

# Back-to-School Icon Cryptograms

Three levels, one partner activity, and a playful way to build classroom community.

## Teacher quick start

**Best for:** Grades 4-6

**Prep:** Print student pages 2-5.

**Use:** Morning work, centers, first-week routines, partners, or early finishers.

**Support:** Begin with the full decoder and progress toward fewer clues.

## How cryptograms work

1. Each icon always stands for the same letter.
2. Repeated icons make repeated letters.
3. Short words and clue letters help unlock the rest.
4. Write one letter beneath each icon.

**EASY**  
**School**

**MEDIUM**  
**Fantasy**

**CHALLENGE**  
**Animals**

Teacher tip: students can work independently, then compare strategies before checking the teacher pages.

# The Welcome Code

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the complete decoder below to reveal a welcoming message.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

## COMPLETE DECODER

<b>A</b>	<b>B</b>	<b>C</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>G</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>J</b>	<b>K</b>	<b>L</b>	<b>M</b>
<b>N</b>	<b>O</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>Q</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>T</b>	<b>U</b>	<b>V</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>Y</b>	<b>Z</b>

## DETECTIVE NOTES

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Share the Spark

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Start with the clue letters, then use patterns and repeated icons.

_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
_____	_____	_____	_____									

### CLUE DECODER

<b>A</b>	<b>E</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>T</b>

### DETECTIVE NOTES

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# Three-Heart Surprise

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Use the three starter clues to uncover a surprising animal fact.

												
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
											_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

### CLUE DECODER

		
<b>E</b>	<b>H</b>	<b>T</b>

### DETECTIVE NOTES








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# Create Your Own Secret Message

Write a kind classroom message, then replace every letter with its School icon. Give only the coded message to a partner. Keep this decoder hidden until they ask for a clue.

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 

## MY MESSAGE FIRST

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## NOW DRAW THE CODED MESSAGE

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**Partner challenge:** Which clue would help without giving away the whole answer?

# Messages and teaching notes

**PUZZLE 1 - EASY - FULL DECODER**

## The Welcome Code

**A KIND WORD CAN HELP SOMEONE FEEL WELCOME**

Students practice careful symbol matching with a complete decoder.

**PUZZLE 2 - MEDIUM - SOME CLUES**

## Share the Spark

**BRAVE IDEAS GROW WHEN WE SHARE THEM**

Students combine five clue letters with repeated patterns and word structure.

**PUZZLE 3 - CHALLENGE - STARTER CLUES**

## Three-Heart Surprise

**OCTOPUSES HAVE THREE HEARTS**

















Students receive only E, H, and T. Offer another letter if productive struggle turns into guessing.

**Extension:** Let partners trade page 5. The author may reveal one icon-letter pair at a time. Celebrate a clear clue as much as a correct solution.

# Complete decoder keys

These mappings match the student pages exactly.
























## PUZZLE 1 - SCHOOL

												
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

## PUZZLE 2 - FANTASY

												
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

## PUZZLE 3 - ANIMALS

												
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

## Make one for your own class

Choose an icon set, type any classroom-safe message, select how many clues to reveal, and print a custom worksheet.

[cryptogramonline.com/cryptogram-worksheets-for-kids](https://cryptogramonline.com/cryptogram-worksheets-for-kids)