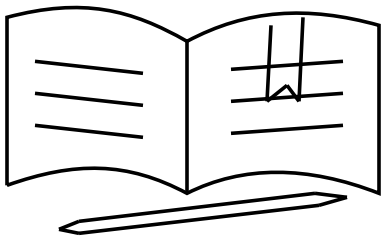
Cozy Codes

& Little Mysteries

100 Beginner-Friendly Cryptogram Puzzles



Ethan H. Arlen

Disperity

Welcome to Willow Lane

Mara has opened the bookshop. Ada has brought something in her old mailbag, and Theo is looking for a place to put a small tin. Pull up a chair; there is a note to decode.

These are little neighborhood mysteries: a moved flowerpot, a puzzling sign, a sound from an empty shop. The answers are in the notes, without specialist knowledge or a race against a clock.

You can stop after one puzzle, use every hint or skip to another visit. Each numbered puzzle has its own code and a scene to help you settle in. A few notes share a small case, and each case reaches an ending.

Use pencil, make a guess and change your mind when a letter asks you to. There is no score to beat.

Meet the neighbors



Mara

Mara runs the bookshop. She keeps a pencil in her ledger and would rather ask one more question than jump to a conclusion.

Ada

Ada is a retired mail carrier. She knows the lane, carries her old canvas bag and has a practical question for nearly every mystery.

Theo

Theo repairs bicycles at the shed. He is a capable neighbor with a work apron and a habit of helping before leaving an explanation.

You do not need to memorize their details. Each scene gives you enough context to begin.

How the code works

A cryptogram replaces each letter with another letter. Within one numbered puzzle, the same code letter always means the same answer letter. Different code letters have different answers.

In this book, a letter never stands for itself. Spaces, apostrophes and punctuation stay in place. Every new puzzle starts a new key.

Write an answer letter beneath every matching code letter, using the aligned spaces. Some starter letters are already filled in. The letter boxes below the puzzle give you a place to keep track.

Try short words and repeated letter patterns. Check a guess everywhere it appears. A name mentioned in the scene may help; that is part of the puzzle.

The question beneath the code is optional. Answer it from the decoded note, without looking up facts.

Try the cover code

The little note on the cover uses this code. It is a worked example, not one of the 100 numbered puzzles.

```
U I F  U J O  J T  P O  U I F  U B C M F .
T _ E  T _ _  _ _  _ _  T _ E  T _ _ _ E
```

The filled letters give T and E. The repeated word UIF can be THE, so I must mean H. Use H wherever I appears.

The word JT becomes IS when J means I and T means S. Check those guesses through the whole note.

Answer: THE TIN IS ON THE TABLE.

The same key must explain every word. Here, each answer letter was encoded as the next letter of the alphabet, with Z returning to A. The numbered puzzles use different shuffled keys.

Choose your amount of help

Stage 1 • Settle in • Puzzles 001–030. Four starter letters: E, T, A and O.

Stage 2 • Follow the clues • Puzzles 031–070. Three starter letters: E, T and A.

Stage 3 • Find your own way • Puzzles 071–100. Two starter letters: E and T.

The print and writing spaces stay the same as starter help decreases. These stages are a gentle design progression, not a measured test of your ability.

Each puzzle has three optional hints: a way to begin, one decoded word, then extra letter pairs. Stop at any step. A sheet of paper can hide later hints if you prefer.

Hints begin on page 119. Full decoded notes and answers begin on page 139. Each puzzle gives its exact pages.

The bookshop opens

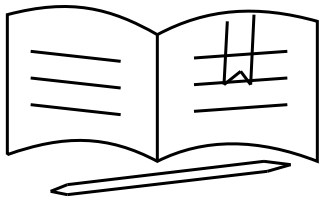
Mara opens the bookshop window while Ada sets down a tray. Theo is somewhere near the garden gate. Begin with a tin that has changed places, then notice what a chair and a green book can tell you.

Three little cases

001–003 | The missing biscuit tin

004–006 | A chair with a view

007–010 | The green book returns



Begin anywhere. Each note gives you a fresh code.

A dusting of flour

Mara opens the bookshop for the reading club. Ada arrives with an empty tray. The biscuit tin has vanished.

Starter letters: T = E R = T M = A Y = O

M E M G T A R R Z T V C I U W C R R C D Y D
A _ A _ E _ T T _ E _ _ _ _ _ _ T T _ _ O _

R Z T G Y B I Z T G A . R Z T F T C I M F C D Q
T _ E _ O _ _ _ E _ _ T _ E _ E _ _ A _ _ _ _

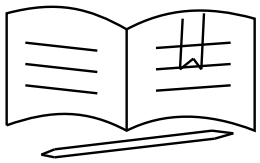
Y A A G Y W F V T I C E T R Z T V G W T V Y B G .
O _ _ _ O _ _ _ E _ _ _ E T _ E _ _ _ E _ O _ _

Which bowl should Mara check?

Letter notes (cipher above, your answer below)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z



Mara keeps her pencil in the shop ledger.

Optional hints: p. 119 | Solution: p. 139

The back door

The blue bowl is still on the counter. Mara reads a second note. Ada is more amused than worried.

Starter letters: V = E O = T R = A N = O

```
O W V   X D Q V   X N L D   G P   F D V R Z ,   X Q O   R
T _ E   _ _ _ E   _ O _ _   _ _   _ _ E A _     _ _ T   A

O E R G D   N Y   Y D N Q E   D V R J P   O N   O W V
T _ A _ _   O _   _ _ O _ _   _ E A _ _   T O   T _ E

X R F U   J N N E .   O W V   O G Z   J G J   Z N O
_ A _ _   _ O O _     T _ E   T _ _   _ _ _   _ O T

D V R T V   X C   O W V   Y E N Z O .
_ E A _ E   _ _   T _ E   _ _ O _ T
```

Which door does the trail lead to?

Letter notes (cipher above, your answer below)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

Optional hints: p. 119 | Solution: p. 139

A table in the shade

Theo appears from the garden with three cups. Before he can explain, Ada points to the last note.

Starter letters: Z = E P = T E = A A = O

```
P M Z A   O A C Z T   P M Z   P G K   P A   P M Z
T _ E O   _ O _ E _   T _ E   T _ _   T O   T _ E

X M E T Z T   U E H T Z K   P E L S Z   I A H   P M Z
_ _ A _ E _   _ A _ _ E _   T A _ _ E   _ O _   T _ E

H Z E T G K U   Q S B L .   M G X   K A P Z   V E X
_ E A _ _ _ _   _ _ _ _     _ _ _   _ O T E   _ A _

B K T Z H   P M Z   Z O F P N   Q B F .
_ _ _ E _   T _ E   E _ _ T _   _ _ _
```

Why did Theo move the tin?

Letter notes (cipher above, your answer below)

A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M

N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z

Optional hints: p. 119 | Solution: p. 140

A little help, one step at a time

Puzzle 001 | A dusting of flour

1. Find the repeated three-letter word. Test THE, then check the same letters elsewhere.
2. AGYWF decodes to FLOUR.
3. Extra letters: D = N, I = S, C = I.

Puzzle 002 | The back door

1. Try the short words before the longer ones. Each guessed letter must fit both sentences.
2. OERGD decodes to TRAIL.
3. Extra letters: Z = N, P = S, J = D.

Puzzle 003 | A table in the shade

1. Look at the names in the scene. The first four-letter word is one of those names.
2. HZETGKU decodes to READING.
3. Extra letters: X = S, S = L, B = U.

Puzzle 004 | A chair with a view

1. The 3-letter word EQV repeats. Test it in each place.
2. PVMHQ decodes to BENCH.
3. Extra letters: N = S, J = R, R = I.

Puzzle 005 | Room by the window

1. The 3-letter word RBJ repeats. Test it in each place.
2. CPJRNB decodes to SKETCH.
3. Extra letters: L = N, E = R, Q = I.

The notes, decoded

Puzzle 001 | p. 10

ADA LEFT THE BISCUIT TIN ON THE LOW SHELF. THERE IS A RING OF FLOUR BESIDE THE BLUE BOWL.

The blue bowl. The flour gives Mara a sensible place to begin.

Puzzle 002 | p. 11

THE BLUE BOWL IS CLEAN, BUT A TRAIL OF FLOUR LEADS TO THE BACK DOOR. THE TIN DID NOT LEAVE BY THE FRONT.

The back door. Nothing in this note says a biscuit was stolen.

The notes, decoded

Puzzle 003 | p. 12

THEO MOVED THE TIN TO THE SHADED GARDEN TABLE FOR THE READING CLUB. HIS NOTE WAS UNDER THE EMPTY CUP.

He set it on the shaded garden table for the reading club. The missing tin was a small misunderstanding.

Puzzle 004 | p. 13

A FOLDED CARD ON THE CHAIR SAYS PLEASE USE THE BENCH TODAY. ONE OF THE CHAIR LEGS IS LOOSE.

Its leg is loose; the card directs readers to the bench.

Until another visit

Thank you for spending time on Willow Lane.

All 100 numbered messages and their neighborhood scenes were created for this book. The cast and cases are fictional; the puzzles do not use borrowed quotations or song lyrics.

You can find more Disperity books and reading activities at disperity.com.

For another visit, start on page 8. The visit map will take you to the part of the lane you want to explore.

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