

Engaging Reading Task

- Students will enjoy the reading activity
- Captivating story line with Dystopian theme
- Explore a futuristic dystopian world
- Imagery and descriptive writing throughout

A spiral-bound notebook with a blue cover is open to a worksheet titled "ESCAPE FROM THE SHATTERED CITY". The worksheet is divided into two main sections. The top section, titled "Introduction: The Collapse", contains a story about a dystopian city. The bottom section, titled "Story Escape Room", contains a grid of eight boxes for answers. A blue pen and a grey pen are resting on the worksheet. The story text is as follows:

Allie remembered the moments when the world shifted. The city she once knew had crumbled. Towering glass buildings now stood as broken shells. The reflective windows remained like hollow eyes staring into the smoke-filled sky.

The collapse had happened in slow motion but took only seconds to change the lives of those who survived. Allie didn't like to think about who didn't make it.

As she walked down the street, sticking to the shadows, the air buzzed with the low hum of drones that patrolled the ruins. These were known as the Enforcers, and it was best to stay out of their way when you could avoid it. They were always scanning for anyone who looked like they dared to rebel against the Regime.

Allie sighed as she reached the end of the street, hesitant about which way was best to turn. This was a fractured city where freedom was all but a whisper. The idea of being free was more like a legend, even to those who remembered what freedom was like.

At the end of the street, Allie pulled a hood tight around her head. She had walked this way many times and knew the people along the route. There was Calla selling batteries and Amos making a living through busking, bringing music and joy through his guitar. Allie knew she could count on them when things got tough.

But this evening, Allie had to stay alone. Her heart pounded as she touched the small metal key in her pocket. This was the last gift from her older brother, Ben, before he disappeared. He and Allie had survived the collapse and had been part of a true team. But Ben had joined the Rebels and accepted an assignment that took him away. Allie hadn't heard from him in months, and she suspected the worst.

The key was her only hope. He had snuck it to her in the depths of night, and the words that Ben spoke echoed in her mind.

Follow the clues to find peace.

The worksheet also features a grid of eight boxes for answers, each with a section number and instruction to circle a letter. The sections are: Section One Answer (Circle the SIXTH letter), Section Two Answer (Circle the FIRST letter), Section Three Answer (Circle the FIRST letter), Section Four Answer (Circle the FIRST letter), Section Six Answer (Circle the FIRST letter), Section Seven Answer (Circle the FIRST letter), and Section Eight Answer (Circle the FIRST letter). A blue pen and a grey pen are resting on the worksheet.

Escape Room Puzzle

- Puzzle question in each part of the story
- Students collect the answers and use certain letters to spell a secret word

Short Story Escape Room **Section One: The Broken Fountain**

Read the next part of the story. Find the answer to the puzzle question within the paragraphs.

Allie snuck along the street until she found a concealed window covered with boards. She lifted one board and twisted it left, revealing a small opening. This was the hideout where she, Amos, and Calla often spent the evenings together. No one really had a fixed address in this world unless they worked for the Regime. Everyone else just found a spot to shelter and hoped they could stay there for a while.

While she waited for the sun to set and darkness to provide cover from the Enforce Ben's belongings. The map was a bunch of hand-drawn landmarks with arrows con flowing through the mountains. Allie had spent the past few weeks sneaking across scouting the landmarks in the city. From here, she had determined a rough idea of

Once it was dark enough, Allie grabbed her backpack filled with essential supplies fountain in the city square that once spilled clear water was now dry and cracked ready to fly towards freedom.

Allie traced her fingers along the statue, looking for a clue.

Below the bird, there was a message engraved on the fountain, written in a pig

Puzzle question: What is the first word in the cipher coded message?

here

Short Story Escape Room **Section Four: The Underground** **Dystopian**

Read the next part of the story. Find the answer to the puzzle question within the paragraphs.

Allie landed with a thud through the trapdoor. The drop wasn't as big as she expected, so she landed on her feet. A plume of dust billowed around her, and she coughed loudly. This made her panic, worried someone-or something-would hear her down here. She crouched behind a large crate, feeling safer hidden.

Once Allie felt safe, she poked her head up and looked around. She was at an underground train station. Strange plants, thick vines, and twisted branches grew over the abandoned train carriages. There was a toppled-over carriage in front of her. Rust and dirt covered the chipped paint surface.

A maze was stuck to the window of a train carriage. A message appeared at the bottom of the page, but someone wrote it upside down. Allie tilted her head to read the words, "Complete the maze to find the right direction."

Allie blinked, confused. There were cardinal directions around the maze, but not in the order one would expect. South was where east should be, and north was facing west. It was like looking at a broken compass. Then Allie realized that this was intentional.

She carefully peeled the maze off the window and turned it around, so the message was facing the right way. Now the directional letters changed position. Allie started the maze at West and traced a pathway with her fingers, knowing this would guide her in the right direction to go next.

Puzzle question: Complete the maze and write which direction Allie will go next.

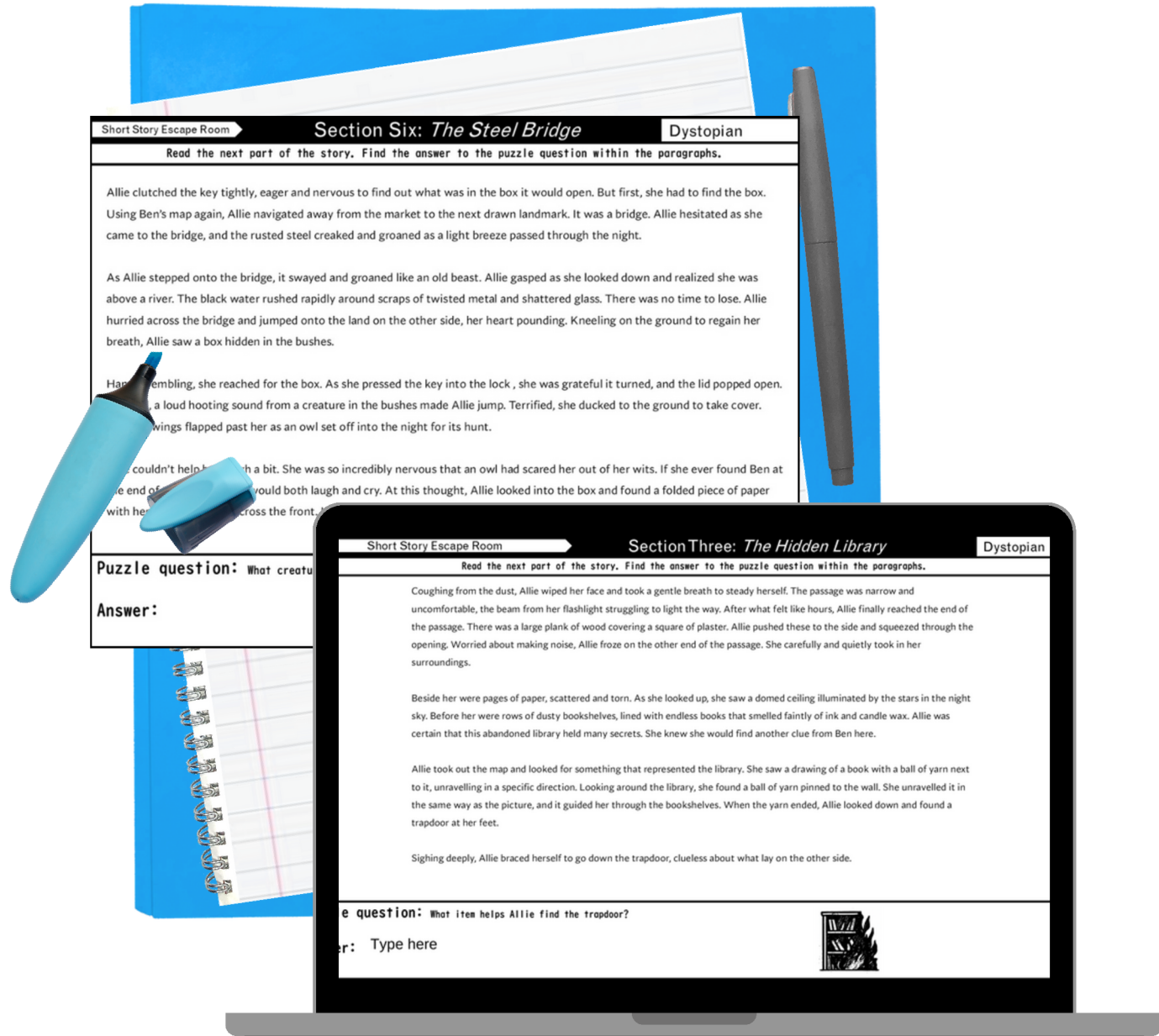
Answer:

S
W N E



Themed Short Story

- Dystopian theme
- Great for world-building
- Support student imagination
- Use as a standalone reading comprehension activity



Short Story Comprehension

- Dystopian theme
- Puzzle-based comprehension questions
- Answers are embedded in the story
- Engage students in a reading task



Short Story Escape Room

Section Nine: *The Hidden Valley*

Dystopian

Read the next part of the story. Find the answer to the puzzle question within the paragraphs.

As Allie walked closer, she heard a voice calling her name. Her heart leapt. From behind a grove of silver-barked trees, a figure stepped forward. It was her brother, Ben! His clothes were tattered, his face thin. But his eyes were bright and sparkled with the warmth of freedom.

"You made it," he whispered, pulling her into a tight embrace. For the first time in months, Allie felt safe. She leaned into her brother, the weight of the journey she had just been on catching up to her. She was exhausted.

"You didn't make it easy!" Allie teased, thinking about all the clues she had scrambled through the night to follow.

"It's all worth it to find this place, I promise," Ben smiled back.

Keeping his arm tightly around his sister, Ben led Allie to the settlement. Here, the Rebels had built a secret base, with small huts of

with life, untouched by

Short Story Escape Room

Section Five: *The Silent Market*

Dystopian

Read the next part of the story. Find the answer to the puzzle question within the paragraphs.

Using the maze to guide her and referring to Ben's map, Allie wove her way out of the underground station. She resurfaced in a part of the city that was completely unknown to her. There was no hum of the Enforcer drones. There was no shuffling of people's feet. There was no beeping in time with the flashing lights from the Regime headquarters. In fact, there was no noise at all.

The silence shocked Allie. She was so used to the background noise of the Regime. This was the furthest from the city she had ever been. Looking around, she could see that this place used to be a market. There were vacant stalls, knocked over and weathered from the elements. Shopping baskets and decorated signs showed hints of what was once a bustling and joyful place.

Ben's map had market stalls drawn on it. Beside the stalls was a picture of a key. Allie reached into her pocket, wondering if it was time to use this key. On Ben's map, the key was next to a stall that had a picture of fruit on it. Allie searched the market until she found a market stall with fruit decorations.

Allie rummaged around, looking for a clue. She turned over boxes and discarded wrapping until she found a crate that had engravings on it. It was another message, written in code, each bold letter the starting point for the scrambled words.

The **e** **k** **y** will **n** **p** **e** **o** the **o** **d** **i** **d** **r** **f** **t** **o** **w** box.

Question: What type of box will the key open?

Answer: Type here

Complete Activity

- Digital and printable format available
- Student answer sheet provided
- Answer key and teacher instructions
- Extension activities for students



Short Story Escape Room Student Answer Sheet

Name: _____ Date: _____

ESCAPE FROM THE SHATTERED CITY

Follow the instructions to circle the letter of each answer. The circled letters will spell out the secret word.

Section One Answer
Circle the SIXTH letter.

Section Two Answer

Section Three Answer

Section Four Answer
Circle the FIRST letter.

Section Eight Answer
Circle the SIXTH letter.

Short Story Escape Room Extension Task Ideas

Name: _____ Date: _____

Choose an activity from the ideas below.

Creative letter writing.

Write a letter from Calla to her brother before they are reunited. What would she say about her journey, her fears, and her hopes?

Map design.

Design a map of the dystopian world and the fractured city. Include any landmarks from the story and write a short description for each.

Design an emblem.

Use symbols from the story to design an emblem for the Rebel group. It can be a logo or a flag.

News report.

Imagine you are a news reporter in the dystopian city. Write a report about events that happen or create a character to interview.

Character journal.

Write a journal entry from Allie's perspective about her first week in the Hidden Valley.

Poetry.

Write a poem describing the destroyed city. Use imagery for the sights, sound, and feelings of living in a dystopian place.

Create a comic.

Turn Allie's journey to freedom into a comic strip. Use dialogue and thought bubbles along with illustrations.

instructor has assigned him a solo mission, and he's beaming with excitement.

With his space-bag carefully packed, Luca confidently walked along the pathway towards his starship. His classmates cheered for him, and he was ecstatic to be going on his first proper mission. He felt proud of his hard work, intense training, and lots of study over the past months.

and uncover the hidden stories written in the stars.

'Here is your expedition guidebook,' Navi said in an automated voice and handed Luca a heavy book with golden letters on a red velvet cover. It seemed to have nearly 1,000 pages in its binding. 'Would you like a warm drink of tea while you read?' Navi asked.

Multiple Uses

- Independent reading activity
- Group reading task
- Intervention group work
- Whole class reading activity
- Homework task

