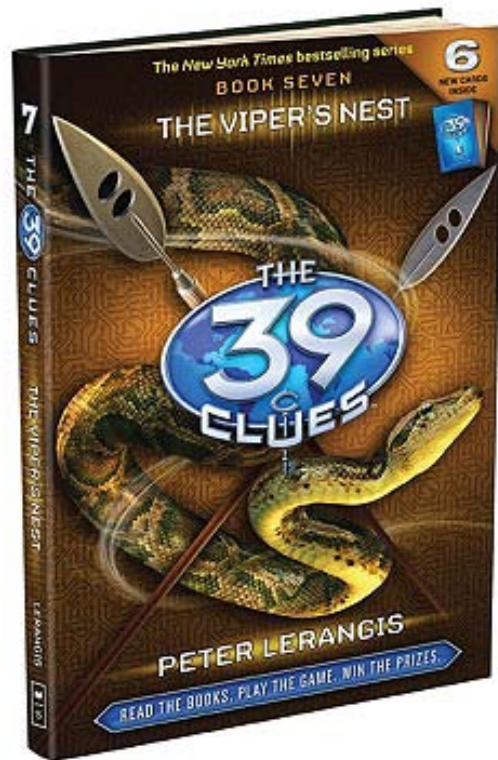


## The 39 Clues Book #7: *The Viper's Nest* Teacher's Guide

**Theme:** Foreshadowing  
and Flashback



### Guide to The 39 Clues Book 7: *The Viper's Nest* by Peter Lerangis

Theme of this section: Foreshadowing and Flashback

#### **What the Book is About**

It's no longer a game. The body count is rising. Shaken by recent events, Amy and Dan flee to a distant land and trace the footsteps of their most formidable ancestor yet: a military leader of mythic proportions. Yet just as the siblings begin to master the art of ancient warfare, they confront a dangerous enemy that can't be felled with a sword: the truth. With the stakes higher than ever, Amy and Dan uncover something so devastating it changes everything – the secret of their family branch.

#### **About the Author**

Peter Lerangis is the author of over 150 books, for early readers through teens, which have sold nearly 3 million copies. He injects his own brand of suspense, humor, and colorful characters into many different writing genres - mystery (the *Spy X* series), science fiction (the *Watchers* series), teen romance (the *Drama Club* series), and serious historical fiction (*Smiler's Bones*).

## Foreshadowing and Flashback

Two literary elements that can be as elusive as a Madrigal are foreshadowing and flashback. While foreshadowing is used by the author to provide a hint to the reader about something that might happen later in the plot, flashback interrupts the plot by telling an event that happened before the time of the story. Both literary elements provide plot clues without giving away the ending. They help build interest and suspense as the reader speculates how the clue will affect the ending.

Students will stay in front of the competition in the hunt for The 39 Clues by becoming experts in detecting the use of foreshadowing and flashbacks. In *The Viper's Nest*, Grace, Arthur, and Hope come alive to the reader through the author's use of flashbacks. Flashbacks are easy to spot because the text often reverts to past tense. Amy shares her memories of her parents through flashbacks frequently as she begins to remember how and why her parents died and who was responsible!

Foreshadowing in The 39 Clues is sort of like a clue hunt within a clue hunt. The author plants hints in the text for the reader to find. One signal of a foreshadowing clue is when the reader thinks, "I wonder why the author told me that..."

Identifying foreshadowing in a story can be tricky. Master this plot element by discussing foreshadowing clues from books 1-6 or reflect back upon them in book seven. Finding foreshadowing when the story is complete will help students to easily identify it when reading in the future.

Teaching students to analyze plot elements like foreshadowing and flashback opens literary doors by showing the student that there's more to the story than just what's obvious. Great stories are like puzzles waiting to be solved.

What does the following paragraph foreshadow? Why does Lerangis use foreshadowing and how does it support the plot?

*"Well, yes, one of the family branches is rumored to have developed antidotes to Kabra poisons over the years. I always suspected Grace of being behind this. But oh, dear, I do suppose it's a bit too late for the children to run crying to her, isn't it?"*

## Flashback to the Future

Create a memory book of Arthur and Hope based upon Amy's flashbacks. Gather pictures of the places they visited. Create photographs or draw what they might look like based upon their characterizations. Put the artifacts of their adventures together in a scrapbook for Dan and Amy to remember their parents. While investigating the flashbacks in the 39 Clues, is it possible to find foreshadowing in a flashback? What predictions can you make after studying the flashbacks?

Grace's friends provide valuable information to Dan and Amy while they hunt for the Clues. They are a great place to start when searching for foreshadowing clues as a reader too. Students should examine details Grace's friends tell to Dan and Amy and how some of the details about her adventures foreshadow future events.

Finally, help students appreciate how difficult it is to write using these literary tools by having them create their own story with a flashback or foreshadowing. Have students pretend to be Arthur Trent telling Grace about an adventure he had as Roger Nudelman. Perhaps if they master this element they can win a Nobel Prize in Literature like Winston Churchill!

*This guide was written by Laura Stockwell, Fifth Grade Teacher, Orlando, Florida*