale Pruitt, Lily Pruitt, Linda Pruitt, and Owen Pruitt.

Clue 3 rules out the guests at other tables: June Finch (table 1) and Paul Hollis (table 1).

Clue 4 rules out the guests who brought no dessert: Grace Hollis (lemonade) and Nina Hollis (fried chicken).

Clue 5 rules out the guests who are not family: Sam Ortiz (neighbor).

One guest is left: Theo Hollis, 27, Rose's grandson, who brought the lemon bars and sat at picnic table 3.

When Theo was small, Rose sat with him on the dock at the lake and taught him to whistle through a blade of grass, so he could always call her and she could always whistle back. He left his name off the card because, he said, she would know. She did. Rose put her fingers to her lips and whistled across the lawn, and from picnic table 3 came a whistle back.

Full cases: 2,000 names, 12 clues — selenbypuzzles.com/mystery/