

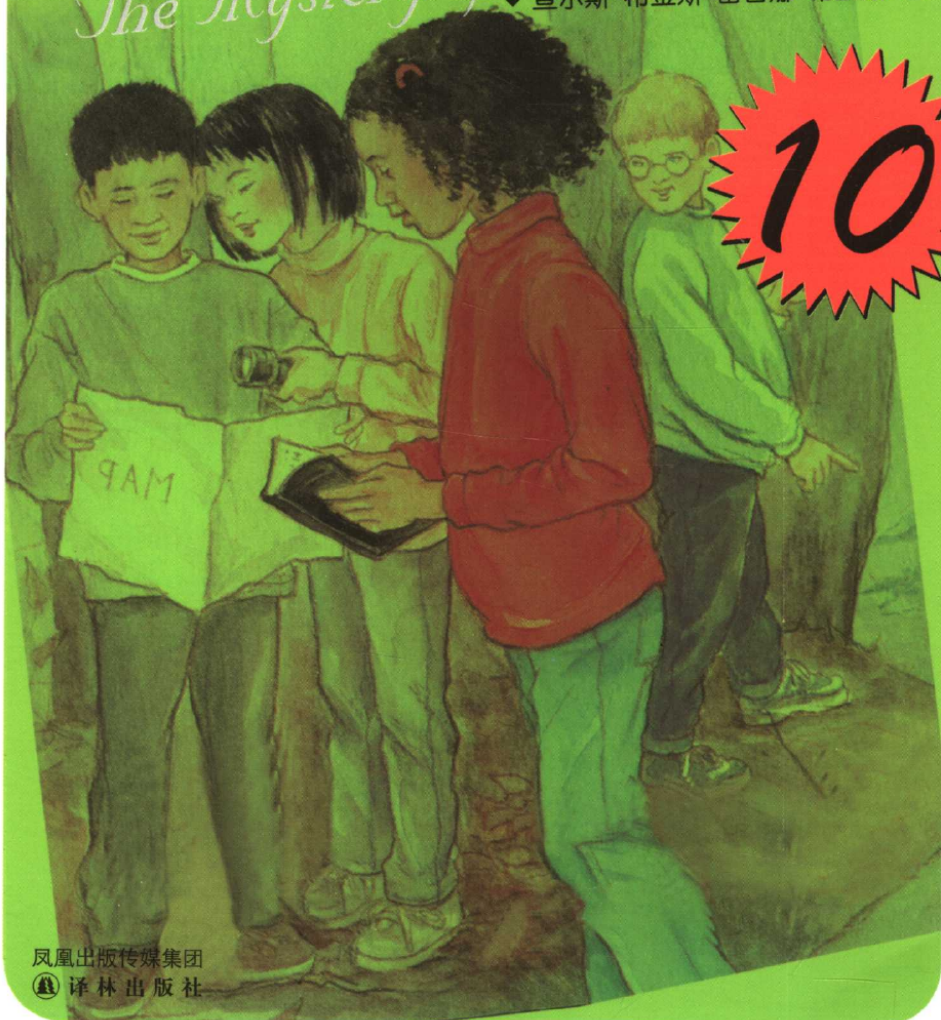
The Mystery of the Sp

培生  
英语阅读

# 特工日记里的秘密

*The Mystery of the Spy's Diary*

◆ 查尔斯·希金斯 雷吉娜·希金斯 著



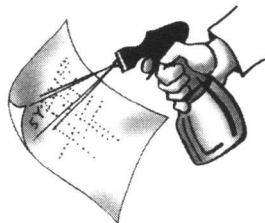
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# Invisible Messages

Send a secret message to a friend using invisible ink. Have a grown-up help you make the ink.

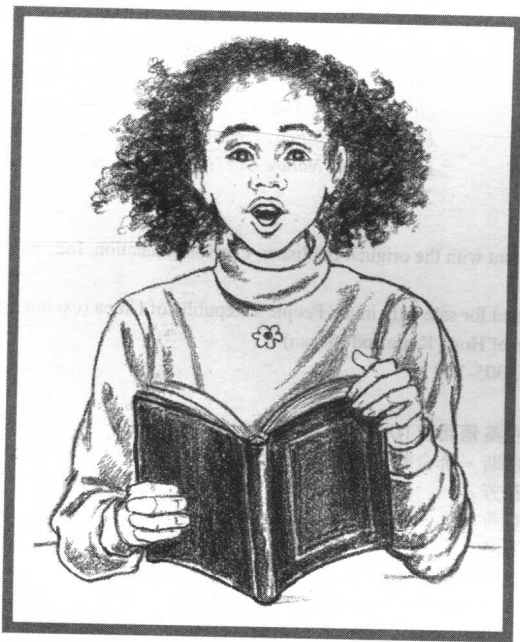
You will need:

- vinegar
- red cabbage
- water
- cotton swabs
- paper
- spray bottle
- kitchen pot
- stove



1. Have the grown-up help you chop the red cabbage into small pieces. Put the pieces in a pot of water. Cook them over low heat until the water is colored. Cool the mixture and pour the liquid into a spray bottle.
2. Mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup vinegar with  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup water to make the invisible ink.
3. Dip a cotton swab into the ink and write a message on the paper. Let the message dry completely.
4. Give the message to a friend.
5. Have the friend spray the paper with the cabbage water to make the message appear.

# The Mystery of the Spy's Diary



By Charles Higgins and Regina Higgins  
Illustrated by Thea Kliros

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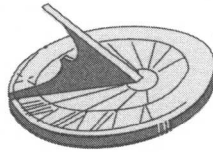
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# CONTENTS



## **Chapter 1**

A Mystery in the Mail .....page 5

## **Chapter 2**

Clues and Riddles .....page 12

## **Chapter 3**

What Now? .....page 20

## **Chapter 4**

A Look Into the Past .....page 27

## **Chapter 5**

The Post Road Bridge .....page 33

## **Chapter 6**

A Friend Shows the Way .....page 40

## **Chapter 7**

The Cave .....page 47

## **Chapter 8**

Jacob Harper's Treasure .....page 56

Exercises .....page 64

**For Frances and Charles,  
master spies**

# CHAPTER 1

## A Mystery in the Mail

The October day was sunny and cool. Karen Harper and her friends, Luke Williams, Wendy Asato, and Steve Alvarez, were walking home from school. A light wind pulled leaves from the trees and swirled them around.

Suddenly one leaf landed softly on Karen's head. She looked up just as **a gust of** wind blew the leaf up and away.

"What a great day!" Karen said. "If only I knew what I was doing for my history project."



“You don’t have an idea yet?” Luke asked.

“No, the idea I had was already taken by the time I talked to Mrs. Delgado,” Karen said.

“There isn’t much time left,” Wendy said. “You always hand in everything early, too. What are you going to do?”

“I don’t know,” Karen sighed. “We’re supposed to do our reports on local history, but I can’t think of anything unusual enough. I don’t want to do the same old things.”

“Maybe your dad could help you. He must know a lot about River City history. He’s the head librarian at the River City Library,” said Steve. “If he doesn’t know, who does?”

As they talked, they turned a corner onto the street where Karen lived. They saw a mail truck parked outside of Karen’s house. “I wonder what we’re getting,” Karen said.

“Let’s go see,” Wendy said. “I’ll **race** you!”

The friends all ran to the house. As they ran up the front steps, Karen’s dogs, Tip and Top, greeted them with happy barks and wagging tails. Inside the house, Karen’s mother was just opening a small cardboard box.

“Who’s it from, Mom?” Karen asked.



“It’s from Aunt Emma,” Karen’s mother replied, reading the note. “She was **cleaning out** her attic and found something she thought you and your dad might be interested in. She says that it’s very old.”

As the friends gathered around the table, Karen looked in the box. Inside she found a book with a black cover. She took it out of the box.

“What is it?” Wendy asked.



Karen opened the book. When she turned the pages, she saw spidery writing in faded blue ink.

"I think it's a diary," Karen said. "Look, there's a date on this page. Wow, it says 1777!"

Everyone was quiet. Then Luke said, "That's when the Americans were fighting the British for their freedom in the **Revolutionary War!**"

"Who wrote it?" Wendy asked.

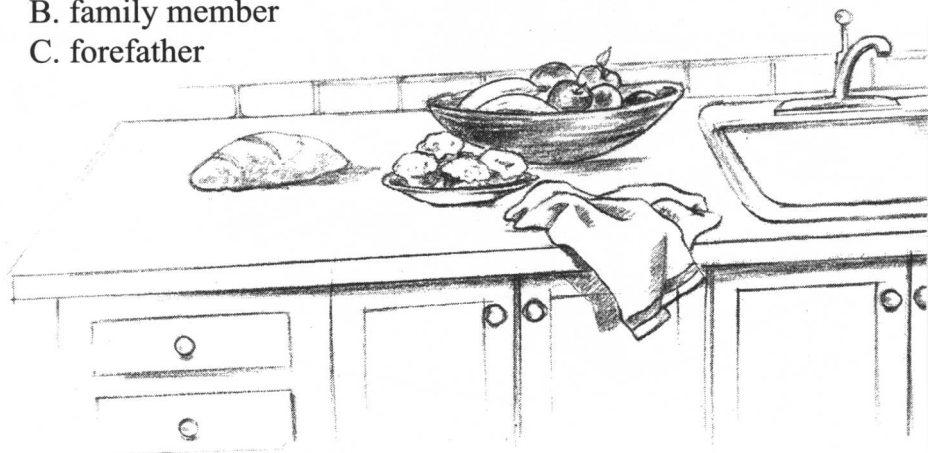
Karen turned to the first page of the book. "It says, *Property of Jacob Harper.*"

Karen's mother nodded. "Jacob Harper is an **ancestor** of ours. Aunt Emma told me about him. He lived during the time of the American Revolution," she said.

"That was a long time ago," Steve said.

ancestor

- A. relative
- B. family member
- C. forefather



Karen turned to another page. She studied the old-fashioned writing awhile, then tried to read it aloud. “*Today I rode to River City again. The town is growing fast.*” Karen looked up. “Does he mean our River City?” she asked her mother, looking surprised.

“Maybe so,” her mother replied. “The Harper family lived near here during that time.”

Karen read on, “*I made sure my secret was safe in its hiding place.*”

“What secret? What hiding place?” Luke, Steve, and Wendy said at the same time.





Karen turned the yellowed pages, stopping to read a few paragraphs. "He keeps calling it his secret. *My secret is safe*, he says."

Karen continued to **flip** the pages, then stopped again. "Listen to this," she said. "*I hope someone in my own family will find my secret one day, a long time from now. That person will need to follow the clues to solve the puzzle I have made to hide my secret.*"

"You like puzzles," Steve said to Karen. "You love history, too."

“What do you think his secret was?” Wendy asked curiously.

“I’ll bet it had something to do with the Revolutionary War,” Luke said.

Karen read again. “*The one who finds my secret will find a true **treasure**.*”

“A treasure!” Steve nearly shouted.

“What did Jacob Harper do?” Luke asked.

“Was he a farmer?”

Karen turned a page and read to herself. Then she looked up slowly, her eyes wide. “He was a **spy!**” she said.



Could Karen and her friends find any clues to find her ancestor’s secret?

# CHAPTER 2

## Clues and Riddles

Karen turned the diary around to show the other kids. She pointed to the top of a page and read aloud, *"I am a man of secrets, a spy."*

"Your ancestor was a spy in the Revolutionary War!" Steve said excitedly.



“He left a secret treasure here in River City!” Wendy added.

“What about the clues?” asked Luke. “Are they in the diary, too?”

Luke, Steve, and Wendy crowded in by Karen as she looked through the old book.

“I didn’t know they had spies then,” Steve said as Karen carefully turned the pages.

“Spies have been around for a long time, even before the Revolutionary War,” Mrs. Harper explained. “Each side in a war wants to find out what the enemy is **planning**. Spies get the information and send back secret messages.”

“In those days, they didn’t have telephones or e-mail,” Steve said. “It must have been hard to send secret messages.”

Mrs. Harper smiled. “Before computers, spies sent messages on paper. A spy would write his message **in code** so that only another person who knew the code could read it,” she said.

“I know about codes,” Steve replied. “My grandfather leaves me notes in code, just for fun. He uses numbers instead of letters—1 is A, 2 is B, and so on.”

“Codes are fun,” agreed Mrs. Harper, “but in a war a coded message would be very serious. It might tell about plans for a battle. If he really was a spy during the Revolutionary War, Jacob Harper’s secrets were probably very important. They were also probably very dangerous.”

“Why?” asked Wendy.





“An army wouldn’t want the enemy finding out where, when, or how they planned to attack. They would be careful to **guard** their plans. If they found someone trying to steal their secrets, they would probably capture the person,” Mrs. Harper said. “They might even kill him!”

Karen suddenly called, “Here’s a clue!” She read, “*The key that unlocks the secret lies in the darkness below the darkness.*” She looked up at her friends. “What does that mean?”

“It sounds like a **riddle**,” said Steve, shaking his head.

“I don’t understand,” Wendy said, frowning. “What could that mean?”

“What else does he say?” Luke asked, reaching for the diary. He pointed to the next page.

“*Follow the river to the Post Road Bridge. Between the bridge and the schoolhouse, there is a **sundial**,*” he read.

“What is the Post Road Bridge?” Steve wanted to know.

“Some of the landmarks Jacob Harper tells about are probably gone by now,” Mrs. Harper told him. “The bridge and the schoolhouse may have been torn down.”

“The river is still there,” said Wendy.

