Rain-Path Witnesses

HOST ONLY - preparation and story

Includes answers. Keep these pages and all hint pages with the adult host.

Welcome to the rainy garden path. Rain smeared a path sign, and a cancelled walk must be separated from the walk that happened. Your team has the original records on the table. First recover five pieces of information, then use the final plan to trace the waterproof message pouch. Keep every result beside its badge so another teammate can check your reasoning.

1. Print the six player sheets and two record sheets for each team. Keep answers and hints with the host.

2. Lay out Walk reports, Travel map (one way), the remaining clue sheets and the final plan. All task records are printed inside the sheets; no extra prop is needed.

3. After each clue, pass roles one seat clockwise. With two players, combine Reader with Recorder and Checker with Builder. With five or six, add a second checker and a source finder; everyone explains one decision.

4 players; 1 team. Give each team 6 player sheets and 2 record sheets. Share one host guide and one set of three hint levels.

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

Optional: 4 invitations or certificates, only if selected.

Rain-Path Witnesses

HOST ONLY - solution guide

1. Record: EAST

Check source status first, then join the matching tag. The useful information comes from separate records, not their printed row order. Result: EAST.

2. Path: S-B-C-F

Discard closed roads and paths missing C. Add the costs of every remaining edge; the lowest eligible total determines the whole route. Result: S-B-C-F.

3. Habitat: OAK

Compare all printed features with every positive and negative requirement. Reject each near match using the particular requirement it fails. Result: OAK.

4. Window: MID

Add job time and travel time to each printed start. Compare the sum with both that window's end and the deadline, then reject early starts. Result: MID.

5. Signal: HOLD-RIGHT

A consistent one-to-one mapping satisfies every training example. Use the complete mapping to read the two-signal message in order. Result: HOLD-RIGHT.

6. Final: BAY-L

Translate each recovered result through its named evidence key. Each location must match all five recovered features. Both values occur equally often in each column, so the location plan alone cannot identify the answer. Checked result: BAY-L.

Rain-Path Witnesses

HOST ONLY - timeline, story and ending

3 minutes: Read the opening. Show the evidence record and choose starting roles.

5 minutes: Solve Record. Offer one hint at a time and rotate roles after checking.

5 minutes: Solve Path. Offer one hint at a time and rotate roles after checking.

5 minutes: Solve Habitat. Offer one hint at a time and rotate roles after checking.

5 minutes: Solve Window. Offer one hint at a time and rotate roles after checking.

5 minutes: Solve Signal. Offer one hint at a time and rotate roles after checking.

7 minutes: Build the evidenced location using all five results.

3 minutes: Read the ending. Ask each teammate to explain one rejected alternative.

After Path: A checked entry can explain one feature, while another source can still rule out a near match. Pass the record sheet to a new checker before opening the next clue.

After Window: Four results are recorded. Each teammate points to a source supporting one result. Complete the fifth check before building the evidenced location.

Check every result using the solution guide. Offer the next hint only when requested; save the answer reveal until the group is ready.

The team finds the waterproof message pouch at BAY-L. Thank each teammate for a different piece of reasoning.

Explain one tempting wrong choice and the evidence that ruled it out. Show how each of the five results affected the evidenced location. If a clue is missing, say what remains uncertain before reopening that sheet.

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

Rain-Path Witnesses

Player clue 1: Record | Team 1

Rain smeared a path sign, and a cancelled walk must be separated from the walk that happened. We will use the records on the table to trace the waterproof message pouch. Share the reading, explain each choice and keep the five results for the final plan.

Use the walk reports and boot-tag book to follow the completed record. Match printed keys, then report the requested field. A planned or cancelled entry cannot prove a move.

Walk reports

item: Hut | tag: WAVE | status: draft

item: Oak | tag: PINE | status: checked

item: Gate | tag: STAR | status: cancelled

Boot-tag book

tag: STAR | bay: NORTH

tag: PINE | bay: EAST

tag: WAVE | bay: WEST

tag: STAR | bay: SOUTH

Cross-check

Match A.tag to B.tag.

A.status is not cancelled.

A.status is not draft.

Report B.bay.

Record result: _____

Rain-Path Witnesses

Player clue 2: Path | Team 1

Trace a legal supply journey from S to F. The map's arrows are one-way roads. Visit every required stop, stay inside the travel budget and use the cheapest complete journey. Report all stop letters.

Travel map (one way)

S=Pouch desk; A=Open lawn; B=Covered walk; C=Oak hut; F=Message gate

S > A: 1 units

A > F: 1 units

S > B: 3 units

B > C: 1 units

C > F: 2 units

B > F: 2 units CLOSED

A > B: 4 units

Journey rules

Start S; finish F; limit 8 units.

Visit B. Use the least total cost.

Write every stop in order, with hyphens.

Path result: _____

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Player clue 3: Habitat | Team 1

The pouch carrier left a print under a shelter. Match its three described features with the four path reports. Use the print evidence together; a similar sole on its own is not enough.

Boot-print reports

RIDGE: sole=bar; mud=dark; heel=wide

HUT: sole=dot; mud=dark; heel=wide

GATE: sole=bar; mud=pale; heel=narrow

OAK: sole=bar; mud=pale; heel=wide

BIRCH: sole=dot; mud=pale; heel=wide

Required features

sole must be bar.

mud must not be dark.

heel must be wide.

Report the one matching card ID.

Habitat result: _____

Rain-Path Witnesses

Player clue 4: Window | Team 1

The team needs time for both the job and the journey. It cannot start before the earliest time, leave a window unfinished, or arrive after the deadline. Which departure window works? Times are minutes after opening.

Departure windows (minutes after opening)

EARLY: start 10; window ends 25

MID: start 20; window ends 35

LATE: start 30; window ends 50

Work and travel

Earliest start 15; job 7 min.

Travel 5 min; arrival deadline 35.

Job + travel must both fit inside one window.

Report the only possible window ID.

Window result: _____

Rain-Path Witnesses

Player clue 5: Signal | Team 1

Each signal means one different word. Use the training examples to recover the legend. Words marked "any order" may be swapped; compare shared signals across cards. Decode the received message from left to right. The desk uses this message when handling the waterproof message pouch.

Unlabelled legend

Signals: DOT, BAR, ARC. Words: LEFT, HOLD, RIGHT.

Each signal has one word; each word is used once.

Training messages

DOT+BAR means HOLD+LEFT (any order)

BAR+ARC means HOLD+RIGHT (any order)

DOT+ARC means LEFT+RIGHT (any order)

Received message

BAR > ARC

Report decoded words in order, with hyphens.

Signal result: _____

Rain-Path Witnesses

Player clue 6: Final | Team 1

Use each recorded result in the evidence key to learn one feature. Compare all five features with the location plan. Report the one location ID supported by every source, then explain why a nearby alternative fails.

Use your results from: Record, Path, Habitat, Window, Signal.

Location plan
BAY-H: leaf / south / stone / lower / square
BAY-I: leaf / south / wood / upper / round
BAY-J: ring / south / stone / upper / square
BAY-K: leaf / north / wood / upper / square
BAY-L: leaf / north / wood / upper / round
BAY-A: ring / south / wood / lower / square
BAY-B: leaf / north / stone / upper / round
BAY-C: ring / south / stone / lower / round
BAY-D: ring / north / wood / upper / round
BAY-E: ring / south / stone / lower / square
BAY-F: leaf / north / wood / lower / round
BAY-G: ring / north / stone / lower / square
Column order and evidence key
Stamp (Record): NORTH=ring; EAST=leaf
Door (Path): S-B-C-F=north; S-A-F=south
Surface (Habitat): RIDGE=stone; OAK=wood
Level (Window): MID=upper; EARLY=lower
Seal (Signal): LEFT-HOLD=square; HOLD-RIGHT=round

Final result: _____

Ask your host to check your final result and read the ending.

Rain-Path Witnesses

Hint level 1 - HOST ONLY

1. Record

Start with the status field in Walk reports.

2. Path

Find S, F, the required-stop list and any CLOSED edge.

3. Habitat

Read the boot-print reports and the requirements.

4. Window

Look at earliest start, each window end and the arrival deadline.

5. Signal

Look at the training cards that share one signal.

6. Final

Keep the five named results beside the final plan and find the key for each badge.

Rain-Path Witnesses

Hint level 2 - HOST ONLY

1. Record

The tag links an item to a bay; rows in separate records need not line up.

2. Path

A cheap shortcut is not a complete journey if it skips a required stop.

3. Habitat

Compare the same named feature across cards; check negative requirements as carefully as positive ones.

4. Window

The journey uses time as well as the job; add both to the start of each window.

5. Signal

In an unordered pair, a word cannot be assigned by its left/right position. Use the overlap with another pair.

6. Final

Each badge controls a different fact, road leg, order note, pulse or habitat layer. Use the matching key exactly once.

Rain-Path Witnesses

Hint level 3 - HOST ONLY

1. Record

Keep only entries meeting every status test. Follow each printed join to the report field; do not guess from row position.

2. Path

List the legal complete paths, add their edge costs and compare only paths that meet every condition.

3. Habitat

Keep a card only if it passes every requirement. Point to the failing feature before crossing out each alternative.

4. Window

Check all three conditions for each window. A slot can be long enough yet start too early or arrive too late.

5. Signal

Give each signal a different word, check every training example and only then decode the received message in its printed order.

6. Final

Check the completed product against all five recovered facts. If two answers remain, locate the fact that distinguishes them rather than guessing.

Rain-Path Witnesses

Team 1 result record

Write the complete result from each clue. Results can be words, routes, orders, settings or numbers.

Record: _____

Path: _____

Habitat: _____

Window: _____

Signal: _____

Keep this record beside the final clue. Copy results exactly, including any leading zero.

Reader / Recorder / Evidence checker / Route or model builder

After each clue, pass roles one seat clockwise. With two players, combine Reader with Recorder and Checker with Builder. With five or six, add a second checker and a source finder; everyone explains one decision.

Rain-Path Witnesses

Team 1 final result and celebration

Our final challenge: Final

We combined our earlier clues to decide:

_____

_____

We know it works because:

_____

_____

Host: compare the result with your solution guide. Read the ending when it matches, then let the team explain one discovery.

No physical lock or prize is required. Draw a celebration star here if you like.

Rain-Path Witnesses

You're invited to a mystery!

Join Birthday Explorer for Rain-Path Witnesses.

Rain smeared a path sign, and a cancelled walk must be separated from the walk that happened. Work together to trace the waterproof message pouch.

Date: _____

Time: _____

Place: _____

Bring your curiosity. Paper and pencils are provided. Share ideas and solve six clues together.

Designed for ages 8-10. Estimated 35-50 minutes.

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Rain-Path Witnesses

Mystery Explorer

Presented to Birthday Explorer

Team member: _____

For completing Rain-Path Witnesses with curiosity, teamwork and kindness.

The team finds the waterproof message pouch at BAY-L. Thank each teammate for a different piece of reasoning.

Date: _____

Host signature: _____

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