Name: _____ Date: _____

A River Carves a Canyon

Circle group

A canyon is a deep valley. Its sides are steep. Some are so deep that the river looks like a thin ribbon. How can a river make a hole so big?

It takes time. Water is soft. But a river carries sand and small stones. They scrape the rock. Each scrape takes off a tiny bit.

One scrape is too small to see. But the river flows day after day for years. It cuts down into the ground. The canyon gets deeper.

The Grand Canyon is in Arizona. The Colorado River cut it. It took a very long time. The river still flows there.

Questions

1. What is a canyon?

_____

_____

2. What does a river carry that scrapes rock?

_____

_____

3. How long does a canyon take to form?

_____

_____

4. Which river cut the Grand Canyon?

_____

_____

5. Water is soft. How can it cut rock?

_____

_____

Words to know

canyon: a deep valley with steep rock sides
steep: very sharply slanted, almost straight up
scrape: to rub against something and wear it away
carries: takes something along from place to place

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: _____

A River Carves a Canyon

Triangle group

A canyon is a deep valley with steep sides. Some canyons are so deep that the river at the bottom looks like a thin ribbon. How could a river make a hole that big?

The river did it with time. Water by itself is soft. But a river carries sand and small stones. As the river flows, these bits scrape the rock below. Each scrape takes away a tiny bit of stone.

One scrape is too small to see. But the river keeps flowing day after day, year after year. Slowly, it cuts down into the ground. The canyon gets deeper and deeper.

The Grand Canyon in Arizona is a famous example. The Colorado River cut it over a very long time. The river is still flowing there today.

Questions

1. What is a canyon?

_____

_____

2. What does a river carry that helps it cut the rock?

_____

_____

3. How long does it take a river to make a canyon?

_____

_____

4. Which river cut the Grand Canyon?

_____

_____

5. Why can water cut rock even though water is soft?

_____

_____

Words to know

canyon: a deep valley with steep rock sides
steep: very sharply slanted, almost straight up
scrape: to rub against something and wear it away
carries: takes something along from place to place

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: _____

A River Carves a Canyon

Square group

A canyon is a deep valley with extremely steep sides. In some canyons, the river at the very bottom looks like a thin ribbon far below. How could a river possibly carve such an enormous hole?

The river accomplished it with time. Water by itself is soft, but a flowing river carries sand and small stones along with it. As the river rushes forward, these bits scrape against the rock beneath, and every scrape removes a tiny piece of stone.

A single scrape is far too small to notice. However, the river keeps flowing day after day and year after year, slowly cutting down into the ground, until the canyon grows deeper and deeper.

The Grand Canyon in Arizona is a famous example of this. It was carved by the Colorado River over a very long span of time, and that river is still flowing there today.

Questions

1. How would you describe a canyon?

_____

_____

2. What does a river carry along that helps it cut the rock?

_____

_____

3. How much time does it take for a river to carve a canyon?

_____

_____

4. Which river carved the Grand Canyon in Arizona?

_____

_____

5. Why is a river able to cut through rock even though water is soft?

_____

_____

Words to know

canyon: a deep valley with steep rock sides
steep: very sharply slanted, almost straight up
scrape: to rub against something and wear it away
carries: takes something along from place to place

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: A River Carves a Canyon

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

Circle: A River Carves a Canyon

Easier · 104 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.4

1. A deep valley with steep sides.
2. Sand and small stones.
3. A very long time.
4. The Colorado River.
5. The sand and stones in it scrape the rock.

Triangle: A River Carves a Canyon

This passage · 129 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.4

1. A deep valley with steep sides.
2. Sand and small stones.
3. A very long time.
4. The Colorado River.
5. The sand and stones in the water scrape the rock.

Square: A River Carves a Canyon

Harder · 147 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.2

1. A deep valley with very steep sides.
2. Sand and small stones.
3. A very long time.
4. The Colorado River.
5. The sand and stones it carries scrape the rock.