

The Secret of the Ninth Hole

1 Chad and Lisa waited in line to play Unsolved Mysteries, the new miniature golf course. When they reached the counter, a clerk handed them balls and clubs. “No one has solved the mystery yet,” the clerk said.

2 “Isn’t every hole a mystery?” asked Chad. “Like UFOs or sea monsters?”

3 “Each hole is about a famous mystery,” said the clerk. “But you have to solve a mystery to complete the course. If you’re the first to solve it, you get your picture in the newspaper.”

4 Chad grinned at Lisa. “Look for my picture on tomorrow’s front page.”

5 “You wish,” Lisa said, following him onto the course.

6 Chad and Lisa boarded the rusty plane at the first hole. The green stretched from the tee behind the cockpit to the cup in the tail of the plane. Suddenly, lights flashed and dials spun wildly in the cockpit. A speaker crackled, “Mayday! Mystery Flight 319 crashing in the Bermuda Triangle.”

7 “I hope my ball doesn’t disappear in the Bermuda Triangle,” said Chad. He took his first shot. The ball bounced off the walls of the plane. Chad took three more shots to finish the hole. Lisa swung, and her ball rolled through the plane and into the cup.

8 “Hole-in-one!” she yelled.

9 “Welcome to the Lost City of Atlantis,” said the speaker at the second hole. The walls glowed with scenes of fish darting among the sunken ruins of a city. Chad felt like he was golfing underwater.

10 At the third hole, the speaker said, “Meet Nessie, the Loch Ness Monster.” Chad tapped his ball through the loop-the-loop of the giant sea monster’s body. Lisa whacked hers too hard, sending it off course.

11 Chad made a hole-in-one at King Arthur’s round table. On the alien spaceship, Lisa mastered the controls. Chad’s ball was lost through a trapdoor. After the haunted house, Mount Olympus, and King Tut’s Tomb, Chad and Lisa were tied at 27 strokes each.

12 A dragon towered over the ninth hole. Giant eggs dotted the green. Steam seeped from a nearby cave.



13 “The mysteries of the golf course hold the solution to your last adventure,” crackled the speaker. “Put the clues together, and escape. Fail, and enter the Dragon’s Lair.”

14 “What clues?” asked Lisa.

15 “The course holds the solution,” Chad repeated. “We played the Bermuda Triangle, then Atlantis, Nessie, and King Arthur. What was next?”

16 “The haunted house, Mount Olympus, and Tut’s tomb,” said Lisa.

17 Chad pictured each hole. But he didn’t see any clues. He thought about each mystery...Bermuda, Atlantis, Nessie, King. Then Chad grinned.

18 “You solved the mystery?” cried Lisa.

19 “Spell out the first letters of something at each hole,” Chad said. “Like, B for Bermuda or S for spaceship.”

20 “B-A-N-K-S-H-M-T.”

21 “Olympus, not Mount Olympus,” corrected Chad. “The letters spell out *bankshot*.”

22 “I get it!” cried Lisa. “Don’t aim for the cup. Bank the ball off the eggs.”

23 Lisa putted. Her ball bounced off an egg and into the cup. The dragon roared, and its tail opened a door hidden near the cave. Lisa stood in the secret exit, watching Chad shoot. Chad missed the eggs. His ball rolled into a gutter. Flames shot from the dragon’s snout. The speaker crackled, “Beware the Dragon’s Lair!”

24 Laughing, Lisa scurried out the secret exit.

25 “Time to have my picture taken,” she said as the door snapped shut.

26 Chad entered the cave, wondering what hazards he would find, but the cave only led outside the golf course. He saw Lisa talking to a man with a camera.

27 “Both our pictures should be in the newspaper,” she said. “I finished the course, but my brother solved the mystery.”

28 Chad pictured tomorrow’s headline: Secret of the Ninth Hole Solved!

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Headlines

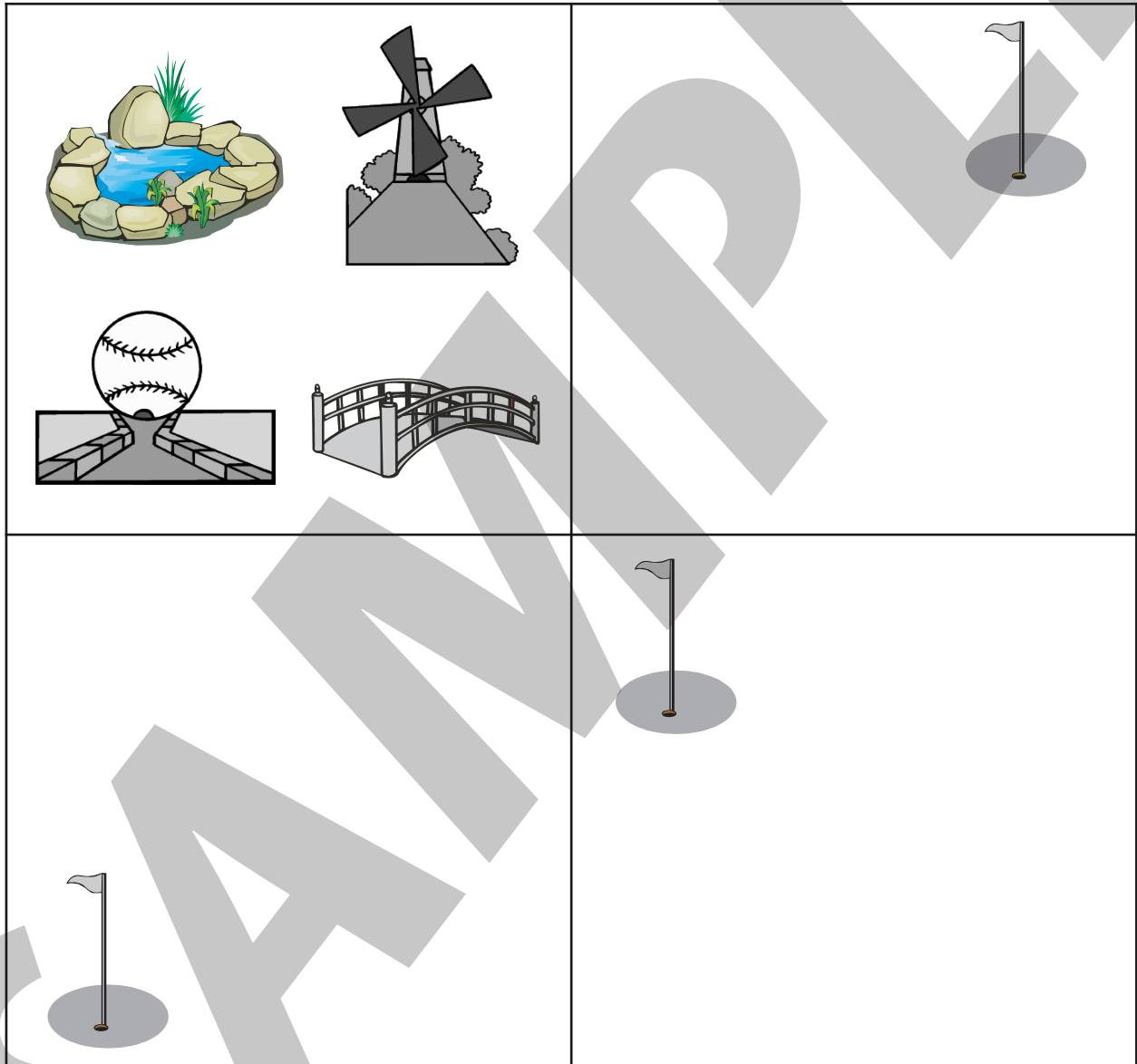
If this passage were a news story, it might have this headline:

New Miniature Golf Course Holds Mystery

On the line below, write a headline of your own about the passage.

My Golf Course

Use the pictures below to design your own three-hole miniature golf course. On a separate sheet of paper, describe your golf course or describe someone's adventure on your golf course.



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Extension

Create a 3-D model of one of the holes you designed. Use a shoebox, green felt, and any other materials you want. Be creative!

3.1.3.F.5 (Vocabulary)

1. Read the sentence from the story.

Chad and Lisa boarded the rusty plane at the first hole.

What does **boarded** mean?

- A Bumped
- B Closed
- C Entered
- D Searched

3.1.3.F.5 (Vocabulary)

2. Read the sentence from the story.

Bank the ball off the eggs.

Which meaning of the word **bank** is used in the story?

- A To cover
- B To pile up
- C To play off a surface
- D To tip when turning

3.1.3.G.8 (Inference/Interpretation)

3. What do both Lisa and Chad want most in the story?

- A To find clues
- B To avoid trapdoors
- C To get a good score
- D To hit a ball into a cup

3.1.3.G.5 (Literary Elements/Text Conventions)

4. What happens after Lisa and Chad play the hole at King Tut's Tomb?

- A They have the same score.
- B Lisa rolls a ball into an airplane.
- C They wait in a line to get supplies.
- D Chad hits a ball through a sea monster.

3.1.3.G.2 (Main Idea/Supporting Details)

5. Lisa and Chad finish their game by spelling the word—
- A adventure
 - B bankshot
 - C exit
 - D golf

3.1.3.G.5 (Literary Elements/Text Conventions)

6. At the end of the story, Chad thinks about the newspaper headline because he—
- A likes being famous
 - B feels proud of himself
 - C wants people to visit the course
 - D enjoys reading about mysteries

3.1.3.G.5 (Literary Elements/Text Conventions)

7. Why is the golf course important to this story?
- A It gives practice in aiming a ball.
 - B It holds the answer to the mystery.
 - C Both Lisa and Chad get to play the last hole there.
 - D Both Lisa and Chad must learn to use clubs there.

3.1.3.G.5 (Literary Elements/Text Conventions)

8. Lisa includes Chad in the newspaper picture because—
- A Chad's ball rolled into a gutter
 - B Chad wants to be on the front page, too
 - C Chad's hint leads her to the secret exit
 - D Chad is her brother, and he is a good player

3.1.3.G.6 (Central Idea/Theme)

9. What is a theme of this story?
- A Being too greedy
 - B Helping each other
 - C Accepting new ideas
 - D Thinking only of yourself

3.1.3.G.5 (Literary Elements/Text Conventions)

10. What kind of story is “The Secret of the Ninth Hole”?
- A Fable
 - B Fairy tale
 - C Realistic fiction
 - D Tall tale