

CAUSE AND EFFECT

INSTRUCTIONS

Read the story and answer the questions that follow.

The Mystery at Crooked Steps Inn

Marnie was determined to solve the mystery at Crooked Steps Inn. The inn belonged to her Aunt Ivy, and her parents had always told her that “funny things” happened there. One time, a guest’s locket disappeared in the middle of the night. Another time, the candles in the hallway suddenly blew out—and nobody was near them. Another time, the big French doors in the living room slammed shut, startling everyone in the room.

Marnie had always heard stories like this and wanted to investigate. She loved reading Nancy Drew books, and she wanted to be a sleuth too.

Marnie’s father was planning to visit his sister Ivy for her birthday, so this was Marnie’s chance. “Take me with you, Dad!” she pleaded. “I want to be like Nancy Drew!”

“All right, Marnie,” he answered. “But don’t pester Aunt Ivy about these mysteries.”

When Marnie and her father arrived at the inn, Marnie immediately noticed the crooked steps leading up to the

front porch. “Those steps look creepy,” Marnie whispered.

Her father laughed. “While the builders were laying the bricks, a huge lightning storm started,” he explained. “They all ran inside—and then went home for the day. When they returned, the cement had dried, and the bricks were all crooked.”

Marnie’s father rang the doorbell. Aunt Ivy opened the door and greeted them with open arms. Her long black dress touched the floor and hid her feet.

“Marnie,” Aunt Ivy said, once they were in the living room. “You should know that this house is full of secret staircases. If you slide that bookcase over there to the left, a narrow set of stairs appears. Those lead to my bedroom.”

“Wow,” said Marnie, glancing at her father.

“You’ve got your work cut out for you, Nancy!” he said with a smile. “Oops, I mean Marnie.”

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1. Why do Marnie and her father visit Aunt Ivy?
 - a. Marnie's father wants Aunt Ivy to sell the old inn.
 - b. Aunt Ivy wants to solve the mystery of her inn.
 - c. Marnie's father promised to take Marnie to the inn.
 - d. It is Aunt Ivy's birthday.

2. What happens if someone slides the bookcase in the inn's living room to the left?
 - a. The candles in the hallway blow out.
 - b. The French doors in the living room slam shut.
 - c. A staircase to Aunt Ivy's bedroom appears.
 - d. A secret passage to the kitchen is blocked.

3. Why are the steps leading up to Aunt Ivy's crooked?
