Name: _____ Date: _____

A Mushroom Is Not a Plant

Circle group

A mushroom looks like a little plant, but it is not one. It is a fungus. Plants are green, and they make food from sunlight. Mushrooms are not green. They cannot make food from light. So they grow in dark, damp places, like logs and shady soil.

Most of a mushroom is hidden. Thin threads spread out under the ground or inside a log. The threads soak up food from dead leaves and wood. The part we see makes spores. Spores are tiny specks. They float away and can grow into new mushrooms.

Some mushrooms are safe to eat. Farmers grow them in cool, dark rooms. But some wild mushrooms are poisonous. Never eat a wild mushroom. Ask a grown-up who knows.

Questions

1. What group do mushrooms belong to?

_____

_____

2. Why can mushrooms grow in the dark?

_____

_____

3. What do the thin threads do?

_____

_____

4. What are spores?

_____

_____

5. Where do farmers grow mushrooms to eat?

_____

_____

6. Why should you never eat a wild mushroom?

_____

_____

Words to know

damp: a little bit wet
spores: tiny specks that can grow into new fungi
poisonous: able to make a person very sick

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 Mushroom Is Not a Plant

Triangle group

Walk through a shady forest and you may spot a mushroom. It seems to stand in the dirt like a tiny plant. But a mushroom is a fungus, and fungi are a kingdom of their own. Green plants use sunlight to make food. A mushroom has no green in it, so sunlight cannot feed it. That is why mushrooms pop up in dark, damp spots, like old logs and shady soil.

The part you see is only a small piece. Hidden underneath, thin white threads creep through the soil or a log. The threads take in food from rotting leaves and wood. When the time is right, the mushroom rises up and drops spores. Spores are very small specks. Breezes carry them off, and a few may start new mushrooms.

Farmers can grow tasty mushrooms in cool, dark rooms. Some wild mushrooms are poisonous, though. Never pick or eat a wild one. Ask a grown-up who really knows.

Questions

1. What group do mushrooms belong to?

_____

_____

2. Why can mushrooms grow in dark places?

_____

_____

3. What do the thin threads of a mushroom do?

_____

_____

4. What are spores?

_____

_____

5. Where do farmers grow mushrooms to eat?

_____

_____

6. Why is it a good rule to never eat a wild mushroom?

_____

_____

Words to know

fungi: a group of living things that includes mushrooms
damp: a little bit wet
spores: tiny specks that can grow into new fungi
poisonous: able to make a person very sick

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 Mushroom Is Not a Plant

Square group

A mushroom may resemble a small plant, yet it is not a plant at all. It belongs to a separate group of living things called fungi. Plants are green and manufacture their food from sunlight, but mushrooms have no green color and cannot make food from light. Consequently, they grow in dark, damp places such as rotting logs and shady soil.

Most of a mushroom remains hidden. Beneath the ground, or inside a log, thin threads spread out like a web and soak up nourishment from dead leaves and wood. The part that we notice above the ground exists mainly to release spores, which are tiny specks that drift away and may grow into new mushrooms.

Certain mushrooms are safe to eat, and farmers raise them in cool, dark rooms. However, some wild mushrooms are poisonous, so you should never pick or eat one. Ask a grown-up who truly knows.

Questions

1. Which group of living things do mushrooms belong to?

_____

_____

2. Why are mushrooms able to grow in dark places?

_____

_____

3. What do the thin threads of a mushroom do beneath the ground?

_____

_____

4. What are spores?

_____

_____

5. Where do farmers raise mushrooms that are safe to eat?

_____

_____

6. Why is it wise never to eat a wild mushroom without help from an expert?

_____

_____

Words to know

fungi: a group of living things that includes mushrooms
damp: a little bit wet
spores: tiny specks that can grow into new fungi
poisonous: able to make a person very sick

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 Mushroom Is Not a Plant

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

Circle: A Mushroom Is Not a Plant

Easier · 123 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.2

1. The fungi.
2. They do not need sunlight to make food.
3. They soak up food from dead leaves and wood.
4. Tiny specks that float away and can grow into new mushrooms.
5. In cool, dark rooms.
6. Some are poisonous, and it is hard to tell which ones.

Triangle: A Mushroom Is Not a Plant

This passage · 159 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.5

1. The fungi.
2. They do not need sunlight to make food.
3. They take in food from rotting leaves and wood.
4. Very small specks that breezes carry off, and a few may start new mushrooms.
5. In cool, dark rooms.
6. Some wild mushrooms are poisonous, and it is hard to tell which ones.

Square: A Mushroom Is Not a Plant

Harder · 151 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.8

1. The fungi.
2. They cannot make food from light, so they do not need sunlight.
3. They soak up nourishment from dead leaves and wood.
4. Tiny specks that drift away and may grow into new mushrooms.
5. In cool, dark rooms.
6. Some wild mushrooms are poisonous, and it is hard to tell which ones.