

Name _____

Family Times

Summary

Encyclopedia Brown and the Case of the Slippery Salamander

A salamander has been stolen from the Den of Darkness in the town aquarium. Encyclopedia Brown, the police chief's son, solves the mystery that has his dad stumped.

Activity

Puzzle Me Look in newspapers or books for brainteasers and word games. Work with a family member to see how many of the answers you can find.

1.										
2.	S	A	L	A	M	A	N	D	E	R

1. Something not known
2. Amphibian

Comprehension Skill

Character and Plot

Characters are the people and animals in a story. The **plot** is the storyline or series of events that show **characters** in action. A plot begins when a character has a problem or **conflict**. The problem builds up during the **rising action**, is met directly at the **climax**, and comes to an end, with the action winding down, during the **resolution**.

Fairy Tales in Action

With your family, think of a familiar fairy tale you can act out together. Write each character's name in a list. Write each stage of the plot on an index card. Have one family member hand you a new card as you act out the different characters and plot points.

Lesson Vocabulary

Words to Know

Knowing the meanings of these words is important to reading *Encyclopedia Brown*. Practice using these words.

Vocabulary Words

amphibians cold-blooded animals with backbones and moist skin

crime a violation of law

exhibit thing or things shown publicly

lizards any of many reptiles with long bodies and tails and movable eyelids

reference something used for information or help

reptiles cold-blooded animals with backbones and lungs

salamanders any of numerous animals shaped like lizards, but related to frogs

stumped puzzled

Conventions

Contractions and Negatives

A **contraction** is a word made by putting two words together. In a contraction, one or more letters are left out. An apostrophe is used in place of the missing letter or letters. Some contractions are formed by joining a pronoun and a verb. *For example: it + is = it's, we + are = we're, I + am = I'm, they + will = they'll.* Other contractions are formed by joining a verb and *not*. *For example: was + not = wasn't, did + not = didn't, have + not = haven't, are + not = aren't.* Be careful not to confuse the contraction *it's* with the possessive pronoun *its*.

Activity

Cut It Short Play a game with family members to see who can spot contractions around you, then tell what words they combine. Look for these shortcuts on signs, such as "Don't Walk," and in newspapers and magazines.

Practice Tested Spelling Words
