

## Welcome to Nanas!

I'm glad you signed up at [www.WelcomeToNanas.com](http://www.WelcomeToNanas.com) to receive weekly emails full of fun things to do with your "grand" kids.

Just like I promised, attached is your bonus sign-up gift. Attached are free escape room plans to create a children's escape room in your own home.

I created the free children's escape room plans for your personal use only. They are not to be shared or sold. Please tell your friends and family all about it then send them over to [www.WelcomeToNanas.com](http://www.WelcomeToNanas.com) so they can sign up and receive their own personal free copy.

Be sure to post photos of your children's escape room!

**Welcome to Nana's!**  
**Where there's fun things to do with your "grand" kids!**  
**Come join the fun at [www.WelcomeToNanas.com](http://www.WelcomeToNanas.com)**



## **The Treasure Map Mystery: An Escape Room for Grands!**

Escape rooms are all the rage. Just wait till your grands find out you put one together just for them! This project will take some time and some money to prepare but it is so worth it!!

This is for the older grands as it is necessary that they are school age and can read, spell and problem solve more easily. This escape room is based on word games. I'll put together something for the younger ones later, don't worry.

*Age:* 10-18 (an adult in the mix is very helpful for the younger kids)

Note- I set this up for fun for a few adult friends to try after supper one evening. It works for adults too.

Make the clues more obvious and give more help to younger grands.

*Room:* You will set up the Escape Room in your living room or TV room where there is space to move around and to set up a few props. You will also need one adjoining room such as a bedroom for one activity. It worked well to group the props in the center of the room and put certain areas out of bounds (like book cases and china cupboards for example). This kept them from pulling all the books off the shelves and breaking delicate items. Take items out of this area that you don't want sorted through. The boundaries could be marked on the floor with tape as an easy reminder.

*Instructions:* Print off these instructions on the front side of the page only (not double sided). They will guide you through the Escape Room process from start to finish.

*Supplies/Props:* Gather all the supplies and props together. They are listed below.

I have included pictures to give you an idea of what the item may look like. You do NOT have to get an item that looks exactly like the picture, just something similar that fits the purpose.

*Tip:* Ask to borrow items from others or check out local thrift stores before purchasing supplies at a retail store to keep costs down.

I suggest gathering all of the supplies and props and then setting them up in your home as described in these instructions. Perhaps you could have a couple friends do a practice run through just so you know the procedure well before the kids try it.

When the kids come, have the escape room set up as described or set out the props after asking all the players to be away from the area. It's a secret you know!!

NOTE: When finished, locate the props, especially the key and the locks so they don't get misplaced!

## Supply and Prop List

- \*1. **Pen or pencil and paper or small notepad-** for the kids to write down notes during the activity. You will give these to the kids during the Initial Story Set up described in Step #3.
  
- \*2. **Basket, box or tote bag-** for the kids to put the items they will find and need to keep in hand to solve the clues (so they don't get lost in the excitement). You will give these to the kids during the Initial Story Set up described in Step #3.



- \*3. **Initial Story Set Up** that you read or have read to the kids (you may want to ask someone else to read). Print this Story Set Up on a piece of paper and have the blanks filled in for your circumstances, the appropriate information selected and the extra info in parenthesis crossed out so it is easy to read. Initial Story Set Up is located on the next page.

## Story Set Up:

It is \_\_\_\_\_ (insert the holiday or reason you are together) and your family has gone to visit \_\_\_\_\_ (insert your name or the name of whoever owns the house you are at). During your visit, you found an old letter tucked in \_\_\_\_\_ (her/his) favorite book. When you showed it to \_\_\_\_\_ (her/his name), \_\_\_\_\_ (her/his) eyes got wide with surprise and relief for the letter brought back a long-forgotten memory. The letter tells the tale of an old treasure map hidden in \_\_\_\_\_'s (same person's) house! \_\_\_\_\_ (She/He) is forgetful but *very* clever, so \_\_\_\_\_ (she/he) has hidden things to remind \_\_\_\_\_ (her/him) of the map and also to make sure no one will take it or the treasure from \_\_\_\_\_ (her/him). Now \_\_\_\_\_ (person's name) has asked *you* to find and follow the secret clues \_\_\_\_\_ (she/he) has hidden to help remember where the treasure map is hidden. Who knows what treasure may await you!

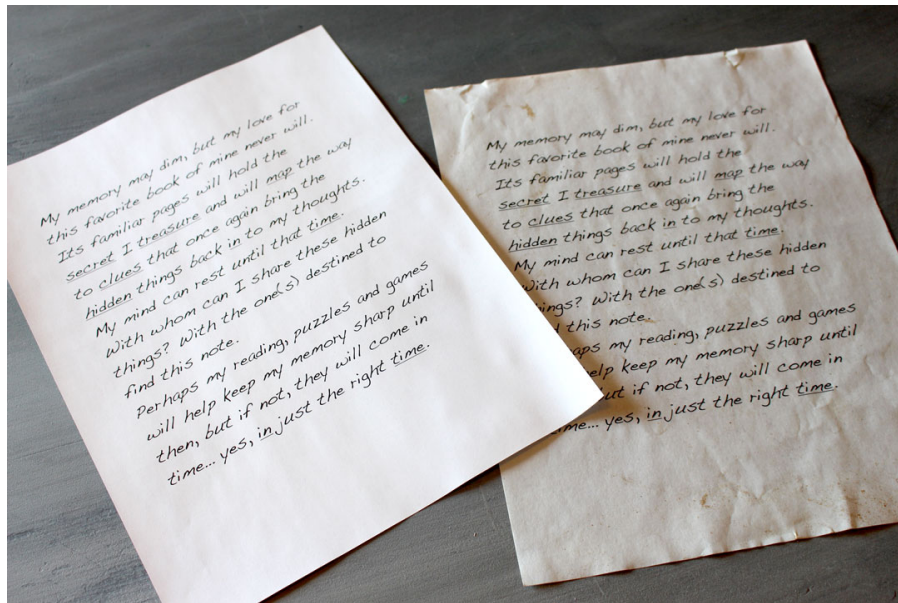
**Rules:** No tools are needed to take things apart in the room. Don't damage the structure of the house, force open or hurt the furniture or objects in the room. Clues are in various places and will give you ideas about where to find other secret clues. Be observant and put on your thinking cap because some of the clues may be hidden and others may be in plain sight. Here are a pencil/pen and paper to write down clues and a basket/bag to hold the clues you may find and need to hang on to. The clues will all fit together and work together so you can find that hidden treasure map and treasure! You may ask for a clue if *really* stuck. Remember to work together and talk to each other so you can get this task done before \_\_\_\_\_ (same person) forgets again and tells you to stop your hunt!

\*4. **Letter- hand written by you in ink or printed out on your computer.** You could use ivory paper and crinkle the Letter a bit to give the illusion of age. Cut this instruction section off the top of the letter if printed on a computer. This letter is folded and tucked in a book. Instructions for doing this are described in Step #5.

Letter content:

My memory may dim, but my love for this wonderful book of mine never will. Its familiar pages will hold the secret I treasure and will map the way to clues that once again bring the hidden things back in to my thoughts. My mind can rest until that time. With whom can I share these hidden things? With the one(s) destined to find this note. Perhaps my reading, puzzles and games will help keep my memory sharp until then, but if not, they will come in time... yes, in just the RIGHT time.

Picture of the Letter described above.



\*5. **One of your favorite books**- Tuck the folded Letter from Step #4 inside the book so that it sticks out of the top of the book. Set the book on an end table or on a flat surface.



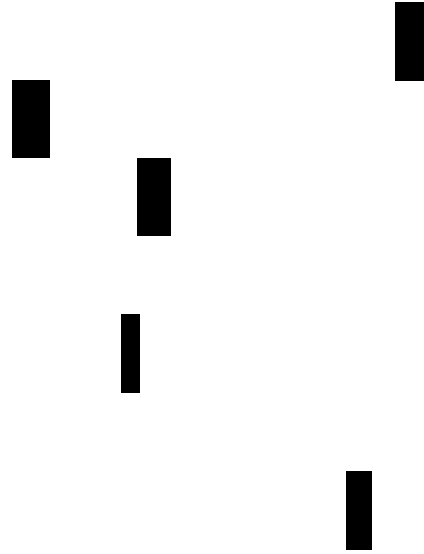
\*6. **Three or four other books** stacked and set around the room (so they have to look for the right book that contains the letter described in Step #4). Make sure there are no extra papers or writing in these books that will accidentally confuse the clues.

\*7. **Clock with hands (not digital)**- Place a Clock out in the room. It may help if the clock is a bit unusual somehow, like an old alarm clock, so the kids notice it. The clock will have a paper taped to the back or bottom of it or (directions for this paper are found in Step #8). Place the clock so that the back of the clock is not easily seen if the paper is on the back. Stop the clock by taking out the batteries or not winding it up. The time you set the clock hands to is a clue and will be determined by the combination of a lock described in Step #19. Instructions will be given in that step and you will come back and set the clock then.



\*8. **Decipher Card with cut outs to be used to decipher a message**. Print off the Decipher Card found on the next page on heavier weight paper if possible. Cut it out on the outside black outline. Cut out the black squares printed on the decipher card with a small pointed scissors or an Exacto knife as precisely as possible. Tape this card to the back or the bottom of the clock. For a smaller clock, before taping, carefully fold the card up to fit so it can't be seen easily. The cut outs on the Decipher card will reveal a message when placed on top of the Message Card described in Step #9.

What goes behind?

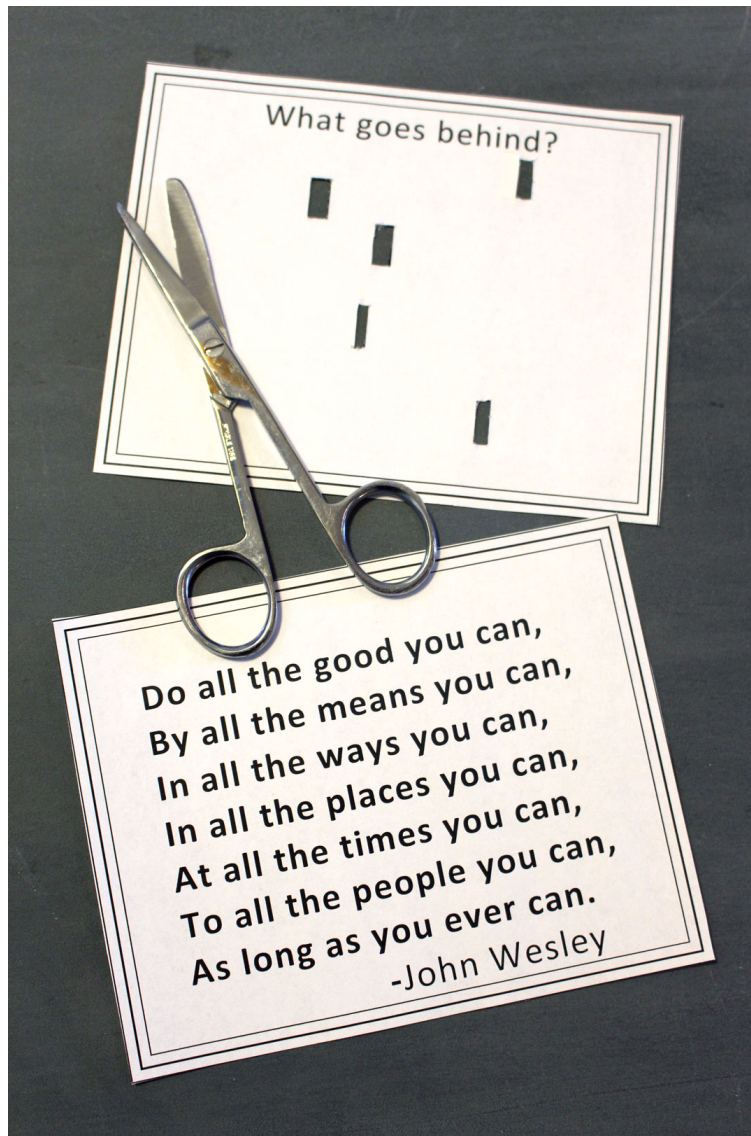


**Do all the good you can,  
By all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can,  
In all the places you can,  
At all the times you can,  
To all the people you can,  
As long as you ever can.  
-John Wesley**



\*9. **Message Card**- The Message Card was printed off along with the Step #8 Decipher Card. Cut it out on the outside black outline. Place the card in the room in a fairly obvious place, like in a **little stand** on the puzzle table. The Decipher Card with cut outs from Step #8 will be used to set on top of this Message Card and when the letters seen through the cutouts are read they will be a clue (the clue will say "chair").

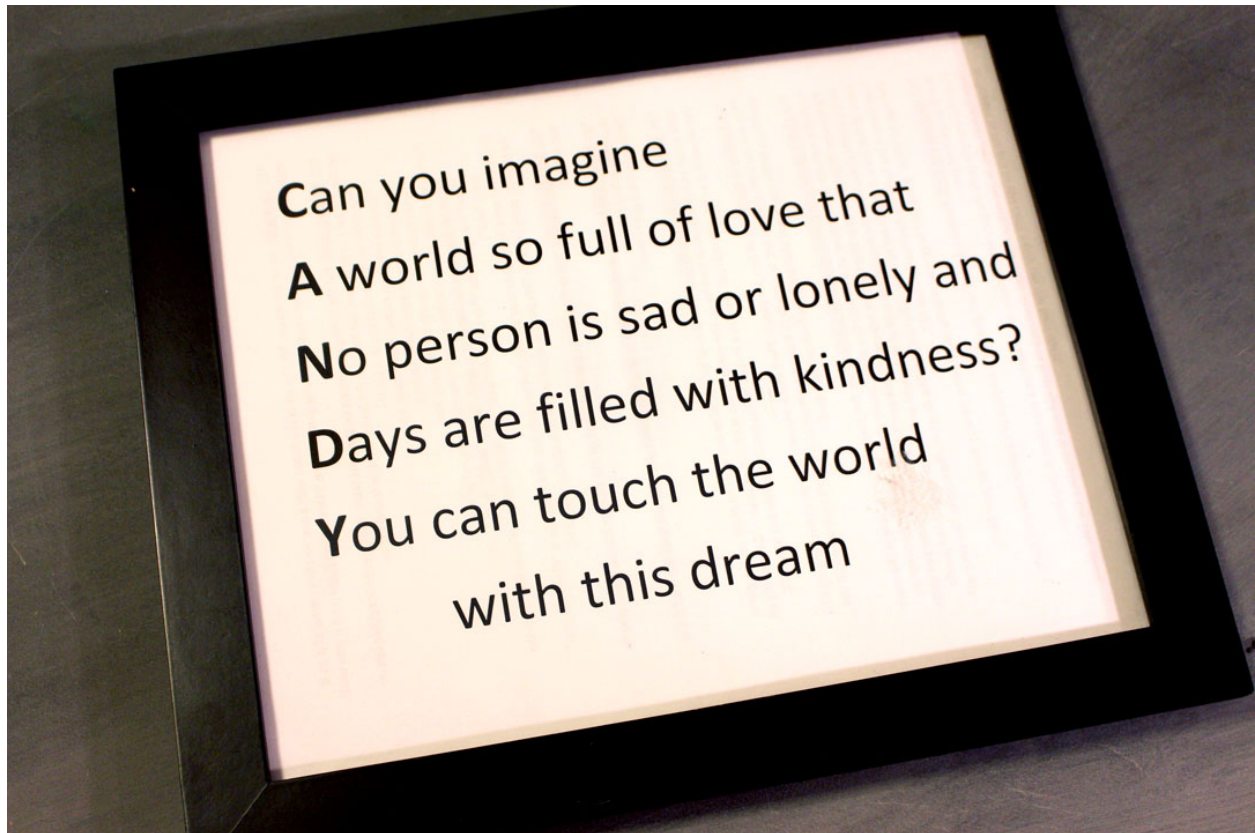
You will be instructed what to put under one of your chairs after Step #25.



\*10. **8"x10" Frame with framed quote**- Print off the quote found on the next page and trim it down to 8" by 10" in size. Place the quote in an **8x10" easel backed frame**. Place the frame on the puzzle table or close by, but it needs to be obvious so the kids will notice it when looking around. The capital letters at the beginning of each line in the framed quote are an acronym and spell the word "CANDY". This is a clue to lead the kids to the Souvenir Dish with candy in it that will sit on the Card Table as described in Step #11.

Quote content:

Can you imagine  
A world so full of love that  
No person is sad or lonely and  
Days are filled with kindness? 6 IMG\_8883  
You can touch the world  
with this dream



**Can you imagine**

**A world so full of love that**

**No person is sad or lonely and**

**Days are filled with kindness?**

**You can touch the world**

**with this dream**

\*11. **Card Table**- to set games on. Set the Card Table up in the room with a couple of chairs around it so it looks like someone has been recently playing games there. Place a **tablecloth** on it if you want.

\*12. **Scrabble game**. Put the open Scrabble game board on the card table. Place seven Scrabble letters on the 4 letter stands around the board in the letter combos found below.

- \*Scrabble letters on first stand- "o plant l"
- \*Scrabble letters on second stand- "darts ba"
- \*Scrabble letters on third stand- "under lj"
- \*Scrabble letters on fourth stand- "g the oxm"

Place other Scrabble letters on the board in the pattern found below.

- \*Scrabble letters on the board that spell- "well", "look", "kids"  
(*"look"* comes off the *"l"* in the word *"well"* and *"kids"* comes out from the *"k"* in the word *"look"*)

These words are a message to lead the kids to the next clue.

The message says: *"Well look kids" "darts under the plant"*.

This plant in a pot will be described in Step #20.



\*13. **Additional Games**- two or three more games stacked by the table or on the couch. These games are just for looks.

\*14. **Souvenir Dish from a US state**. This souvenir dish should be a bowl or cup you can place on the game table to put a couple mints or cookies in. The name of the state on this souvenir is a clue (for example: "Colorado").

This will lead them to a United States Puzzle described in Step #16.

Place a piece of masking tape on the bottom of the dish. On the tape write the name of the state and underline it just to make the clue more obvious.



\*15. **Candy such as mints**- one or two per player. Place the candy in the Souvenir Dish described in Step #14. Make sure you can still read the name of the State on the Souvenir Dish. They can eat the candy if they want, it isn't important itself as a clue. The 8x10 framed acronym clue saying "CANDY" described in Step #10 led them to this candy to get them to see the Souvenir Dish.

\*16. **United States Map Puzzle, mostly assembled**- place this puzzle out on a **table** in the room. Write the message found below on the underside of the puzzle piece of the same state *featured on the Souvenir Dish* described in Step #14 (for example: "Colorado"). If you would rather not write on the puzzle piece, write the message on a small sticky note and place this under the puzzle piece of that state. The small message should not be noticeable when looking down on the puzzle. Assemble most of the puzzle leaving out the piece with the note to one side of the assembled puzzle and a few more pieces on the other side. This is to make the clue more noticeable.

The note on the puzzle piece will lead them to the backpack described in Step #18.

Message to write on the puzzle piece:

*"If you love to go a wandering you'd better take this along!"*





\*17. **Nerf Dart Blaster and Darts**- Purchase a small Nerf Dart Blaster and a package of 10 additional Nerf Darts that fit in this Nerf Dart Blaster. The Nerf Dart Blaster must be small enough to fit in a backpack.

You will place the Nerf Dart Blaster (**only the Blaster, not the darts**) in the Backpack described in Step #18.

Hold onto the Nerf Darts for the moment. You will be told where to place the Nerf Darts in Step #20.



\*18. **Backpack with zipper tabs that have holes in them** so they can be padlocked and the Backpack can't be opened. The Nerf Dart Blaster described in Step #17 is to be inside the Backpack.

Remember, there should not be any Darts in the Blaster or in the Backpack.

Write a message on a 3x5 notecard. The message says:

*"The bedroom door is where you need to be- but YOU MAY NOT ENTER THE BEDROOM until the target hits the floor!!"*

Adapt this clue with the appropriate adjoining room name that you have available in your home (for example- bathroom or maintenance room)

Place this note in the Backpack.

Lock the Backpack zipper with the Padlock described in Step #19.





\*19. **Three-Digit Combination Padlock** to padlock the backpack shut. The combination to the padlock is three digits. These three digits are used to set the Clock described in Step #7. For instance, if the three digits to open the Padlock are 417, then set the hands of the clock on 4:17. Write your 3-digit Padlock combination here so you don't forget it: \_\_\_\_\_ Go and set the Clock hands to the proper time that corresponds to your Padlock's 3-digit code. Lock the Backpack with the padlock. Place the Backpack in a visible but non-conspicuous place in the escape room area.

\*20. **Plant in a pot**- obtain a fake Plant or Flowers and an empty Flower Pot. Place the Nerf Darts described in Step #17 in the Flower Pot. Write a **Note on a recipe card or piece of paper** that says:  
*"The bedroom door is where you need to be- but YOU MAY NOT ENTER THE BEDROOM until the target hits the floor!!"*  
Adapt this clue with the appropriate adjoining room name that you have available in your home (for example- bathroom or maintenance room)  
Place the Note in the Flower Pot along with the Darts.

Place the fake Plant or Flowers into the Flower Pot as best as you can so that you can't see the Darts or Note.

Set the Plant and the Pot on the Puzzle Table.



\*21. Set up the adjoining bedroom/room in the following manner- Place a flat topped bar stool, flat topped step stool or a flat TV tray in the room, about 10 feet into the room from the door, with no obstructions between it and the door. You will place the Message Circle described in Step #22 on the flat surface of the stool so it can be shot off with the Nerf Dart Blaster and Nerf Darts.



\*22. **Message Circle target/clue**: This is a “target” which is actually a Message Circle that can be turned to reveal a clue. The Message Circle clue will reveal the location of the Treasure Map Box key described in Step #25. The kids will need to shoot and knock down the Circle Message with the Nerf Dart Blaster and Darts (these items must be found separately by the kids by using other clues).

When the Message Circle hits the floor they are then released to go in the room and get the message.

The directions to create this message circle are printed below.

### **Message Circle directions:**

Print the pages off on heavier paper so it will stand up as a target when you are done.

Click here for the Message Circle Pattern.

Cut out each piece on the outer solid black line.

Poke a hole in the center of each circle using an ice pick or another sharp tool.

Layer the circles from largest to smallest with the smallest ending up on top.

Place a metal brad through all of the center holes in the circles, starting with the smallest circle and then finishing by going through the hole in the back semi-circle shaped piece.

Attach the two stand legs as shown in the picture below.

When finished, the Message Circle will stand up, leaning back just a little bit.

Scramble the Message Circle by turning the circles randomly to the left and right making it unreadable.

Once the target has been hit with a Nerf Dart and knocked to the floor the kids can go in and get the Message Circle and try to figure out the clue.

When the circles on the target are turned properly the message on the circles will align and reveal a clue.

When unscrambled, the Message Circle clue says:

*“Life is not a game- the key is to not get board.”*

This is a clue- they are to go to the Scrabble board and look underneath.

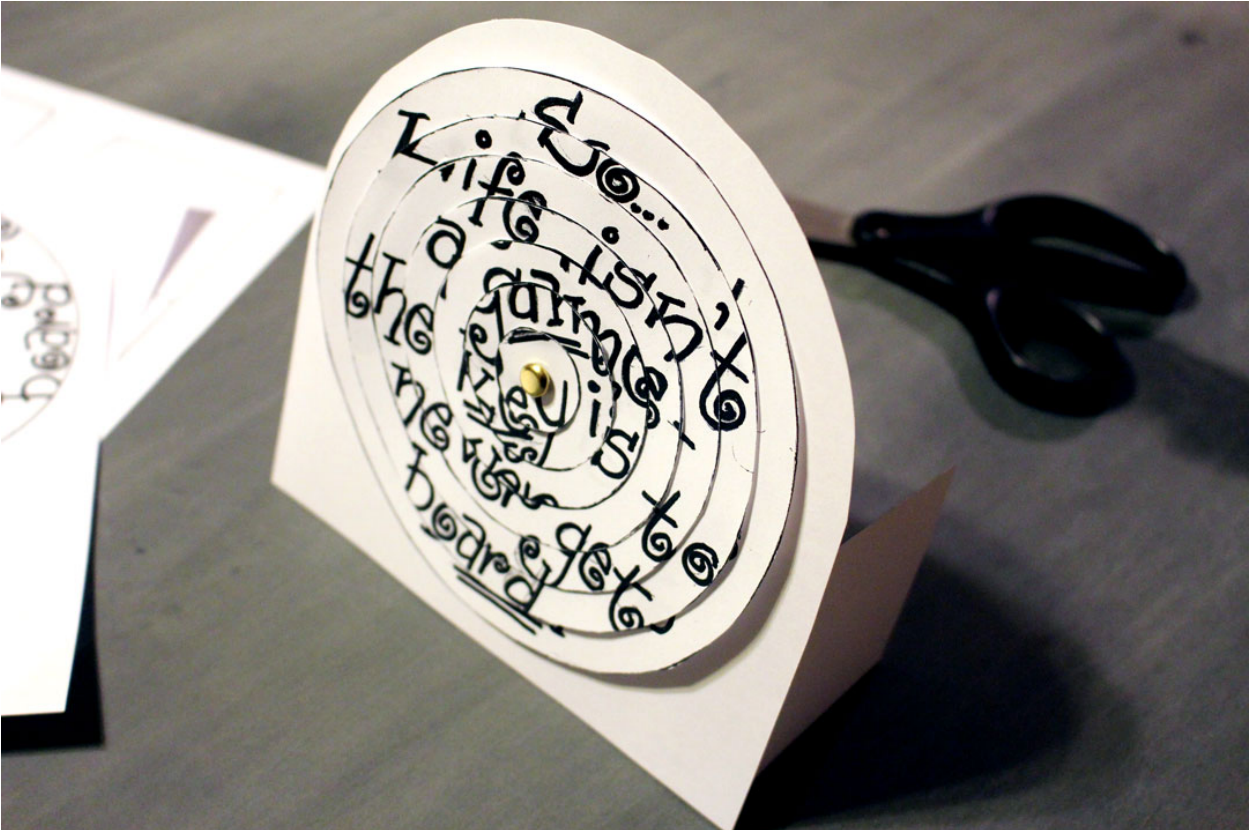
That is where a Key will be hidden as described in Step #28.

Place the Message Circle on the flat surface of the bar stool, step stool or chair you placed in the room in Step #21. The writing on the Message Circle should face the door and look like a target.

The kids will have to find the Nerf Dart Blaster and the Darts in order to do this task.

Tape **string or ribbon** across the doorway of the room at their eye level so that it will remind the kids not to enter the room in their excitement to find the clue.

Slightly close the door of the room and shut off the light.



\*23. **Treasure Chest**- The Treasure Chest should be large enough to fit a Treasure inside. Step #24 will help you decide what your Treasure will be. This Treasure Chest can be a cardboard box, a plastic tote, a sack of some sort, an actual wooden box, or whatever you have that will work (it doesn't have to look like a treasure chest). The treasure chest does *not* need to be locked. (My Treasure Chest was a plastic whipped topping container because I didn't want it to be obvious if they saw it early for some reason.)

\*24. **Treasure**- The Treasure is the prize of the Escape Room as promised in the Set-Up Note in Step #3. The Treasure can be anything you would like to give the grands as the prize; coupons to go out to eat at a favorite restaurant, tickets for an outing like the zoo or a baseball game, candy, antique coins, family heirlooms to pass on, Christmas gifts, birthday gifts, or anything that fits your occasion. Place the Treasure inside the Treasure Chest and hide it in a secret location in the Escape Room area or outside your home in the yard somewhere close by. The Treasure Chest needs to be well hidden so the kids don't accidentally find it before they figure out the clues. The weather was bad so I hid my Treasure Chest and Treasure in a sewing stand (My Treasure was some candy and a few small toys this round).





\*25. **Treasure Map Box with a handle**- (different than the *Treasure Chest* described in Step #23, this is for the *Treasure Map* that you will make in Step #26). The Treasure Map Box can be a lunch box, tackle box, tool box or school supply box. It only needs to be big enough to place the folded Treasure Map inside, but *needs to have a handle* so that the Chain described in Step #27 can fit around the box and through the handle to help lock the box.

Decide where the Treasure Map Box will be hidden in your escape room area.

Once decided, hand print a Note on a 3x5 card describing or giving a clue to where the Treasure Map Box is located.

For example: I hid my Treasure Map Box in a basket where I keep lab blankets so my Note said, "You will need to bundle up because you are getting very warm, very close to finding the next clue!"

Note: Be sure to print. Some children will not be able to read cursive.

Tape this Note under a Chair in your escape room area as described in Step #9.

Hold onto the Treasure Map Box for a moment. You will be placing a Treasure Map inside in Step #26 and chaining it shut in Step #28!



\*26. **Treasure map made from brown paper**- Locate a **brown paper bag** like you get from the grocery store or a piece of **brown paper used for wrapping packages**. Use a portion that does not have writing on it and tear out a section about 10"x12".

A picture of my map is shown as an example. Adapt the drawing to be a map that brings the kids from the Treasure Map Box location in the room in your home to where you have hidden the actual Treasure Chest and Treasure described in Steps #23 and #24.

Directions for drawing the map:

Draw your map in pencil first (not that you'll need to do any erasing, ha). Draw from a "bird's eye view", like you are looking straight down on the room from above.

First you draw the outline shape of your room. Draw this quite large, almost filling the map. My room was a rectangle shape.

Draw smaller rectangles, semi-circles and circles to represent the furniture in your room. Draw the furniture shapes in their places in the room as if looking down from above. Label them if it helps (couch, table, blue chair, etc).

Make an X on the location of the Treasure Map Box and label it. Make an X on the location of the Treasure Chest and label it. Make a dotted line from the Treasure Map Box location to the Treasure Chest location to indicate to the kids how to get from one to the other.

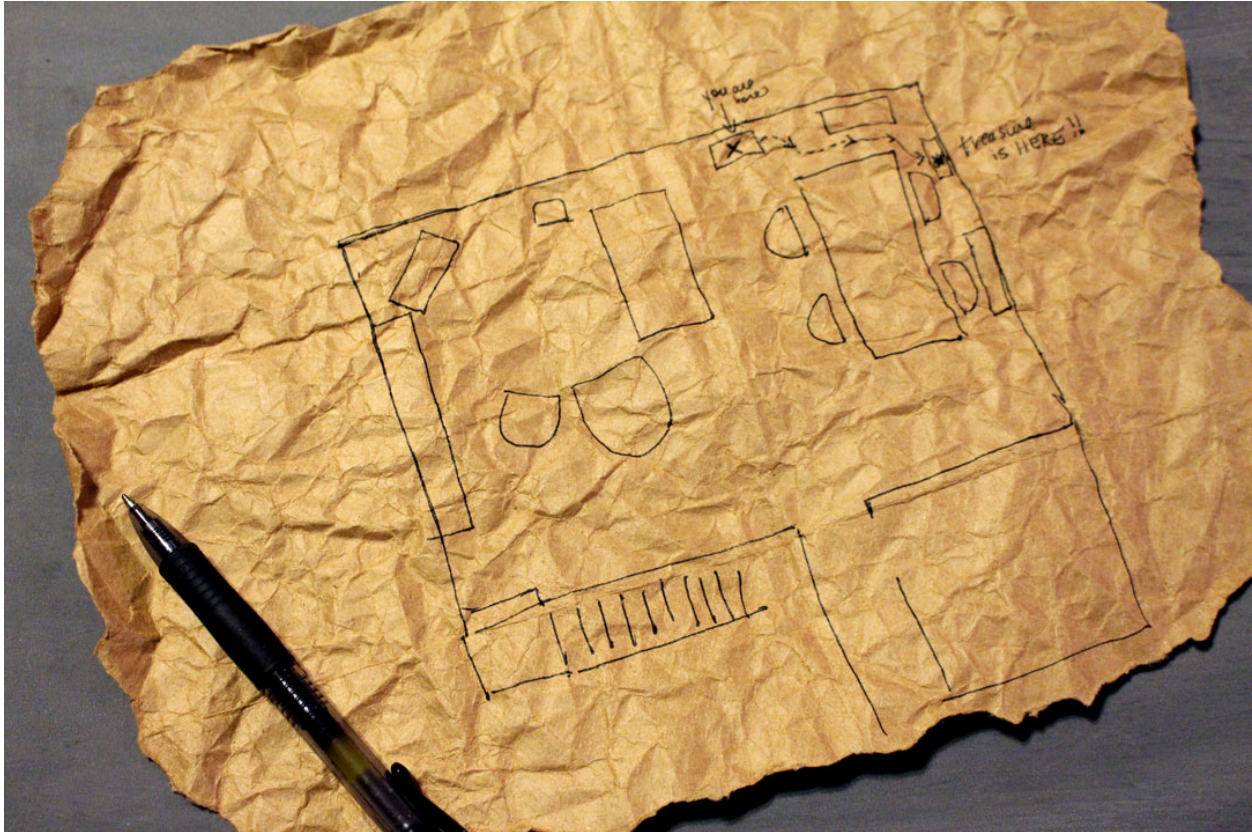
Note: If the weather is nice it would be cool if the treasure was placed outside in the yard, but it could be hidden anywhere, even in the same room if you want.

When finished, go over the pencil drawing with a **black fine tipped marker** so it is easier to see.



If drawing the map is really difficult for you, ask a friend to draw it for you.

When the drawing is complete, crumple the brown paper treasure map in your hands over and over until the paper gets really soft, it will kind of feel like leather. Place the map in the treasure map box described in Step #25.



\*27. **A Chain that will fit around the treasure map box** and through the handle so it can be locked. The chain must have loops large enough to be locked with the padlock described in Step #28. You could use a dog chain or chain cut to length at the hardware store. I used a dog collar chain. Place the chain around the treasure map box.

\*28. **Padlock along with its' Key like you may use on a suitcase or locker.** Padlock the Treasure Map Box Chain described in Step #27 with this padlock so that you can't open the Box. The key for this lock is to be hidden under the Scrabble game board described in Step #12. Go and hide the key under the Scrabble game board now. Now go ahead and hide the Treasure Map Box in the place you decided in Step #25.



You are done!! Whew!!

Now all you need are some Grands to come and visit!

Don't forget to take some pictures of your children's escape room activity.

Post a few for us to see! I'm really excited.

29. **Clues-** The following clues are to be given by you to the children if you can see they really get stumped or if they ask for help. You will be in the room as they solve the case to escape. Don't give clues too easily or quickly (it will be tempting to do so). See if they can work together to figure things out first.

**Clues:**

\*LETTER IN BOOK- *"Try to get things to line up."* (to help them notice the lines that underline particular words in the message sending them to the clock)

\*CLOCK- You'll find that this clock holds understanding for you to peek through to get another clue. (There is a Decipher Card code decoder taped to the clock.)

(The time on the clock is the three digit code for the lock that locks up the backpack.)

\*DECIPHER CARD WITH CUT OUTS and MESSAGE CARD- *"If this clue told jokes you would say it's a card!"* (You may need to give a hint about where the message card is located in the room.)

\*QUOTE IN A FRAME- *"You should be able to picture where your clue is hidden."* (If they need more of a clue continue with the following) *"It's as easy as taking candy from a baby!"*

\*SCRABBLE GAME- *"Play one round of this game and the location of your clue will be easily spelled out."* (This is to get them to notice the words on the Scrabble piece stands.)

\*SOUVENIR DISH- *"Doesn't that dish state things clearly?"* (To get them to notice the name of the state and head to the US Map)

\*UNITED STATES MAP- *"To say this map is important is an under state ment!"* (To get them to look under the puzzle piece to find the clue.)

\*NERF DART SHOOTER- *"Finding the darts for this Nerf Dart Shooter are as easy as A, B, C!"* (referring to the Scrabble game)

\*BACKPACK- *"Finding a way to get that lock off will just take time."* (to notice the hands of clock to get the 3-digit code. Give additional hints if necessary, this one may be hard.)

\*PLANT IN A POT- *"Finding a clue is a dirty deal."* (To get them to look in the pot where the dirt should be)

\*SECOND ROOM- May need to remind the kids that they may not enter until the clue is knocked off by the Nerf Dart Shooter.

\*MESSAGE CIRCLE- *"It's hard to get these clues all straightened out!"* (This is to get them to line up the circles to get their message.)

\*TREASURE MAP BOX and PADLOCK- *"Do you have the time to find the 3-digit code for this lock?"* (To send them to the clock and see what time the hands are set on in order to have the 3-digit code) For more help say: *"This clock will hand you a clue."*

\*TREASURE MAP- *Take care to use your own GPS, because Siri can't help you with this one!* (To help them turn the map until they can see where they are at on the map and go to the treasure location. Some kids can't read a map very easily so you may need to give another hint.)

Enjoy your WTN sign-up bonus, free plans for a Children’s Escape Room.

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Here are a couple pictures of the final set up:

