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About This Book

This book offers a collection of fun, easy-to-use detective cases for Grades 3 – 12+. That is a wide grade range, but anyone who can carefully read these cases and is willing to study the evidence can solve them. They are not solved through tricky logic or advanced math concepts.

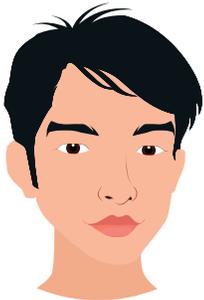
Some mysteries may be more challenging for younger students, but teachers and parents can always provide hints if absolutely needed. The cases develop critical thinking skills by requiring students to read carefully and analyze and synthesize information to guide their decision-making. The cases also develop observation skills, reading comprehension, deductive and inductive thinking skills. The ability to identify and evaluate evidence is the very heart of critical thinking.

For a more lesson-based approach to teach critical thinking, we recommend *The Basics of Critical Thinking* (Grades 4 – 9) and *Practical Critical Thinking* (Grades 9 – 12+).

Read the case below to find evidence to identify the innocent and guilty suspects. Remember, the story and suspects' statements are true.

The Boat Thief

¹On Friday afternoon, one of the four suspects below stole a dark blue and black speed boat on a trailer from the parking lot next to O'Neil Street at Godinez Lake. ²The owner had parked and left it there with a for-sale sign at 1 p.m. ³He returned to show someone the boat at 3 p.m. and discovered that it had been stolen. ⁴The police found the stolen boat and trailer parked on Gray Street, between Tate Street and Slyter Street. ⁵The boat was not connected to a vehicle, but there were four men standing around it. ⁶A witness said she was certain that one of the four men around the boat dropped it off. ⁷Police questioned the four men who gave the statements below. ⁸None of the men knew each other or the boat owner. ⁹After listening to the statements, police arrested one of the suspects, who confessed to stealing the boat without anyone's help.



Dave Taft

¹⁰I saw the boat on the trailer at 1:30 p.m. ¹¹I then drove the short distance to my red home on McDonald Street across from the Keaten Building. ¹²I didn't leave my house until I walked to Gray Street and talked to the police.



Tom Zomerschoe

¹³I saw the boat in the parking lot, but I hate boating. ¹⁴When I left the lake, I drove down O'Neil, Slyter, Gray, Tate, Abbey, and McDonald streets. ¹⁵After I got to my home in the Baker Building, I walked north back to Gray Street.



Matt Goucher

¹⁶I was at the lake this afternoon. ¹⁷The only thing I pulled with my car today was my new boat. ¹⁸I parked my boat in front of the August Building. ¹⁹After that, the only time I was north of Slyter Street was when I was walking.

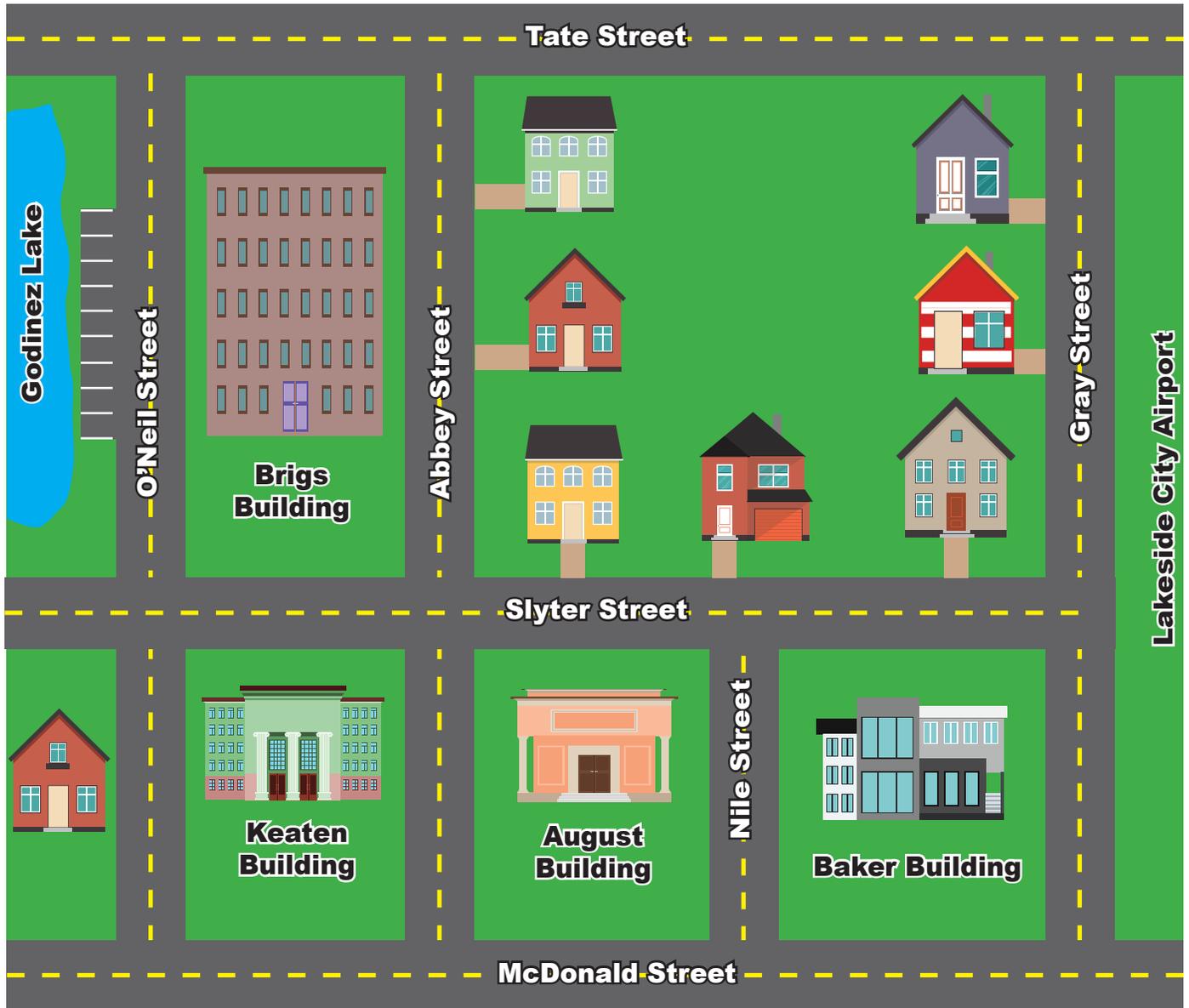


Ron Crowder

²⁰I only towed one boat today. ²¹It was light blue and black, and I parked it on Gray Street in front of another boat. ²²Next, I started comparing the two boats, and that is when the police showed up.

Circle the Boat Thief.

The Boat Thief



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