



Grade 7 Summer 2026 Book Report #1

Course: English Language Arts (ELA)

Theme: Mystery Detectives: Nancy Drew and The Hardy Boys

Due Date: On or before Tuesday, September 15, 2026 (Submitted via Google Classroom)

Assessment Weight: Each book report will be recorded as a full test grade.

Overview & Objectives

Welcome to your 7th Grade Summer Reading Assignment! This summer, you will delve into the world of classic mystery and detective fiction. You will demonstrate your literary understanding of the novels through comprehensive summary, character insight, and creative thinking.

Upon returning to school in the fall, students will take a formal exam assessing comprehension, analysis of characters and plot, and the ability to compare and contrast both texts.

Required Reading List

Students entering the 7th grade are required to read both of the following novels:

1. ***Nancy Drew — #2: The Hidden Staircase*** by Carolyn Keene
2. ***The Hardy Boys — #3: The Secret of the Old Mill*** by Franklin W. Dixon

Note: Copies of *Nancy Drew: The Hidden Staircase* and *The Hardy Boys: The Secret of the Old Mill* are widely available for purchase online through retailers like Amazon, and free PDF versions can be accessed online.

Assignment Instructions

You must complete a separate, dedicated book report for **each** of the two required novels. Below are the explicit structural guidelines for your submissions, including a final section to synthesize both readings.

Section 1: Plot Summary (1–2 Paragraphs per book)

Provide a detailed summary of each novel's plot in your own words. Ensure your writing addresses the following points:

- Identify the primary and supporting characters.
- Establish the setting (where and when the story takes place).
- Explain the central mystery that the detectives (Nancy Drew or the Hardy Boys) are trying to solve.
- Highlight key clues, plot twists, and obstacles encountered during the investigation.
- Detail how the case is ultimately resolved.

Section 2: Character Analysis (1 Paragraph per book)

Select one major character from each novel and analyze their role in the story:

- Describe their core personality traits and how they contribute to solving the mystery.
- Explain how they handle danger, pressure, and problem-solving.
- Highlight the specific strengths they display throughout the narrative.

Section 3: Theme Exploration (1 Paragraph per book)

Identify a central theme or moral lesson present in the novel and explain how it is shown in the plot using specific examples. You may choose one of the following themes or select your own:

- **Courage:** Facing fear or danger to do what is right.
- **Teamwork:** Overcoming obstacles by working together.
- **Justice:** Uncovering the truth and making things right.
- **Curiosity:** Pursuing answers and learning from surroundings.

Section 4: Compare and Contrast (1–2 Paragraphs)

To be included at the conclusion of your submissions, synthesizing both texts.

- **Characters:** Compare the character traits and dynamics of Nancy Drew versus Frank and Joe Hardy.
- **Mystery-Solving Styles:** Analyze how each detective or team approaches clues, interrogation, and deductions.

- **Plot Structure:** Detail the core similarities and differences between the two storylines and their resolutions.

Evaluation & Grading Criteria

Each report will be evaluated out of **100 total points** based on the following breakdown:

Assessment Category	Maximum Points
Plot Summary (Accuracy, completeness, and detail)	25 Points
Character Analysis (Depth of insight and supportive evidence)	25 Points
Theme Analysis (Clear explanation and integration of plot examples)	25 Points
Effort, Grammar, & Formatting (Spelling, punctuation, and neatness)	25 Points
Total Possible Score	100%