

The Cypher Files, by Dimitris Chassapakis

The Cypher Files is an interactive puzzle book in which the player has to solve puzzles on every page and obtain keys to move forward by submitting answers online.

The “escape room in a book” can be played by one player only or by a group, as the puzzles can be quite challenging sometimes. The player is an agent of C.Y.P.H.E.R., which is a secret international agency working on “unsolvable” code-based cases. The player is called upon to investigate clues discovered in the wake of a series of mysterious disappearances. The game is timed, and you have to crack the codes before it’s too late.

Particularity

- There are certain steps: solve the puzzle on the puzzle page, visit the URL by typing it in your browser or by scanning the QR code provided, submit the answer to the puzzle on screen, write down the clue as you will need it for solving the puzzles later in the book.
- To solve the puzzles, you will need to think outside the box, write, draw, search, fold and cut pages, explore virtual escape rooms (which will make it impossible to be reused)
- There is a DEMO puzzle to help the player familiarize with the steps.
- Once you decide to play, you must read the context or the storyline, in which you are presented the character you will play and the other characters in the game: the missing persons, the agent you will report to and the supervisor, “known as Arthur”.

Materials needed

- a pencil,
- a pair of scissors and
- a device connected to the internet (preferably a smartphone).

Why it is relevant to language teaching

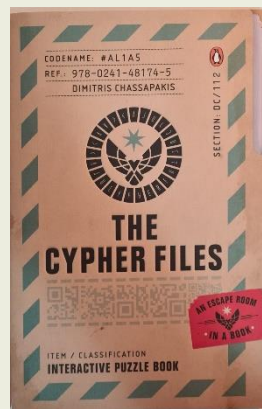
- First, all the instructions are in English, written in a clear and neat way so that a player that is at B1 level could easily understand them. The player has to do a lot of reading, and finding details and clues is of uttermost importance. This will keep the player focused



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on reading the texts, making sure that they are not losing track of the text. What is more, the player will learn specific vocabulary related to detective work.

- In addition, besides using the already acquired vocabulary, the player must look up and use new words or expressions that will serve as clues.
- As the player must write down the clues, he/she will have the opportunity to practice spelling (the solutions will not be accepted if they are not spelled correctly).



Reference:

Chassapakis, D (2020), The Cypher Files, 1st ed, UK, Penguin Random House

