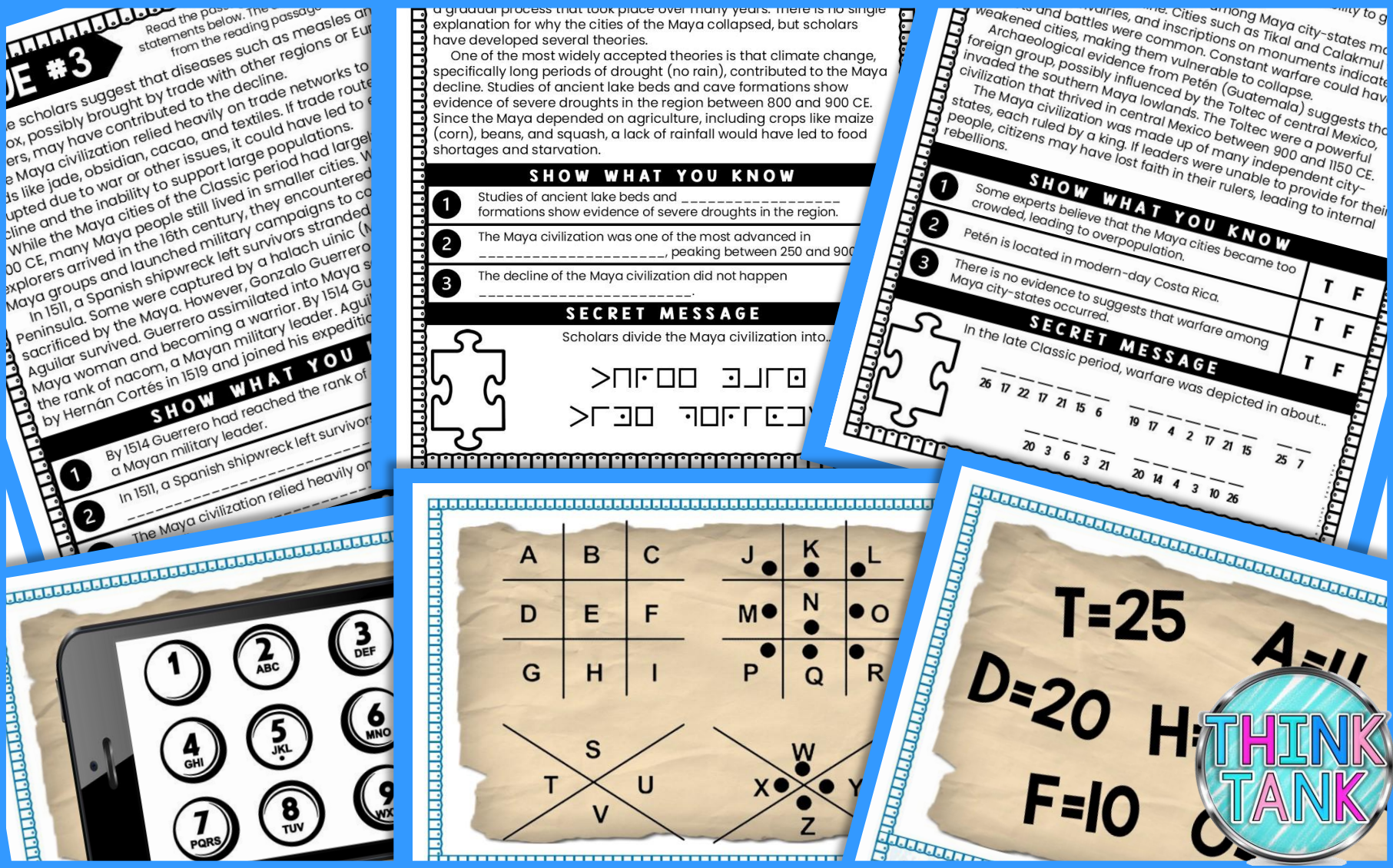
DECLINE OF THE MAYA

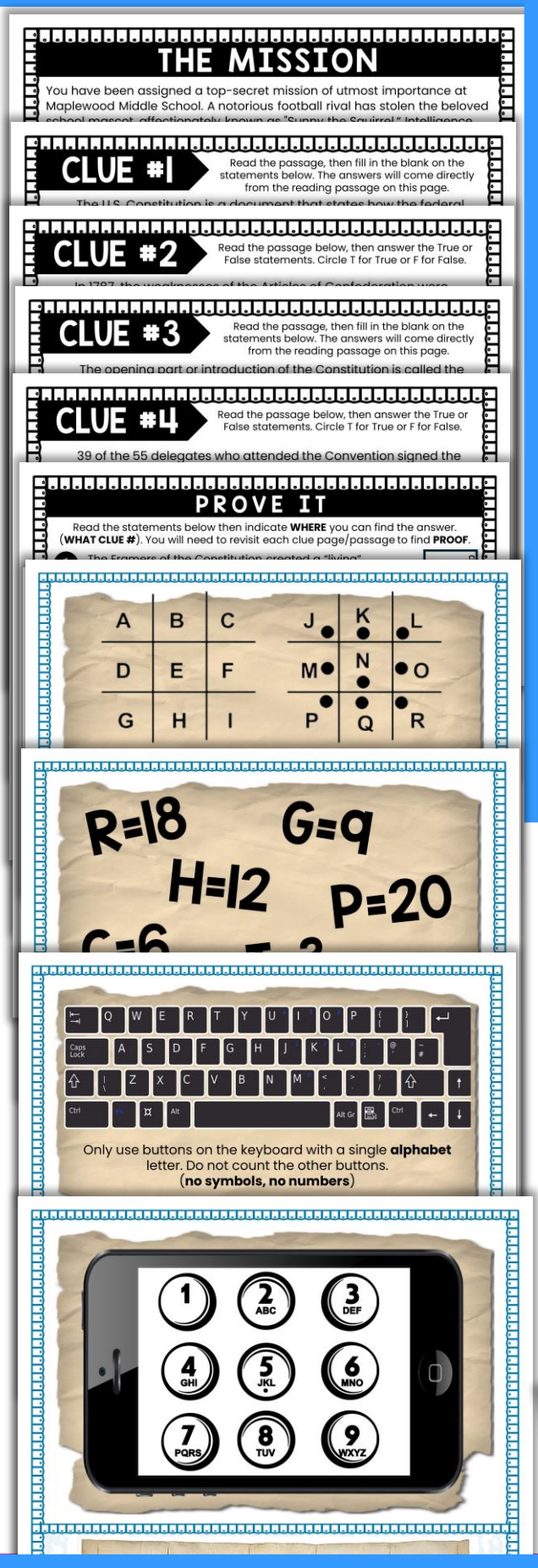
ESCAPE ROOM



WHAT'S INCLUDED?

- 4 SHORT READING PASSAGES
- 4 PUZZLE DECODERS (UNLABELED)
- 4 PUZZLE DECODERS (LABELED)
- 18 COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS
- TEACHER SET UP
- STUDENT DIRECTIONS
- HINT CARDS
- FAQS
- ANSWER KEY
- PROP SIGNS







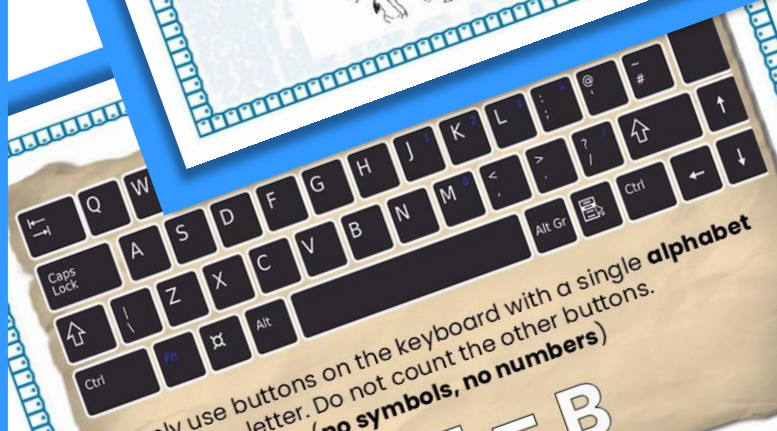
4 CLUE CARDS


CLUE #1
Read the passage, then fill in the blanks in the statements below. The answers will come from the reading passage on this page.
The Maya civilization was one of the most advanced in Mesoamerica, reaching its peak between 250 and 900 CE. However, around 900 CE, the great cities of the Maya began to decline, and many were abandoned. Historians and archaeologists have debated for years about what caused the fall of this once-great civilization. Later, in the 16th century, the Maya encountered the remaining Maya, leading to eventual
The decline of the Maya civilization did not happen overnight. There is a gradual process that
explanation for
have developed
One of the
specifically
decline. Studies
evidence of
Since the Maya
(corn), beans
shortages
KNOW
1 Studies of formations show
2 The Maya civilization was
3 The decline of the Maya civilization did not happen
SECRET MESSAGE
Scholars divide the Maya civilization into...
CLUE #2
Read the passage below, then circle T for True or F for False statements. Circle T for True
Some experts believe that the Maya cities became too crowded, leading to overpopulation. As the population grew, the demand for food, water, and other natural resources increased. This could have resulted in deforestation, soil exhaustion, and the inability to grow enough crops to sustain large populations.
Evidence suggests that warfare among Maya city-states may have played a role in their decline. Cities such as Tikal and Calakmul were known for their rivalries, and inscriptions
conflicts and battles were
weakened cities, making them
Archaeological evidence
foreign group, possibly
invaded the southern
civilization that thrived
The Maya civilization
states, each ruled by
people, citizens may
rebellions.
T F
T F
T F
1 Some experts believe that the Maya cities became too crowded.
2 Petén is located in the southern region of Mexico.
3 There is no evidence to suggest that warfare among Maya city-states occurred.
SECRET MESSAGE
In the late Classic period, warfare was depicted in about...
CLUE #3
SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW
1 By 1514 Guerrero had reached the rank of _____ a Mayan military leader.
2 In 1511, a Spanish shipwreck left survivors stranded on the _____ Peninsula.
3 The Maya civilization relied heavily on trade networks to exchange goods like _____, obsidian, cacao, and textiles.
SECRET MESSAGE
Guerrero was shipwrecked with...
2-4 1-8 2-4 1-5 1-3 1-3 3-6
SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW
1 Before reaching the Aztec capital of Tenochtitlán, Cortés & his men first landed on the Yucatán Peninsula.
2 Hernán Cortés was a French conquistador who arrived in the New World in 1534.
3 Cortés is best known for leading the conquest of the Aztec Empire.
SECRET MESSAGE
The last independent Maya city, Nojpetén, fell to the...
444 66 7777 444 99 8 33 3
66 444 66 33 8 999
7777 33 888 33 66

4 DECODERS







Only use buttons on the keyboard with a single **alphabet** letter. Do not count the other buttons.
(**no symbols, no numbers**)

3-5 = B



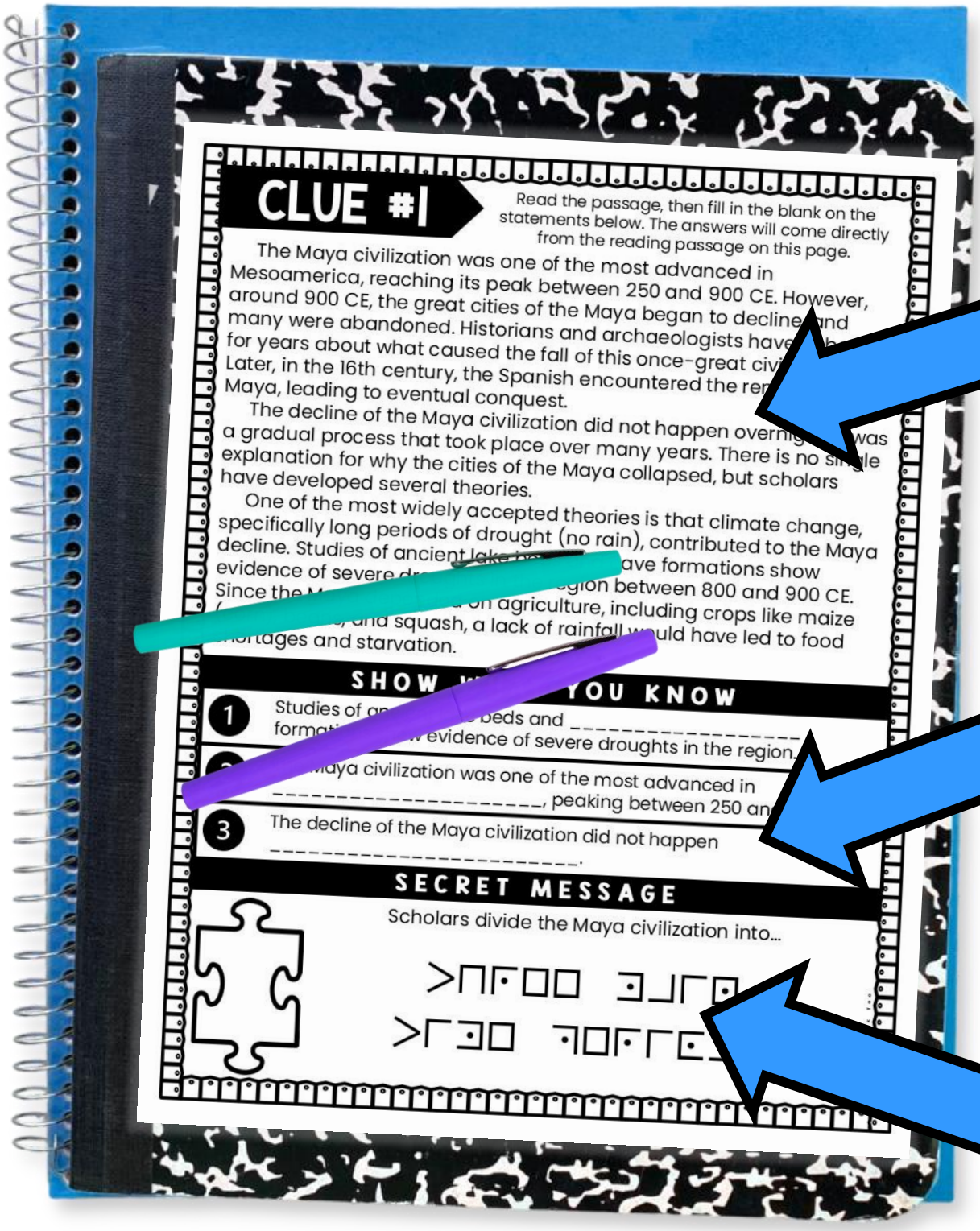
N=21 Y=6 P=19
R=4 F=7







READ & THINK



READ THE PASSAGE

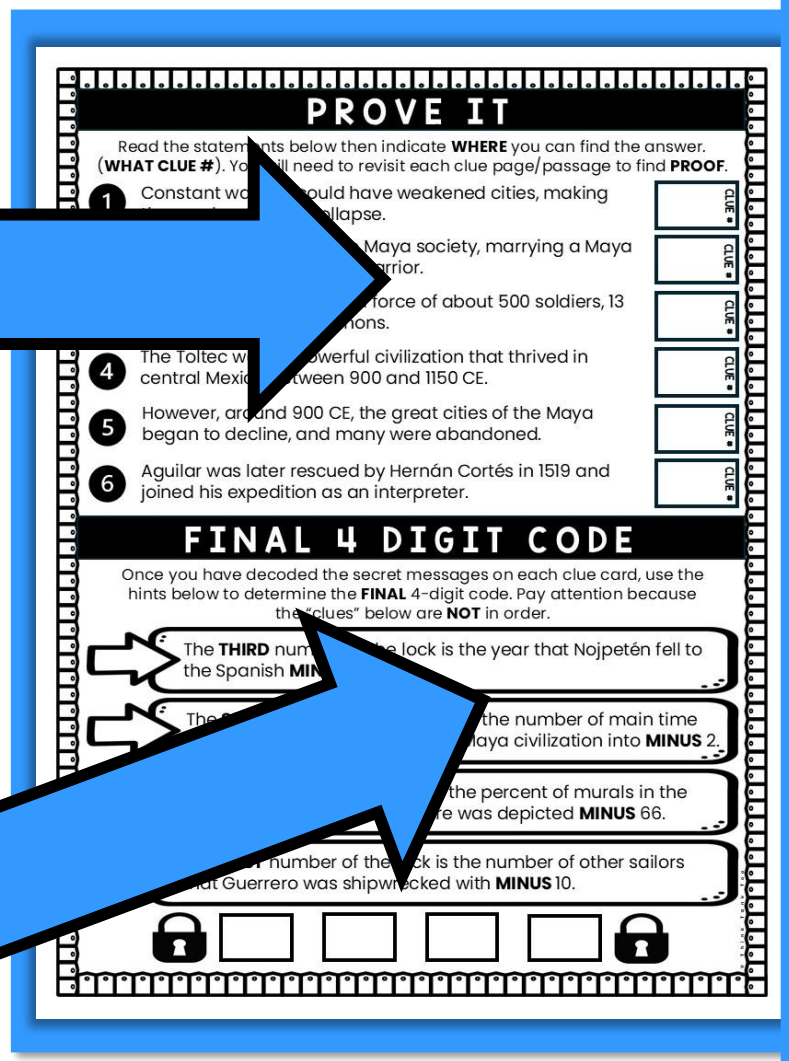
SHOW WHAT YOU KNOW

DECODE THE MESSAGE

FINAL CODE

CITING TEXT EVIDENCE

Students will read the final code statements then PROVE WHERE they found the answer (CLUE #). This will ensure that students read and revisit the reading passages multiple times seeking text evidence.



CRITICAL THINKING

Students will use critical thinking skills to decode the secret messages. They will then use the information revealed in the message to determine the final 4-digit code.



HOW IT WORKS







ENGAGING READING COMPREHENSION PRACTICE!

1. There are 4 clue cards and 4 puzzle decoders. Each clue card includes a short reading passage, questions to check for understanding, and a secret message to decode.

2. Students will work in pairs (or individually) and race to complete all 4 clue cards. A friendly competition always increases engagement. As students progress through the escape room, they will earn "clues" to determine the final 4-digit code. The final code is also a puzzle!



PRINT & GO



ABOUT THIS ACTIVITY

The reading passages are sequential but broken down throughout 4 pages to allow students to work on comprehension skills. Each clue card includes a short passage, comprehension questions and a secret message to decode. Although the passages build on one another, inferences, deductive reasoning and citing evidence will lead to understanding of the full text.

	OVERVIEW
READING PASSAGE	Students will use the reading passage from EACH clue card seeking answers to the "show what you know" portion. They will also need to revisit each of the 4 clue card passages to "prove" where they found the answer for the final code (text evidence)
CLUE 1	Students will read the passage, answer 3 fill in the blank questions, and reveal a secret message using a puzzle decoder.
CLUE 2	Students will read the passage, answer 3 True False questions, and reveal a secret message using a puzzle decoder.
CLUE 3	Students will read the passage, answer 3 fill in the blank questions, and reveal a secret message using a puzzle decoder.
CLUE 4	Students will read the passage, answer 3 True or False questions, and reveal a secret message using a puzzle decoder.
FINAL CODE	As students progress through the escape room, they will decode "clues" to determine the final 4-digit code. The final code is also a puzzle! In order to "escape" students must present correct answers for EVERY question as well as the decoded secret messages and final 4-digit code.

© Think Tank Too

BENEFITS

- ✅ PRINT & GO
- ✅ CLOSE READING
- ✅ COMPREHENSION SKILLS
- ✅ SECRET CODES
- ✅ CITING EVIDENCE
- ✅ CRITICAL THINKING
- ✅ MOVEMENT
- ✅ ACTIVE LEARNING
- ✅ CROSS-CURRICULAR
- ✅ HIGHLY ENGAGING
- ✅ NO LOCKS NEEDED
- ✅ NO ENVELOPES TO STUFF
- ✅ NO ODD SHAPES TO CUT



Everything a teacher dreams of wrapped up into one FUN and engaging activity!

USE FOR



ANTICIPATORY SETS

UNIT REVIEW

EARLY FINISHERS

STATIONS

REWARD ACTIVITY

SUB PLANS

COLLABORATION

ENRICHMENT

GALLERY WALK