

Balloon Railway Switch

HOST ONLY - preparation and story

Includes answers. Keep these pages with an adult.

Six railway switch records disagree with the control desk checks. Recover the route, crew, station, stock and signal evidence. Every check rules out one incorrect switch. Collect five named badge digits and use the final sheet. Every clue is on the table; ask the host for one hint at a time.

1. Print one player pack and two record sheets per team. Keep the host answers and all three hint levels with the adult.
2. Keep every clue as a full sheet at one table. Put the final sheet face down until all five results are recorded. Nothing needs cutting, folding or hiding.
3. Give each child a pencil. Choose a reader, recorder and checker, and swap jobs after each clue. Use one team for 2-4 children or two teams for 5-6.

Players: 4; teams: 1. Print one player and prop set per team. Invitations and certificates: 4 each.

Paper and pencils are enough. Keep whole sheets at one table; nothing needs cutting, folding or hiding.

Balloon Railway Switch

HOST ONLY - solution guide

1. Track: 9

The route ends at row 3, column 3. That cell gives 9.

2. Crew: 5

Juno has Flag; Otis has Map; Zed has Bell. Zed's item gives 5.

3. Station: 8

D2, A1, B2, C3 reads HOME. The conversion table gives 8.

4. Stock: 2

Known stock: $12 + 5 - 1 = 16$. Closing stock 18 minus 16 gives the missing return 2. Cancelled +7 never arrived.

5. Signal: 5

The decoded word is HOME; its row gives 5.

6. Final: 01917

Only Switch B matches all five columns. Copy its printed code 01917.

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HOST ONLY - timeline and paper check

3 minutes: Read the story, show the badge record and choose roles.

4 minutes: Solve Track. Offer one hint level at a time if wanted.

6 minutes: Solve Crew. Offer one hint level at a time if wanted.

5 minutes: Solve Station. Offer one hint level at a time if wanted.

5 minutes: Solve Stock. Offer one hint level at a time if wanted.

4 minutes: Solve Signal. Offer one hint level at a time if wanted.

5 minutes: Use the five results on the final sheet.

2 minutes: Read the ending and thank each teammate.

Paper completion: check each badge against the solution guide, then check the final code. No device is required.

The matching switch record routes the imaginary train to Home. Thank your team for checking the evidence together. Confirmed: Switch B, code 01917.

Duration and ages are estimates. Adjust pace and offer help for your group.