

- The Case of the Fifth Word Summary

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Summary: "The Case of the Fifth Word" is a detective story featuring Encyclopedia Brown, a young boy who helps his father, the Chief of Police, solve difficult mysteries. In this story, Chief Brown is troubled by a case involving Tim Nolan, a man suspected of involvement in a jewellery robbery five years ago. Nolan recently died, leaving a will that bequeaths his palm-tree nursery to Daniel Davenport, his friend and suspected accomplice. Nolan left a cryptic message on a calendar sheet with four strange words: "Nom Utes Sweden Hurts." Encyclopedia Brown deciphers this code, revealing that the words represent days of the week with the fifth word, "Fir," implied but unwritten. The stolen jewellery was hidden under a young fir tree in Nolan's nursery, solving the mystery before dinner.

Key Elements

- **Characters:** Encyclopedia Brown (Leroy), Chief Brown (his father), Mrs. Brown (his mother), Tim Nolan, Daniel Davenport.
- **Setting:** Idaville, USA; mainly at the Brown family dining table and Nolan's palm-tree nursery.
- **Themes:** Intelligence and observation, family cooperation, mystery and crime-solving, the importance of clues and codes.
- **Plot:** The story revolves around solving the mystery of the stolen jewellery hidden by Nolan and Davenport, using a coded message.

Important Quotes and Explanation

- "Encyclopedia solved the case for him before dinner was over." – Highlights Encyclopedia's sharp intellect and quick thinking.
- "The four words say so." – Refers to the coded message that leads to the discovery of the hidden jewellery.

Practice Set

Level 1 – Easy

- Who is Encyclopedia Brown and what is his special skill?
- What was Tim Nolan suspected of?

Level 2 – Moderate

- Explain the significance of the four words "Nom Utes Sweden Hurts" in the story.
- Describe the relationship between Encyclopedia and his father.

Level 3 – Challenging

- How does Encyclopedia Brown use logic and knowledge to solve the mystery? Give examples.
- Discuss the theme of secrecy and trust in the story.

Answer Key

- **Level 1:** Encyclopedia Brown is a young boy detective who helps solve mysteries using his knowledge and observation. Tim Nolan was suspected of involvement in a jewellery robbery.
- **Level 2:** The four words are a code representing days of the week, which helped locate the hidden jewellery under the young fir tree (the fifth word). Encyclopedia and his father share a close relationship where the father trusts his son's intelligence to solve difficult cases.

- **Level 3:** Encyclopedia uses his knowledge of grammar and days of the week to decode the message. He asks insightful questions, such as about the young fir tree, to confirm his deductions. The story shows secrecy in Nolan's hidden message and trust in Encyclopedia's ability to solve the case.

Quick Reference

- Encyclopedia Brown = young detective
- Tim Nolan = suspect who died
- Daniel Davenport = friend and accomplice
- Four-word code = Nom (Monday), Utes (Tuesday), Sweden (Wednesday), Hurts (Thursday)
- Fifth word (implied) = Fir (Friday), location of jewellery

Glossary

- **Nickname:** A pet name or informal name.
- **Hold-ups:** Robberies involving threat or violence.
- **Testify:** To give evidence in court.
- **Hunch:** A strong feeling or guess.
- **Loot:** Stolen goods.
- **Stroke:** A sudden illness affecting the brain.
- **Will:** A legal document stating how a person's property is to be distributed after death.
- **Code:** A secret or hidden message.