

CISD Grade 6 ELAR Unit 04A

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Saddle Up for a Ride Through Texas History and Mystery



1) Attention young mystery and western lovers! Joan Lowery Nixon's book, *Search for the Shadowman*, is your next "must" read! In this exciting story, the Wild West comes to life as a young boy tries to clear a shamed ancestor and solve a century-old mystery.

2) To Andy Thomas, a sixth grade history assignment to create a family tree seems silly. Then, an interview with his Great-Aunt Winnie changes his mind. When she skirts many of his questions, Andy is convinced there is a family secret. To learn the secret, Andy digs deeper. He talks to another town native who is eager to embarrass his great-aunt. With her help, he discovers an outlaw ancestor.

3) Yet, the more Andy learns about his long-dead relative, the less he believes he was a criminal. For the sake of his great-aunt's feelings, Andy's family warns him to drop the subject. Andy begins his crusade to learn the truth. As part of his investigation, he visits the library and runs Internet searches. He even studies headstones! His search takes him back to a terrible time known as the Texas Salt Wars. There, at last, he learns the truth about this relative.

4) Nixon quickly hooks the reader's interest with vivid details of Andy's experiences. The reader will eagerly join Andy in his search for pieces that will solve his puzzle as he uncovers little-known facts in Texas history. There isn't a reader who would pass up this opportunity to solve such a mystery.

5) At times, Nixon paints a harsh picture of Andy's family. His courage in standing up to them is inspiring. Both Andy and the reader are relieved when his family finally helps him in his quest for the truth.

6) From start to finish, *Search for the Shadowman* is a page-turner! Nixon weaves the present and past to create an exciting combination of history and mystery. Don't miss this bumpy trip through Texas' wild and unsettled past!

- 1 Which is the BEST summary of Paragraphs 2 and 3?
- A When Andy discovers a family secret, he investigates details through the Internet and library services. He learns the truth about this long-dead relative.
 - B Andy interviews Great-Aunt Winnie to learn more about his family history. He wants to go to the library and use Internet services to find out more information.
 - C Andy Thomas is a sixth grader who has a history assignment about the Wild West. Andy's family is not always helpful in searching for information.
 - D *Search for the Shadowman* is an exciting story about the Wild West. Andy Thomas is the main character who wants to do his own family research about that time period.

- 2 In Paragraph 6, what is the meaning of the word **combination**?
- F the state of being joined
 - G creating new properties
 - H selecting of elements
 - J the exchanging of thoughts

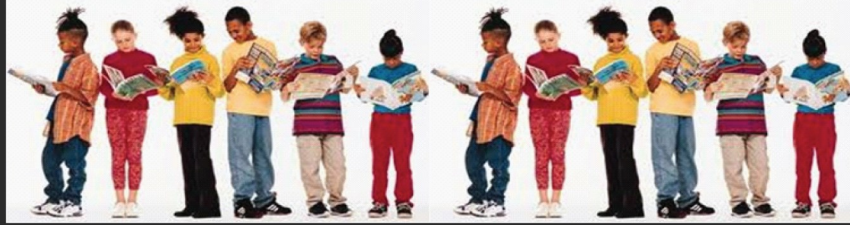
- 3 Complete the following analogy:

details : main idea ::
_____ : mystery

- A summary
 - B clues
 - C crime
 - D secret
- 4 What is the author's purpose in writing *Saddle Up for a Ride Through Texas History and Mystery*?
- F to solve a family mystery
 - G to entertain the reader with Texas history events
 - H to explain how to solve a mystery
 - J to persuade the reader to check out this book
- 5 Why would the author include facts that Andy visited the library, did Internet searches, and studied headstones?
- A to get the reader excited about a good mystery
 - B to let the reader know that he didn't just jump to conclusions
 - C to teach the reader how to write a report
 - D to help the reader understand why Andy was trying to solve the mystery

- 6** You have been invited to a "Meet the Author" luncheon for Joan Lowery Nixon. The invitation says *R.S.V.P.*, a shortened version of the French phrase "*rezpondez s'il vous plait.*" You know that this means -
- F** dress casually
 - G** please reply
 - H** bring a companion
 - J** regrets only
- 7** You can tell that Andy's family is not supportive of his quest to discover the family secret because -
- A** they believe that Andy should be outside playing
 - B** they believe that constructing a family tree is a waste of time
 - C** they believe that Andy has gotten off-track and lost his focus when investigating the outlaw relative
 - D** they worry that Great-Aunt Winnie will be embarrassed

- 8** There is a picture below the title, *Saddle Up for a Ride through Texas History and Mystery*. How does this picture relate to the main idea of the passage?
- F** You can tell from the picture that the book is about the Salt Wars.
 - G** The shadow makes you think about a mystery because the details aren't clear.
 - H** The picture includes many details from the story.
 - J** You can tell from the picture that a boy was involved in solving the mystery.



THIS YEAR'S NUMBER ONE MUST-READ BOOK!

“It will make you love your own family even more!”

“One of the best books I’ve ever read!”

“Find out who-dun-it yourself!”

☛ **A WONDERFUL MYSTERY
TO TRY TO SOLVE**

☛ **A LESSON ABOUT
HISTORY IN TEXAS**

☛ **ALL ROLLED INTO ONE
ACTION-PACKED NOVEL**

☛ **A STEP BY STEP PROCESS FOR
HOW TO TRACE YOUR
FAMILY HISTORY**

Search for the **Shadowman**



Search for the Shadowman
Available for Download January 1



- 9 Pick the two most convincing parts of the ad – which were the most persuasive?
Explain why these two parts of the ad might make you download the book.

- 10 Which part or parts of the ad make a “sentimental appeal”?
- F the statement *Available for Download January 1*
 - G the picture of the two students reading books
 - H the testimonial *It will make you love your own family even more!*
 - J the statement *A Lesson about History in Texas*

[The following excerpts were taken from actual public postings by readers of this novel. Please note that some of the reviews contain errors. Can you locate them?]

Online Customer Reviews of Joan Lowery Nixon's *Search for the Shadowman*

Review #1

An excellent tale that shows the magnitude of communication and trust between a family from generation to generation. This book, about a schoolboy who is assigned a project to look for his family history, is distinctively detailed and is superior for any age. This gumshoe novel created a puzzle when Andy tried to find out what really happened to one of his family members that nobody would spill their guts about. Can you find the "whodunit" yourself?

Review #2

I just want to tell you that this is such a fabulous book by Joan Lowery Nixon. It is about a kid named Andy who gets an interesting assignment on the first day of school. His teacher, Mr. Hammergren, wants Andy to research his family tree. Andy wants to find out if Cole Joseph stole money from his family or not. I am not recommending this book just because Nixon is a four-time Edgar award winner. I am recommending this book because it is one of the best books I have ever read.

Review #3

In *Search for the Shadowman* by Joan Lowery Nixon, the main character Andy Thomas gets an assignment from his history teacher and begins a search for a fellow in his family tree known as Cole Joseph. A mystery surrounds Cole Joseph's being crossed off the family tree by a betrayal of trust. The only trouble is that Andy doesn't think Cole Joseph is guilty and sets out to prove his innocence.

I liked this story's use of the computer, e-mail, library research, and detective footwork to help Andy solve the mystery about Cole Joseph. More than the research, I enjoyed learning about Andy as a person by the way he handled his assignment. Andy showed his faithfulness to his research, his family, and his friend by achieving his goal of clearing Cole Joseph's name, making his family proud of their ancestor, and still honoring his friendship with J.J.

Even when Andy's research could have given him fame and fortune, it would have also hurt his best friend and his family. Andy chose the only honorable way to end the long lost search for the shadowman.

Review #4

I like the way the author teaches you about the Salt Wars because I like learning new things. I'd never heard of the Salt Wars, so that made the book better. However, if I'd already been an expert on them, I probably would have chosen another book. When I did my book report, I said "This book is too easy to figure out".

Review #5

Every one of my friends has read this book, and we all loved it. If you haven't read it, you are seriously out of the loop. Even Justin Bieber says it is the best book for kids our age. So get on board. Don't wait!

11 In Review #3, what change needs to be made in the opening sentence, if any?

- A** Put commas before and after ***Andy Thomas*** and italicize the title of the book.
- B** Italicize the title of the book and put a comma before the word ***and***.
- C** Remove the comma after ***Nixon*** and italicize the title of the book.
- D** Put commas before and after ***Andy Thomas*** and before ***and***.

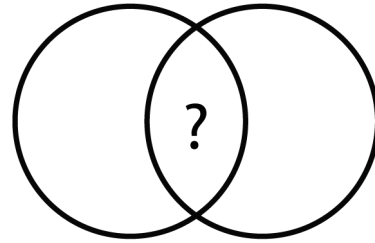
12 What change should be made to the last sentence of Review #4?

- F** Put a comma after the word ***said***.
- G** Put a comma after the word ***said*** and move the period inside the quotation marks at the end.
- H** Move the period inside the quotation marks at the end.
- J** Make no change.

13 Which reviewer's viewpoint indicates that the reader did not particularly like the Nixon novel?

- A** Review # 1
- B** Review # 2
- C** Review # 3
- D** Review # 4

14 Review 1 Review 3



Which of the following belongs in the section with the "?" of the Venn diagram?

- F** family pride
- G** good mystery
- H** family pride and good resources
- J** family history or good mystery

15 Reviewer #5 uses faulty reasoning in trying convince the reader to read the book. Which technique or techniques are used in Review #5?

- A** bandwagon
- B** false authority
- C** false authority and bandwagon
- D** bandwagon and factual evidence