

Nancy Drew Mysteries

- The Secret of the Old Clock -



By
Carolyn Keene

A Novel Study
by Nat Reed

The Secret of the Old Clock

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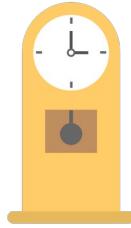
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About the Author: Nat Reed, a member of the teaching profession for more than 35 years, served as a full-time instructor at Trent University's Teacher Education Program for nine years. For more information on his work and literature, please visit reednovelstudies.com.

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Suggestions and Expectations

Each chapter of the novel study focuses on two chapters of *The Secret of the Old Clock* and is comprised of four distinct sections:

1. Before You Read
2. Vocabulary Building
3. Comprehension Questions
4. Language and Extension Activities

A **portfolio cover** (page 7) as well as a **Checklist** (page 6) are included so that students may track of their completed work.

Every activity need not be completed by all students.

Links with the Common Core Standards (U.S.)

Many of the activities included in this curriculum unit are supported by the Common Core Standards. For instance the *Reading Standards for Literature, Grade 5*, makes reference to:

- a) determining the meaning of words and phrases... including figurative language;
- b) explaining how a series of chapters fits together to provide the overall structure;
- c) compare and contrast two characters;
- d) determine how characters ... respond to challenges;
- e) drawing inferences from the text;
- f) determining a theme of a story... and many others.

Themes which may be taught in conjunction with the novel include solving a mystery, justice and fairness, charity towards others, courage and perseverance, family and mentorship.

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List of Skills

Vocabulary Development

1. Locating descriptive words/phrases
2. Listing synonyms/homophones
3. Identifying/creating *personification*
4. Identify *similes*
5. Identify *anagrams*
6. Listing compound words
7. Identifying parts of speech
8. Identify *syllables*

Setting Activities

1. Summarize the details of a setting

Plot Activities

1. Complete a *time line* of events
2. Five W's and an H Chart
3. Create a synopsis
4. Identify the climax of the novel

Character Activities

1. Compare characters
2. Identify the protagonist, antagonist
3. Relating personal experience

Creative and Critical Thinking

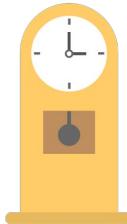
1. Create a poem
2. Write a newspaper story
3. Participate in a talk show
4. Conduct an interview
5. Write a description of personal feelings
6. Write a book review
7. Create a journal entry
8. Opinion writing

Art Activities

1. A Storyboard
2. Create a movie poster
3. Design a cover for the novel
4. Create a comic strip

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Synopsis

Teenage detective Nancy Drew's first adventure features a search for a missing clock – that might contain a missing will!

Wealthy Josiah Crowley has recently died, and the will that he promised to his struggling family members is nowhere to be found. His heirs presumptive, the money-hungry, social-climbing Tophams, stand to inherit everything -- if Nancy and her friend Helen can't find the real will!

To unravel the mystery, they'll have to find out where the will might be hidden, find a way onto the Topham's property, and escape from a troop of burglars. Fortunately, clever, daring Nancy is on the case!

(Courtesy of the Publisher)

Author Biography

Carolyn Keene

Carolyn Keene is a pen name used by a variety of authors for the classic Nancy Drew Mystery series. The first author to use the pseudonym was Mildred Wirt Benson, who wrote 23 of the original 30 books. Other writers who have adapted the "Carolyn Keene" moniker include Leslie McFarlane, James Duncan Lawrence, Walter Karig, and Nancy Axelrod. (Courtesy of the Publisher)

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Student Checklist

Student Name

Nancy Drew Mysteries

- The Secret of the Old Clock -



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Name:

The Secret of the Old Clock

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Chapters 1-2



Before you read this section:

It is important for an author to create an interesting **protagonist** (main character) for any work of fiction. *The Secret of the Old Clock* features 18-year-old Nancy Drew who has a shrewd mind and loves solving mysteries. Think back on some of the novels you've read and movies you have seen. What do you think makes for a really interesting protagonist?



Vocabulary:

Choose a word from the list to complete each sentence.

intuition	incessantly	sympathetic	tact
anticipation	obnoxious	ruefully	bequeath

1. I found my grandmother to be most _____ to people in dire straits.
2. You must show some _____ when dealing with those who disagree with you.
3. Nancy Drew had a lot of _____ in being able to gauge her friend's mood.
4. "I am really sorry I can't come to your party," James said _____.
5. It was with a great deal of _____ that Imani awaited her cousin's arrival.
6. Do you think the old man will _____ any of his estate to his nephew?
7. My next door neighbor is so _____, no one will have anything to do with her.
8. When left in the kennel, the dog barked so _____, he finally went hoarse.

Questions



1. What is the **setting** of the story at the beginning of Chapter One?

2. What had Josiah Crowley promised Mary and Edna? What became of his promise?

3. What made Nancy leave the two women and try to catch up with the van?

4. What was Nancy's impression of the Topham sisters?

5. What did Nancy hope would appear and resolve the issue of the will?

6. Whom did Hannah Gruen see with Mr. Crowley and what did Nancy think this might have meant?

Language Activities



A. The Good Old Indispensable Adverb!

An **adverb** is a part of speech defined as *a modifier (or helper) of a verb* (usually an action word). Often an adverb will end in the letters *ly* (i.e. *slowly*). Our novel features a good many creative adverbs.



1. *Nancy smiled understandingly and made no comment.*

→ In this sentence, which verb does ***understandingly*** modify? _____

2. *But finally she said tactfully, "Ada and Isabel were in high school with me.*

→ In this sentence, what verb does ***tactfully*** modify? _____

3. *The child's great-aunts profusely thanked Nancy again for rescuing Judy.*

→ In this sentence the adverb _____ modifies the verb _____

B. A simile is a comparison using the words “like” or “as”. We find an example of a simile later in the novel: “Moon Lake! The words hit Nancy *like a thunderbolt.*” What is being compared in this example?

--

Invent your own **similes** comparing the following items with something from your own imagination:

a) a moving van leaving the scene of a crime

b) your choice

C. Anagrams

An **anagram** is a word that is formed by changing the order of the letters of another word. For example, the letters in the word **WAS** can also form the word **SAW**. Follow these directions to form the anagrams:



- a) read the clue in the right-hand column.
- b) Using the word in the left-hand column move the letters around in any order, but you must use all the letters. All of the words in the left-hand column can be found in this section of *The Secret of the Old Clock*.

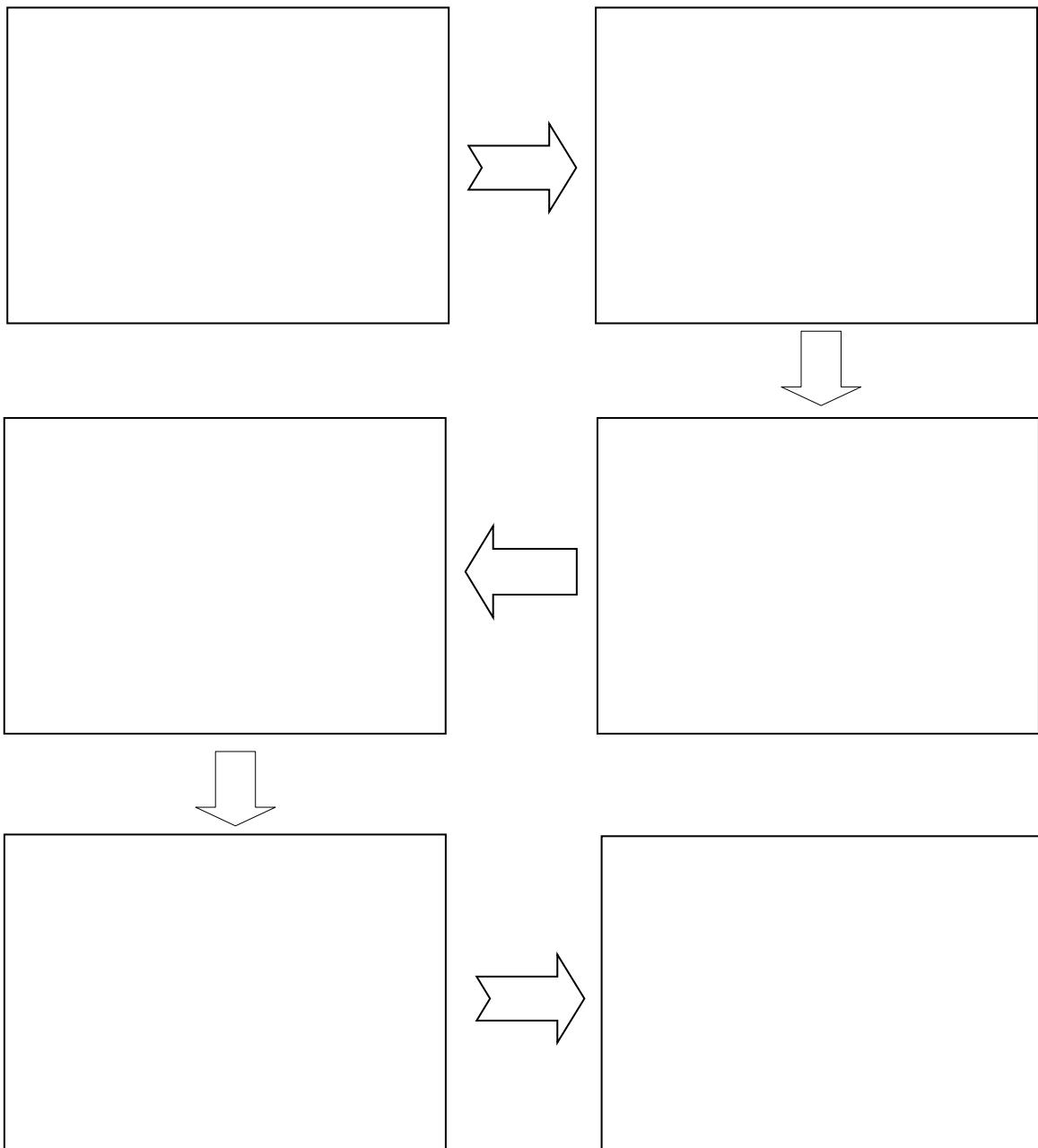
Word	Anagram	Clue
years		State again.
great		Shred.
arms		Male sheep.
burden		Set afire.
heart		The world.
parent		Snare.
items		Strike with a firm blow.

D. A number of fascinating characters have already appeared in the novel. For each of the three characters below think of three adjectives which would accurately describe him/her. Consider both appearance and personality.

Character	1	2	3
Nancy			
Hannah			
Mr. Crowley			

E. Sequence Chart

Choose what you consider to be the six most important events in this section. In each of the six boxes below list the six events that you have chosen, describing what happened and telling why you consider this to be an essential part of the story.



Extension Activity



A Picture's Worth a Thousand Words

Use the three boxes to describe and illustrate the beginning, middle and end of this section.



Beginning Picture:	Beginning:
Middle Picture	Middle:
Concluding Picture:	Concluding: