Name: _____ Date: _____

The Empty Room That Answers Back

Circle group

A family moves out. The rooms are empty. Say hello in a room. The room says hello back! It is an echo.

Sound moves through the air. It hits a hard wall. Then it bounces back to your ears. It is like a ball that bounces off a wall.

An empty room has bare walls and floor. They are hard. They bounce sound well.

A new family moves in. The echo goes away. Rugs and curtains are soft. They soak up sound. Less sound bounces back.

Questions

1. What do you hear in an empty room?

_____

_____

2. What does sound do at a hard wall?

_____

_____

3. Why does an empty room have an echo?

_____

_____

4. What soft things soak up sound?

_____

_____

5. Why does a bathroom with tile walls have an echo?

_____

_____

Words to know

echo: a sound that bounces back so you hear it again
bounces: hits something and springs back
bare: empty, with nothing covering it

soak: to take in, as a sponge takes in water

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: _____

The Empty Room That Answers Back

Triangle group

When a family moves out of a house, the rooms are empty. Say hello in one of them, and the room says hello back! This is called an echo.

Sound travels through the air. It spreads out from your mouth in every direction. When it hits a hard wall, it bounces back to your ears, much like a ball bounces off a wall.

An empty room has bare walls and a bare floor. They are hard and flat, so they bounce sound very well.

When a new family moves in, the echo goes away. Rugs, curtains, and couches are soft. They soak up some of the sound. Less of it bounces back, so you hear mostly your own voice.

Questions

1. What do you hear when you say hello in an empty room?

_____

_____

2. What does sound do when it hits a hard wall?

_____

_____

3. Why does an empty room have an echo?

_____

_____

4. Which soft things soak up sound?

_____

_____

5. A bathroom with hard tile walls often has an echo. Why?

_____

_____

Words to know

echo: a sound that bounces back so you hear it again
bounces: hits something and springs back
bare: empty, with nothing covering it
soak: to take in, as a sponge takes in water

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: _____

The Empty Room That Answers Back

Square group

When a family moves out of a house, the rooms are left completely empty. If you say hello in one of them, the room seems to answer with a hello of its own. That repeated sound is called an echo.

Sound travels through the air, spreading outward from your mouth in every direction. When it strikes a hard wall, it bounces back toward your ears, much like a ball rebounding off a wall.

An empty room has bare walls and a bare floor. Because they are hard and flat, they bounce sound extremely well.

Once a new family moves in, the echo fades away. Rugs, curtains, and couches are soft, and they soak up some of the sound. Less of it bounces back, so you mostly hear your own voice.

Questions

1. What do you hear when you say hello in an empty room?

_____

_____

2. What happens when sound strikes a hard wall?

_____

_____

3. Why does an empty room produce an echo?

_____

_____

4. Which soft things soak up some of the sound?

_____

_____

5. Why might a bathroom with hard tile walls have an echo?

_____

_____

Words to know

echo: a sound that bounces back so you hear it again
bounces: hits something and springs back
bare: empty, with nothing covering it
soak: to take in, as a sponge takes in water

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: The Empty Room That Answers Back

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

Circle: The Empty Room That Answers Back

Easier · 86 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 0.2

1. An echo.
2. It bounces back.
3. The bare walls and floor are hard and bounce sound.
4. Rugs, curtains, and couches.
5. Hard walls bounce sound back.

Triangle: The Empty Room That Answers Back

This passage · 119 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.4

1. An echo.
2. It bounces back.
3. Its bare walls and floor are hard and bounce sound well.
4. Rugs, curtains, and couches.
5. Hard walls bounce sound back, just like in an empty room.

Square: The Empty Room That Answers Back

Harder · 130 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.6

1. An echo.
2. It bounces back toward your ears.
3. Its bare walls and floor are hard and flat, so they bounce sound well.
4. Rugs, curtains, and couches.
5. Hard walls bounce sound back, as they do in an empty room.