**Puzzles, Brain Teasers, and Activities: The Phantom Pen Pal**

**The Haunted Chronicles**

**1. Word Search: The Phantom Pen Pal**

Find the following words related to the book hidden in the word search puzzle:

* Ava
* Letter
* Time
* Mystery
* Story
* Archive
* Past
* Pen Pal
* Secret
* Connection

[You can design a word search generator online or create a grid with the hidden words placed horizontally, vertically, and diagonally.]

**2. Crossword Puzzle: Uncover the Secrets**

**Clues:**

1. Ava’s passion: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Writing)
2. The object that connects Ava to the past: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Letter)
3. The place where Ava finds historical information: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Archives)
4. A word that describes something unexplained: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Mystery)
5. What Ava and her pen pal become through their letters: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Friends)
6. What Ava uses to solve the mystery: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Research)
7. The emotion Ava feels when she reads her pen pal’s stories: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Curiosity)
8. A form of written communication from the past: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ (Postcard)

[You can generate a simple crossword grid online.]

**Brainteasers**

**1. Riddle Me This:**

* *I come in an envelope but hold no address. I can cross centuries but am light as air. You cannot see me, but I tell tales. What am I?*  
  Answer: A letter.
* *I speak of the past, yet I live in the present. I carry voices from times long gone, but I am quiet myself. What am I?*  
  Answer: A story.

**2. Who Said What?**

Match the quotes to the characters from *The Phantom Pen Pal*:

* “I never imagined that a single letter could hold so many secrets.”  
  (Ava)
* “Time doesn’t bind all things. Some stories need to be told, no matter how long it takes.”  
  (Olivia)
* “I thought I knew what was real, but now I’m not so sure.”  
  (Ava)

**Other Activities for Readers, Educators, and Librarians**

1. **Historical Letter Writing Activity**  
   Have students pick a historical figure (or a character from the book) and write a letter to that person, imagining they’re Ava sending a letter to the past. Include prompts like: "What would you ask someone from another time?" and "What would you share about your own life?"
2. **Create Your Own Time Capsule**  
   Encourage young readers to create a time capsule, filling it with letters, objects, and memories from their present life. Include instructions for sealing the capsule and a future date for opening it. Ava might not have known her letters were crossing time, but readers can preserve their own stories for the future!
3. **Draw a Scene from the Past**  
   Using details from *The Phantom Pen Pal*, have readers draw what they think Ava’s pen pal’s world looks like. They can imagine the historical setting based on the clues from the letters and the descriptions in the book.
4. **Decoding the Mystery: Secret Messages**  
   Provide worksheets with a simple cipher (like a Caesar shift or substitution cipher) that can be used to decode secret messages between Ava and her pen pal. You can include secret clues related to the book, such as "Find the hidden message in the letter" or "The key is in the final story."
5. **Interactive Pen Pal Club**  
   Create an online or physical pen pal club where students can send letters to each other. For added fun, they could write from the perspective of a character in the past, as Ava’s pen pal does in the story. Each letter can end with a mystery that the next student has to solve!
6. **Mystery Timeline Puzzle**  
   Create a timeline puzzle based on the key historical events mentioned in *The Phantom Pen Pal*. Readers must place historical events in the correct order, piecing together how the pen pal’s story fits into real-world history.
7. **Character Map**  
   Have readers create a character map that details how Ava’s character changes over the course of the book. Ask questions like: "How does Ava's curiosity grow?" or "What does Ava learn from her pen pal about friendship and connection?"
8. **Virtual Time Travel Journal**  
   Have students or young readers keep a "time travel journal," documenting their thoughts and questions as they read through *The Phantom Pen Pal*. Each entry can begin with, "If I could send a letter through time, I would ask..."

**Extended Learning for Educators and Librarians**

1. **Book Discussion Guide**  
   Create a set of discussion questions for classroom or book club use, focusing on the themes of time, communication, and mystery.  
   Examples:

* "What do you think Ava’s life would be like if she hadn’t found the letter?"
* "How does Ava’s relationship with Olivia teach her about empathy and history?"

1. **Time-Travel Literacy Activity**  
   Integrate a lesson about time periods, literature, and historical context. Use *The Phantom Pen Pal* to teach students how people lived in different time periods. After reading, students can write their own historical short stories inspired by the pen pal’s world.
2. **Explore the Concept of Legacy**  
   Discuss how letters, journals, and stories can preserve a person's legacy across generations. Educators can ask students to write about how they would want to be remembered if someone found their letters years in the future.