The Golden Cup Caper

Grade 4 math · Subtraction, Multiplication, Rounding, Skip counting, Missing addends · Reading level grades 3-4

Detective: _____ **Date:** _____

The World Cup 2026 trophy is missing! Just before the big final match, someone snuck onto the pitch and snatched the gold cup right off the pedestal. The Chief Groundskeeper found a messy trail of cleats and grass clippings leading away from the stadium lockers. Our soccer suspects are practicing on the fields. We need to solve the clues to find the Sneaky Striker before kickoff!

1. Solve each math problem. The answer is a number, and the letter beside it is what that number stands for.
2. In the clue boxes, write that letter in every box showing the same number, then read the secret clue.
3. Use each clue to cross suspects off the list. The one suspect left at the end is the culprit!

My answer: the the Sneaky Striker is _____

Possible suspects

Cross off a row as each clue rules it out. The one left at the end is the culprit.

NAME	SIGNATURE MOVE	SPECIAL GEAR	PLAYER DIVISION	HAIR STYLE	GAME OBSTACLE
Aitana Bonmati	header goals	gold whistles	man	spikey hair	loud whistle
Sam Kerr	speed dribbling	magnetic shinguards	man	headband	yellow card
Alessia Russo	header goals	magnetic shinguards	man	spikey hair	loud whistle
Trinity Rodman	slide tackling	neon cleats	man	spikey hair	loud whistle
Alex Morgan	slide tackling	magnetic shinguards	man	dyed blonde	loud whistle
Vinicius Jr	bicycle kicks	stealth jerseys	woman	spikey hair	soggy pitch
Kylian Mbappe	header goals	magnetic shinguards	woman	headband	yellow card
Alphonso Davies	header goals	neon cleats	man	dyed blonde	loud whistle
Erling Haaland	bicycle kicks	thermal gloves	man	headband	loud whistle
Robert Lewandowski	bicycle kicks	magnetic shinguards	woman	headband	loud whistle
Lauren James	slide tackling	gold whistles	man	spikey hair	soggy pitch
Wendie Renard	diving saves	stealth jerseys	man	headband	soggy pitch
Harry Kane	header goals	gold whistles	man	spikey hair	soggy pitch
Sophia Smith	bicycle kicks	neon cleats	man	dyed blonde	loud whistle
Christian Pulisic	header goals	thermal gloves	woman	spikey hair	loud whistle
Lionel Messi	slide tackling	neon cleats	woman	headband	yellow card
Son Heungmin	header goals	neon cleats	woman	headband	loud whistle
Mohamed Salah	bicycle kicks	gold whistles	man	dyed blonde	loud whistle
Jude Bellingham	diving saves	thermal gloves	man	spikey hair	loud whistle
Luka Modric	speed dribbling	stealth jerseys	woman	spikey hair	yellow card
Yassine Bounou	header goals	thermal gloves	man	spikey hair	loud whistle

CLUE 1 Subtraction

> The coach had a full bag of practice soccer balls, but some went missing during the heist. We subtracted the remaining balls from the starting total to find the missing number and unlock a locker room code.

Solve each problem, then write its letter in every clue box that shows the same number.

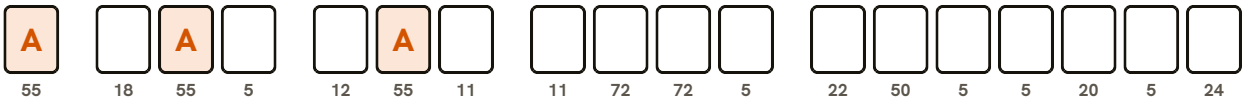
9888 - 2288 =		T	6094 - 2911 =		G	11952 - 3676 =		V
8817 - 2676 =		E	8500 - 3686 =		A	2098 - 862 =		C
6704 - 4035 =		H	9476 - 1774 =		N	7343 - 165 =		M
9114 - 4045 =		I	10696 - 3603 =		S	10461 - 4841 =		F
6426 - 4365 =		O	8889 - 835 =		D	3346 - 1727 =		U
8661 - 2123 =		R						

Scratch space:

CLUE 2 Multiplication facts (1-12)

> The groundskeeper noticed the thief ran past the stadium seats. The seats are arranged in equal rows, so we multiplied the rows by the seats per row to calculate the row number where a clue was dropped.

Solve each problem, then write its letter in every clue box that shows the same number.



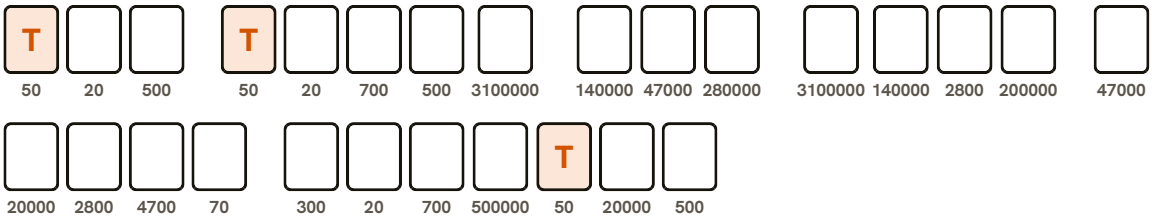
5 × 11 =		A	3 × 8 =		G	12 × 6 =		E
9 × 2 =		M	5 × 10 =		U	2 × 6 =		W
1 × 5 =		N	2 × 11 =		R	5 × 4 =		I
11 × 1 =		S						

Scratch space:

CLUE 3 Rounding

> The high-tech stadium speed camera clocked the running thief, but the radar screen only displays rounded numbers. We rounded the speed to the nearest ten to unlock the camera memory.

Solve each problem, then write its letter in every clue box that shows the same number.



Round 52 to the nearest ten		T	Round 70 to the nearest ten		D
Round 144,421 to the nearest ten thousand		R	Round 46,577 to the nearest thousand		A
Round 548,572 to the nearest hundred thousand		S	Round 4,744 to the nearest hundred		U
Round 19 to the nearest ten		H	Round 214,059 to the nearest hundred thousand		M
Round 2,841 to the nearest hundred		O	Round 3,057,126 to the nearest hundred thousand		F

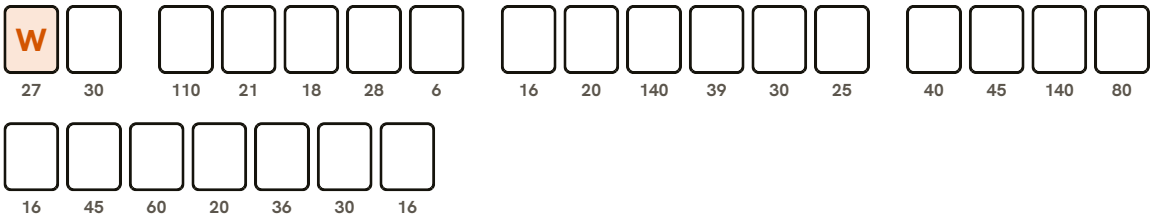
Round 277 to the nearest hundred		W			
Round 499 to the nearest hundred		E			
Round 24,592 to the nearest ten thousand		L			
Round 730 to the nearest hundred		I			
Round 281,940 to the nearest ten thousand		N			

Scratch space:

CLUE 4 Skip counting

> A witness saw the thief jumping over the field cones. They skipped every third cone on the field, so we counted by threes to find the final cone they knocked over.

Solve each problem, then write its letter in every clue box that shows the same number.



Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, ___, 30, 33 [ ] **W**

Skip-count by 2s. Fill the blank: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, ___, 18, 20 [ ] **S**

Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, ___, 45, 50 [ ] **H**

Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, ___, 21, 24 [ ] **U**

Skip-count by 10s. Fill the blank: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, ___, 90, 100 [ ] **R**

Skip-count by 10s. Fill the blank: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, ___, 120, 130 [ ] **F**

Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, 20, ___, 30, 35 [ ] **Y**

Skip-count by 10s. Fill the blank: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, ___, 70, 80 [ ] **M**

Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, ___, 50, 55 [ ] **A**

Skip-count by 2s. Fill the blank: 2, 4, ___, 8, 10 [ ] **D**

Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, ___, 35, 40 [ ] **E**

Skip-count by 10s. Fill the blank: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 110, 120, 130, ___, 150, 160 [ ] **I**

Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, ___, 24, 27 [ ] **O**

Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, ___, 42, 45 [ ] **K**

Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, ___, 39, 42 [ ] **L**

Skip-count by 2s. Fill the blank: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, ___, 30, 32 [ ] **N**

Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, ___, 25, 30 [ ] **P**

Scratch space:

CLUE 5 Missing addends - the last clue

> The security gate requires a target team score to open. We know the current score and just need the missing number that adds up to the winning total to get the last clue.

First solve each problem. Then find each answer in the numbered list below and cross that sentence out. One sentence will be left - that is exactly what the villain did!

Step 1 - solve these:

18 + ___ = 21 ☐	24 + ___ = 29 ☐	4 + ___ = 5 ☐
5 + ___ = 15 ☐	2 + ___ = 4 ☐	18 + ___ = 22 ☐
31 + ___ = 37 ☐	8 + ___ = 15 ☐	23 + ___ = 31 ☐
21 + ___ = 30 ☐	22 + ___ = 34 ☐	

Step 2 - cross out the sentence with each answer:

1. The villain leaps for an epic diving save, then catches the ball with thermal gloves.
2. The villain executes a wild bicycle kick, then snaps on their magnetic shinguards.
3. The villain slides in with a hard slide tackle, then flashes their bright neon cleats.
4. The villain slides in with a hard slide tackle, then fades away in a stealth jersey.
5. The villain performs a rapid header goal, then catches the ball with thermal gloves.
6. The villain leaps for an epic diving save, then fades away in a stealth jersey.
7. The villain executes a wild bicycle kick, then blows hard on their gold whistle.
8. The villain performs a rapid header goal, then snaps on their magnetic shinguards.
9. The villain executes a wild bicycle kick, then catches the ball with thermal gloves.
10. The villain does a lightning speed dribble, then fades away in a stealth jersey.
11. The villain performs a rapid header goal, then blows hard on their gold whistle.
12. The villain executes a wild bicycle kick, then fades away in a stealth jersey.

TEACHER / PARENT

Answer Key

The Golden Cup Caper

Culprit: Aitana Bonmati

header goals · gold whistles · man · spikey hair · loud whistle

Trail: Start 21 → Clue 1 16 → Clue 2 11 → Clue 3 8 → Clue 4 4 → Clue 5 1

Clue 1 (Subtraction): "THE THIEF DOES NOT HAVE MAGNETIC SHINGUARDS"

9888 - 2288 = 7600 (T) · 6094 - 2911 = 3183 (G) · 11952 - 3676 = 8276 (V) · 8817 - 2676 = 6141 (E) · 8500 - 3686 = 4814 (A) · 2098 - 862 = 1236 (C) · 6704 - 4035 = 2669 (H) · 9476 - 1774 = 7702 (N) · 7343 - 165 = 7178 (M) · 9114 - 4045 = 5069 (I) · 10696 - 3603 = 7093 (S) · 10461 - 4841 = 5620 (F) · 6426 - 4365 = 2061 (O) · 8889 - 835 = 8054 (D) · 3346 - 1727 = 1619 (U) · 8661 - 2123 = 6538 (R)

Clue 2 (Multiplication facts (1-12)): "A MAN WAS SEEN RUNNING"

5 × 11 = 55 (A) · 3 × 8 = 24 (G) · 12 × 6 = 72 (E) · 9 × 2 = 18 (M) · 5 × 10 = 50 (U) · 2 × 6 = 12 (W) · 1 × 5 = 5 (N) · 2 × 11 = 22 (R) · 5 × 4 = 20 (I) · 11 × 1 = 11 (S)

Clue 3 (Rounding): "THE THIEF RAN FROM A LOUD WHISTLE"

Round 52 to the nearest ten = 50 (T) · Round 70 to the nearest ten = 70 (D) · Round 277 to the nearest hundred = 300 (W) · Round 144,421 to the nearest ten thousand = 140000 (R) · Round 46,577 to the nearest thousand = 47000 (A) · Round 499 to the nearest hundred = 500 (E) · Round 548,572 to the nearest hundred thousand = 500000 (S) · Round 4,744 to the nearest hundred = 4700 (U) · Round 24,592 to the nearest ten thousand = 20000 (L) · Round 19 to the nearest ten = 20 (H) · Round 214,059 to the nearest hundred thousand = 200000 (M) · Round 730 to the nearest hundred = 700 (I) · Round 2,841 to the nearest hundred = 2800 (O) · Round 3,057,126 to the nearest hundred thousand = 3100000 (F) · Round 281,940 to the nearest ten thousand = 280000 (N)

Clue 4 (Skip counting): "WE FOUND SPIKEY HAIR SAMPLES"

Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, ___, 30, 33 = 27 (W) · Skip-count by 2s. Fill the blank: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, ___, 18, 20 = 16 (S) · Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, ___, 45, 50 = 40 (H) · Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, ___, 21, 24 = 18 (U) · Skip-count by 10s. Fill the blank: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, ___, 90, 100 = 80 (R) · Skip-count by 10s. Fill the blank: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, ___, 120, 130 = 110 (F) · Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, 20, ___, 30, 35 = 25 (Y) · Skip-count by 10s. Fill the blank: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, ___, 70, 80 = 60 (M) · Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, ___, 50, 55 = 45 (A) · Skip-count by 2s. Fill the blank: 2, 4, ___, 8, 10 = 6 (D) · Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, ___, 35, 40 = 30 (E) · Skip-count by 10s. Fill the blank: 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90, 100, 110, 120, 130, ___, 150, 160 = 140 (I) · Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, ___, 24, 27 = 21 (O) · Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, 36, ___, 42, 45 = 39 (K) · Skip-count by 3s. Fill the blank: 3, 6, 9, 12, 15, 18, 21, 24, 27, 30, 33, ___, 39, 42 = 36 (L) · Skip-count by 2s. Fill the blank: 2, 4, 6, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 24, 26, ___, 30, 32 = 28 (N) · Skip-count by 5s. Fill the blank: 5, 10, 15, ___, 25, 30 = 20 (P)

Clue 5 (Missing addends): surviving statement is box 11 → Aitana Bonmati

18 + ___ = 21 = 3 · 24 + ___ = 29 = 5 · 4 + ___ = 5 = 1 · 5 + ___ = 15 = 10 · 2 + ___ = 4 = 2 · 18 + ___ = 22 = 4 · 31 + ___ = 37 = 6 · 8 + ___ = 15 = 7 · 23 + ___ = 31 = 8 · 21 + ___ = 30 = 9 · 22 + ___ = 34 = 12