Name: _____ Date: _____

Why Chopped Onions Make You Cry

Circle group

An onion has a papery skin. It has layers inside. It has a secret.

A grown-up cuts the onion. Tiny bits of gas float out. They reach your eyes. Ouch! Your eyes sting.

Your eyes make tears. The tears wash the gas away. You cry, but you are not sad.

Then the onion goes in the pot. Heat makes it soft and sweet.

Questions

1. What does an onion have inside?

_____

_____

2. What floats out when a grown-up cuts an onion?

_____

_____

3. What do your eyes make?

_____

_____

4. What does heat do to the onion in the pot?

_____

_____

5. Why do you cry when someone cuts an onion?

_____

_____

Words to know

layer: one flat piece on top of another
gas: something like air that you cannot see
sting: to hurt with a quick sharp feeling
tears: drops of water that come from your eyes

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Why Chopped Onions Make You Cry

Triangle group

An onion looks plain. It has a papery skin and layers inside. But it has a secret.

When a grown-up cuts an onion, tiny bits of gas float out. The gas drifts up to your eyes. Ouch! Your eyes sting.

Your eyes want to fix this. They make tears to wash the gas away. So you cry, but you are not sad.

Soon the onion is in the pot. Heat makes it soft and sweet. Now it tastes great in soup.

Questions

1. What does an onion have inside?

_____

_____

2. What floats out when a grown-up cuts an onion?

_____

_____

3. What do your eyes make to wash the gas away?

_____

_____

4. What does heat do to the onion in the pot?

_____

_____

5. Why do you cry when someone cuts an onion?

_____

_____

Words to know

layer: one flat piece on top of another
gas: something like air that you cannot see
sting: to hurt with a quick sharp feeling
tears: drops of water that come from your eyes

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

Name: _____ Date: _____

Why Chopped Onions Make You Cry

Square group

An onion looks very plain from the outside. It has a thin, papery skin, and underneath there are many layers. But an onion is hiding a secret.

When a grown-up slices into an onion, tiny bits of gas float out into the air. The gas drifts up toward your face and makes your eyes sting.

Your eyes try to protect themselves, so they make tears to wash the gas away. That is why you cry, even though you are not sad at all.

Later, the onion goes into a hot pot. The heat makes it soft and sweet, and it adds a wonderful taste to soup.

Questions

1. What is inside an onion under its papery skin?

_____

_____

2. What floats out into the air when a grown-up slices an onion?

_____

_____

3. What do your eyes make to wash the gas away?

_____

_____

4. What does the heat in the pot do to the onion?

_____

_____

5. Why might you cry over an onion even though you are not sad?

_____

_____

Words to know

layer: one flat piece on top of another
gas: something like air that you cannot see
sting: to hurt with a quick sharp feeling
tears: drops of water that come from your eyes

Talk together (every group has these)

1. Find one fact that every group read. How did your sheet say it?
2. What did your sheet tell you that you think another group's did not? Ask them.
3. What is one question about this topic that none of the sheets answered?

For the teacher: Why Chopped Onions Make You Cry

Each student sheet carries a shape, not a level. The same topic and facts, written three ways.

Circle: Why Chopped Onions Make You Cry

Easier · 64 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 0.3

1. Layers.
2. Tiny bits of gas.
3. Tears.
4. It makes the onion soft and sweet.
5. The gas stings your eyes, so they make tears. You are not sad.

Triangle: Why Chopped Onions Make You Cry

This passage · 82 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 0.4

1. Layers.
2. Tiny bits of gas.
3. Tears.
4. It makes the onion soft and sweet.
5. The gas stings your eyes, and your eyes make tears to wash it away. You are not sad.

Square: Why Chopped Onions Make You Cry

Harder · 107 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.2

1. Many layers.
2. Tiny bits of gas.
3. Tears.
4. It makes the onion soft and sweet.
5. The gas stings your eyes, and your eyes make tears to wash it away.