

Clues After Dark

Use clues, structure, and purpose to recognize a mystery.

7.8.A “demonstrate knowledge of literary genres such as realistic fiction, adventure stories, historical fiction, mysteries, humor, myths, fantasy, and science fiction;”

NAME _____

DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK _____ Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline three clues that could help solve the mystery. Circle one detail that makes a character seem suspicious, and number five key events in the order they happen to track how the mystery develops.

The Tower Bell

- ① At 4:15, the bell tower above Pine Street struck once, although the clock had been stopped for years. Mara, who delivered library books after school, looked up from her bicycle. A silver key flashed in the tower window, then vanished. On the steps below, Mr. Vale, the town historian, searched his pockets. “The archive key is gone,” he said. Mara noticed muddy boot prints leading away from the locked side door. She wrote the time in her notebook and followed the prints toward the river.
- ② The prints ended at the riverwalk, where the annual lantern festival filled the path with music and smoke. Mara found one boot print pressed into a spilled patch of blue paint. Near the railing, a boy named Theo was tying his bicycle to a post. Blue paint marked his right shoe, but he said he had been at the festival all afternoon. Then Mara saw a dry strip beneath his coat, shaped like a key. The strip smelled of metal oil, not river water. She asked Theo why he was hiding something.
- ③ Theo opened his coat and showed Mara a rusted key, but it was not the archive key. He had found it under the tower and hoped it opened a sealed map case. Mara compared its teeth with a photograph in Mr. Vale’s phone. They did not match. Then the bell rang again. From inside the tower, Mr. Vale called, “I found my key in the clock gears.” Mara looked at the muddy prints. They ended at the wall, not the door. Someone had climbed up, perhaps to make the bell ring.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE _____ Use the passage

1 What genre best fits this passage? Give two details from the passage that support your answer.

2 Which two details make Theo seem like a possible suspect before he opens his coat?

3 How does the rusted key change Mara's investigation?

4 What unanswered question at the end helps the passage remain a mystery?

3 YOUR TURN _____ Your own words

Choose one genre: adventure, fantasy, historical fiction, or science fiction. Label the genre and write a 4-6 sentence opening that includes a setting, a problem, and at least three features that clearly fit that genre.

PART 1 • READ AND MARK

Underline three clues that could help solve the mystery. Circle one detail that makes a character seem suspicious, and number five key events in the order they happen to track how the mystery develops. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 • ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What genre best fits this passage? Give two details from the passage that support your answer.	Mystery. The passage includes an unexplained bell, a missing key, clues such as boot prints and blue paint, and Mara investigating a possible suspect.
2	Which two details make Theo seem like a possible suspect before he opens his coat?	Blue paint marks Theo's right shoe, matching the blue paint in the boot print, and Mara sees a dry key-shaped strip beneath his coat.
3	How does the rusted key change Mara's investigation?	It shows that Theo's key is not the missing archive key, so he may not have taken it. The key creates another possible question because it may open the sealed map case.
4	What unanswered question at the end helps the passage remain a mystery?	The passage does not reveal who climbed the tower wall or why that person made the bell ring.

PART 3 • YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Genre: Science Fiction On Mars's moon Phobos, Imani checked the colony's oxygen garden before a solar storm arrived. Her wrist computer warned that a damaged satellite was falling toward the dome. She climbed into a magnetic repair pod and launched into the thin, airless darkness. The pod's engines sputtered when charged dust covered its sensors. If Imani could not redirect the satellite, the dome would lose its shield.

Accept genre evidence that accurately identifies mystery features, including clues, suspects, investigation, suspense, and unanswered questions. For the open task, accept any selected genre when the writing includes a clear setting, a problem, and at least three fitting genre characteristics.