Name: _____ Date: _____

The Old Mill and Its Giant Water Wheel

Circle group

Long ago, there were no big machines. People crushed grain by hand to make flour. It took a lot of time. Then people built mills. A mill used moving water for power.

A mill sat next to a stream. A big wooden wheel stood at its side. It had paddles around the rim. The stream pushed on the paddles. The wheel turned.

The wheel was joined to a thick pole inside the mill. The pole turned gears. The gears turned two heavy, round stones. They were called millstones. The top stone spun on the bottom one.

The miller poured grain between the stones. The stones crushed it into flour. The flour poured out below. It went into sacks. Bakers and families bought it.

A water mill needs no fuel. It needs a stream that keeps flowing.

Questions

1. How did people make flour before big machines?

_____

_____

2. Where was a water mill built?

_____

_____

3. What made the big wheel turn?

_____

_____

4. What were the two heavy, round stones called?

_____

_____

5. What did the stones do to the grain?

_____

_____

6. What would happen if the stream dried up?

_____

_____

Words to know

grain: small hard seeds from plants like wheat
paddles: flat boards that push against water
gears: wheels with teeth that fit together and turn each other
miller: a person who works in a mill and grinds grain
fuel: something burned to make power, like wood or oil

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 Old Mill and Its Giant Water Wheel

Triangle group

Before there were big machines, people had to crush grain by hand to make flour. It took a lot of time and hard work. Then people built mills that used the power of moving water.

A mill was built next to a stream. A big wooden wheel stood at its side, with paddles around the rim. When the stream flowed, the water pushed on the paddles and made the wheel turn.

The turning wheel was joined to a thick wooden pole inside the mill. The pole turned a set of gears, and the gears turned two heavy, round stones. These were called millstones. The top stone spun on the bottom stone.

The miller poured grain between the stones. The stones crushed it into flour, which poured out below. Then the flour was put into sacks and sold to bakers and families.

A water mill needs no fuel. It only needs a stream that keeps on flowing.

Questions

1. How did people make flour before there were big machines?

_____

_____

2. Where was a water mill built?

_____

_____

3. What made the big wooden wheel turn?

_____

_____

4. What were the two heavy, round stones called?

_____

_____

5. What did the stones do to the grain?

_____

_____

6. What would happen to a water mill if its stream dried up?

_____

_____

Words to know

grain: small hard seeds from plants like wheat
paddles: flat boards that push against water
gears: wheels with teeth that fit together and turn each other
miller: a person who works in a mill and grinds grain
fuel: something burned to make power, like wood or oil

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 Old Mill and Its Giant Water Wheel

Square group

Before the invention of large machines, people had to crush grain by hand in order to make flour, which demanded a great deal of time and effort. Eventually, people constructed mills that harnessed the power of moving water.

A mill was built beside a stream, with an enormous wooden wheel standing at its side and paddles fastened around the rim. As the stream flowed, the water pushed against the paddles and forced the wheel to turn.

The turning wheel was connected to a thick wooden pole inside the mill. The pole drove a set of gears, and the gears turned two heavy, round stones called millstones. The upper stone spun on top of the lower one.

The miller poured grain between the stones, which crushed it into flour that spilled out below. The flour was then packed into sacks and sold to bakers and families.

A water mill requires no fuel at all. All it needs is a stream that continues to flow.

Questions

1. How did people make flour before the invention of large machines?

_____

_____

2. Where was a water mill built?

_____

_____

3. What forced the enormous wooden wheel to turn?

_____

_____

4. What were the two heavy, round stones called?

_____

_____

5. What did the stones do to the grain?

_____

_____

6. What would happen to a water mill if its stream dried up?

_____

_____

Words to know

grain: small hard seeds from plants like wheat
paddles: flat boards that push against water
gears: wheels with teeth that fit together and turn each other
miller: a person who works in a mill and grinds grain
fuel: something burned to make power, like wood or oil

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 Old Mill and Its Giant Water Wheel

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

Circle: The Old Mill and Its Giant Water Wheel

Easier · 136 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.1

1. They crushed grain by hand.
2. Next to a stream.
3. The stream pushed on the paddles around its rim.
4. Millstones.
5. They crushed it into flour.
6. The wheel would stop, and the mill could not grind grain.

Triangle: The Old Mill and Its Giant Water Wheel

This passage · 156 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.8

1. They crushed grain by hand.
2. Next to a stream.
3. The water pushed on the paddles around its rim.
4. Millstones.
5. They crushed it into flour.
6. The wheel would stop turning, so the mill could not grind grain.

Square: The Old Mill and Its Giant Water Wheel

Harder · 163 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.1

1. They crushed grain by hand.
2. Beside a stream.
3. The water pushed against the paddles around its rim.
4. Millstones.
5. They crushed it into flour.
6. The wheel would stop turning, so the mill could no longer grind grain.