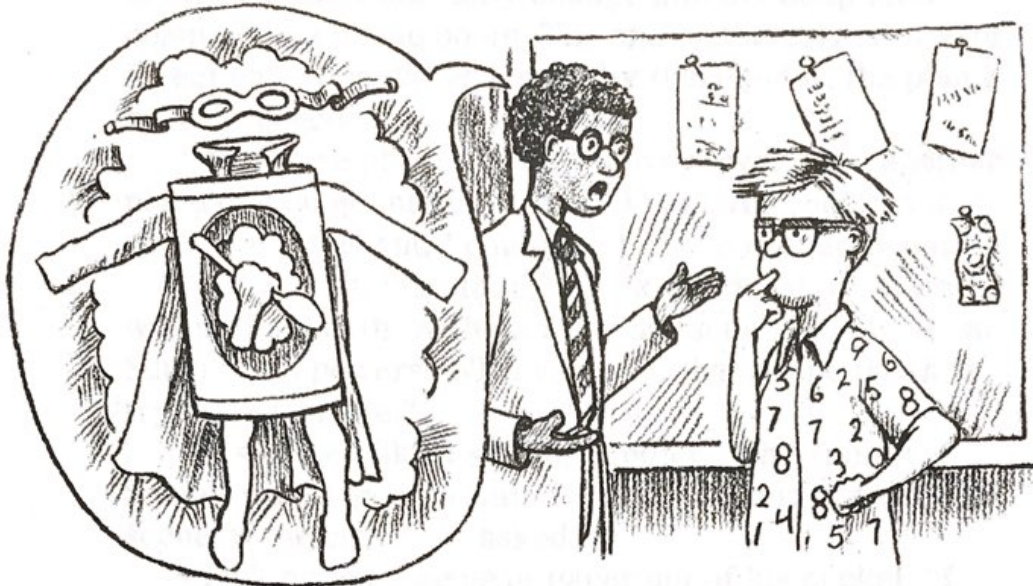


Name \_\_\_\_\_

## ◆ A Soup-er Code ◆



My name is Tommy Tompkins. My friends and I started the Effective Detective Agency. Cesar, Gina, Chuck, Carmen, and I are some of the best detectives around (even if we're only kids!). We have to be good, too, because we get some crazy cases.

Take the other day, for example. I was sitting at my desk, getting ready to bite into a big sandwich: the Tommy Salami Special. Just then, a man wearing a gray suit and glasses came into the Effective Detective Agency office.

"Can you help me?" he asked.

I looked around. I was too busy to help this man. My sandwich was all ready! But it looked like I was the only detective in the office. "I guess so," I said, placing the Tommy Salami Special in my desk drawer. "What's your name?"

"You probably have heard of me," said the man. "I am...Soup Man!"

"You are not Soup Man," I said. Soup Man was our local superhero. "Soup Man is a tall, strong guy, with a

---

red cape. And a big soup can costume.”

“That’s why I’m here,” said the man. “My real name is Cluck Kant. I normally change into my Soup Man costume in a phone booth. The one on the corner of Elm Street and Main. When I went by there today, the phone booth was gone.”

“There are phone booths all over town. Find another place to change into your suit,” I said. Another day’s work was done, and I could get back to my sandwich.

“You don’t understand,” Cluck cried. “My costume was in that booth. Without the giant soup can, I have no Super Soup powers! Whoever stole that phone booth is trying to ruin me.”

This looked like a serious problem. The Tommy Salami would have to wait. “Were there any clues at the scene of the crime?” I asked.

Cluck pulled a piece of paper out of his pocket. “I found this note that tells me how to get my costume back. But I can’t understand it,” he said.

I took the note from Cluck. Sure enough, some of the words had been replaced with numbers. It was a secret code. The beginning of the note told what day Cluck could meet the thief:

I want to meet you in person;  
That really is my secret goal.  
You like football and love soup.  
Let’s meet before the Soup-er 2695.

I stared at the numbers, and tried to figure out the code. Suddenly, it hit me. “I’ve got it!” I said. “Someone who stole a phone booth would probably use a phone code.” Each number in the code stood for a letter on the



phone buttons. Underneath each number, I wrote down the three letters each number could stand for:

2	6	9	5
A	M	W	J
B	N	X	K
C	O	Y	L

Now all I had to do was circle one letter under each number. The answer should spell out a word that makes sense in the note.

Cluck shook my hand. "I'm glad you cracked the code. I really thought I was in hot water," he said. "But soon I'll be back in hot soup."

## NOW IT'S YOUR TURN...

Help Tommy solve the case. Use the phone buttons at right to help you. In questions 1 through 4, use Tommy's phone code to figure out the secret messages in the thief's note. First write down the possible letters under each number in the message. Then circle one letter under each number to spell out a word. Write that word in the "Answer" blank.

1	ABC 2	DEF 3
GHI 4	JKL 5	MNO 6
PRS 7	TUV 8	WXY 9
*	Oper 0	#

1. I want to meet you in person;  
That really is my secret goal.  
You like football and love soup.  
Let's meet before the Soup-er 2 6 9 5.

Possible letters: \_\_\_\_\_

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

-----

2. I'm sorry about your phone booth;  
Now you can't make a call.  
But you'll get your phone booth back,  
If you meet me outside City 4 2 5 5.

Possible letters:      — — — —

— — — —

— — — —

Answer:               — — — —

3. I'll give back your red cape,  
your soup can, and your sock.  
Just be sure that you're not late;  
I'll be there at 6 6 3 o'clock.

Possible letters:   — — —

— — —

— — —

Answer:             — — —

4. How will you know who I am?  
I think you'll recognize me soon.  
Then you'll know that I'm a friend—  
I'll be dressed as a giant 7 7 6 6 6.

Possible letters:   — — — — —

— — — — —

— — — — —

Answer:             — — — — —

1	ABC 2	DEF 3
GHI 4	JKL 5	MNO 6
PRS 7	TUV 8	WXY 9
*	Oper 0	#

5. In this phone code, which numbers on the phone cannot be used? \_\_\_\_\_

6. Which letters cannot be used in the phone code? \_\_\_\_\_

**YOU CAN DO IT** Make up your own secret messages using the phone code. Trade them with friends and have them try to figure out the messages!

