

**THE MYSTERY OF THE  
BLACK RAVEN**  
created by  
**GERTRUDE CHANDLER WARNER**

*Illustrated by Charles Tang*

ALBERT WHITMAN & Company



## Solving a Mystery

When the Boxcar Children solve a mystery, they begin by gathering clues. Clues come in many forms — letters, words, even photographs. All of those clues are important, but they don't always prove your case. The only clue that cannot be disputed is a person's fingerprints. That's because no two people have the same fingerprints. So if you can match a suspect to his prints, you've got the culprit.

Skin contains oil, and when you touch something with your bare fingers, that oil leaves a print. But your fingerprint is often invisible to the eye. To see it, you have to make it visible.

The Boxcar Children know what it takes to make a fingerprint visible. Now they are sharing their secrets with you.



*You will need:* Talcum powder, a pencil, fine sandpaper, a soft feather, transparent tape, and light and dark cardboard.

*Here's what you do:*

1. If the suspected fingerprint is on a dark surface, sprinkle a small amount of talcum powder on the surface. Then very, *very* gently brush the powder with your soft feather. If the fingerprint is there, the talcum powder will stick to it and the print will become visible.
2. If the suspected fingerprint is on a light-colored surface, rub the pencil point against the sandpaper until you have a fine black powder, called graphite. Use the graphite powder the same way you used the talcum powder on the dark surface.
3. If you want to save the fingerprint, cut a small piece of tape and place it directly on the powder-covered print. Carefully lift the tape. It will take the powder pattern with it. Then mount the piece of tape on a piece of cardboard. Use a light piece of cardboard for the graphite-powder prints, and a dark piece of cardboard for the talcum-powder prints.