

Kryptos 2021 – Challenge 1 Solution

Some initial observations:

- These letters are written by someone who took the alias Caesar.
- There are quite a few doodles on all of the letters
- In the header section, several letters have dots, dashes, or combinations doodled under them.

Let's assume that the individual letters with the dots/dashes refer to the ciphertext. How should they be arranged? "getting it all in order is probably the most important thing" we see in the third piece of correspondence and we also see "four" and "bar" underlined in the fourth piece of correspondence. Let's assume the simplest order: one dot, two dots, three dots, bar, bar + one dot, etc. This would give us the following pieces of ciphertext:

CT1: PETX STLM HHIR

CT 2: GEQT YWPM FVEV C

CT 3: FILM RHNS CGI

Ct 4: VYRG SHI

CT5: ERHH IWXV SC

With a name like Caesar and the reference to "shifting", one might expect a shift cipher. One could try them all or use the hint of "four" which shows up a lot to get:

laptop hidden campus library behind joyce run code and destroy