International School of Monterrey

Junior High School ___th Grade
Trimester ___ Literature

Name _____ Date _____ List #: ____-____

DIRECTIONS: Write the letter or letters of the correct answer in the blank. (7 pts.)

Secret Passages

Although secret passages have been glorified through history in fiction and lore, they really did exist and served a variety of functions, mostly as ways to escape or hide during enemy sieges. Most secret passages in castles were hidden from view or camouflaged in walls, staircases, behind bookshelves, or in closets. Some were simple trap doors hidden in floor boards or under rugs. While some were built into the original plans of castles, others, particularly in jails, were tunnels dug into the walls or floors leading to escape.

Secret passages were common features of Egyptian pyramids which were used to access the burial chambers and to trick would--be marauders to enter booby--trapped rooms. Later in history, Christian priests used secret rooms to worship and elude persecution from Catholics. In the 1500s and 1600s, Catholic priests used passages known as “priest holes” to escape persecution from the Protestants. Old Catholic families would often hold services in secluded and specially designed parts of their houses such as in the attic or roof. A priest hole was often built into one of these sections of the house (sometimes in its chimney, behind wall panels, or under floor boards) and was nothing more than a small, hidden enclosure in which the priest could quickly hide along with the sacred vessels, vestments, and alter furniture. Sometimes, these “holes” were so small that the priest suffocated. The existence of these hidden areas were well known to Protestant bounty hunters, but were often so well--built and disguised, that not even expert masons or carpenters could find them, even after virtually destroying the house. One priest hole, recently discovered by the owner of Mains Hall in Singleton, UK, was positioned behind plasterboard of a downstairs hallway, connected to a secret stairwell behind a bookshelf in the study.

More recently, secret passages and rooms have been used for nefarious purposes such as hiding illegal drugs, gambling operations, smuggling illegal immigrants or prisoners, or, even as torture chambers for criminals. Other types of modern secret passages and rooms, such as panic rooms, are constructed by building companies as a refuge for families in case of a home invasion or burglary. These hidden rooms often feature soundproof and bulletproof walls and phone connections that enable inhabitants to call for help.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

Secret Passages Questions

____ 1. **Why were "priest holes" sometimes built into houses?**

A. To enable Catholics to practice religion freely.
B. To lead would--be marauders into booby--trapped rooms.
C. To give a priest a secret place to hide in the event of a raid.
D. To hide the wealth and riches of Catholic families.

____ 2. **Which of the following was a disadvantage of "priest holes?"**

A. They were sometimes poorly hidden.
B. They were sometimes poorly constructed.
C. They were sometimes dangerous for priests because they were too small.
D. They were easily found by bounty hunters.

____ 3. **A place inside a home built to keep safe during a burglary is called a...**

A. panic room.
B. priest hole.
C. secret passage.
D. hidden room.

____ 4. **Which of the following could replace the word "refuge" as used in the final paragraph?**

A. Passage
B. Hidden room
C. Dangerous place
D. Safe place

____ 5. **Which of the following could be a title for the final paragraph?**

A. The History of Secret Passages.
B. Modern Uses for Secret Rooms and Passages.
C. Companies that Build Secret Passages.
D. How to Combat a Burglary.

____ 6. **Which of the following is NOT true about secret passages?**

A. Priest holes were built by Protestant families to hide priests in the event of a raid by Catholic bounty hunters.
B. Some secret passages are built by criminals for conducting crime.
C. Secret rooms and passages were built in ancient times and modern times.
D. Secret passages were used and built for a variety of purposes.

_____ 7. **Write the letter of <u>ALL</u> of the following that are true.**

A. Secret passages were built to hide or escape when an enemy attacked.
B. Secret passages were built to help marauders escape from pyramids.
C. Secret passages were sometimes built by prisoners in jail.
D. Most secret passages in castles were difficult to see.

LIVEWORKSHEETS