Name: _____ Date: _____

Finding Islands Without a Map

Circle group

Long ago, people sailed across the Pacific Ocean in big canoes. They went to tiny islands that were far apart. They had no maps. They had no compasses. How did they find their way?

They read the sky and the sea. At night, they watched the stars. Each star rose in the same place every time. The sailors used the stars like road signs.

In the day, they used the sun. They also felt the waves under the canoe. The waves came from one way, and a sailor could feel it. Birds helped too. Some birds fly to sea for fish and go home to land at night. If a sailor saw them going home, land was near.

These sailors are called wayfinders. They kept all this in their heads. Older wayfinders taught the young ones.

Questions

1. What did the island sailors not have?

_____

_____

2. How did sailors use the stars?

_____

_____

3. What could a sailor feel under the canoe?

_____

_____

4. What are these sailors called?

_____

_____

5. What did it mean if a sailor saw birds flying home?

_____

_____

6. Why did older wayfinders teach the young ones?

_____

_____

Words to know

compass: a tool with a needle that shows which way is north
wayfinders: sailors who find their way by nature's signs
canoes: long, narrow boats

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: _____

Finding Islands Without a Map

Triangle group

Long ago, people sailed across the wide Pacific Ocean in big canoes. They traveled to tiny islands that were far apart. They did not have maps or compasses. How did they find their way?

These sailors learned to read the sky and the sea. After dark, they watched where the stars rose and set. A star came up at the same spot on the horizon each night. So the stars worked like road signs.

In the day, they used the sun. They also felt the waves under the canoe. Ocean swells roll in steady lines, and a sailor could feel which way they came from. Birds helped too. Some birds fly out to sea to find fish and return to land at night. If a sailor saw them flying home, land was near.

These expert sailors are called wayfinders. They kept all of this knowledge in their heads. Older wayfinders taught the young ones, and so the skill passed down through many families.

Questions

1. What tools did the island sailors not have?

_____

_____

2. How did sailors use the stars at night?

_____

_____

3. What could a sailor feel under the canoe?

_____

_____

4. What are these expert sailors called?

_____

_____

5. What did it mean if a sailor saw birds flying home at night?

_____

_____

6. Why was it important for older wayfinders to teach young ones?

_____

_____

Words to know

compass: a tool with a needle that shows which way is north
horizon: the line where the sky seems to meet the sea
swells: long, smooth waves that roll across the ocean
wayfinders: sailors who find their way by nature's signs
canoes: long, narrow boats

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: _____

Finding Islands Without a Map

Square group

Long ago, people crossed the enormous Pacific Ocean in large canoes, voyaging to tiny islands that lay far apart from one another. They had neither maps nor compasses. How, then, did they find their way?

They had learned to read the sky and the sea. After dark, they studied where the stars rose and set, and because each star climbed out of the horizon at the same place every time, the sailors could use the stars as a kind of road sign.

During the day, they steered by the sun. They also paid close attention to the waves beneath the canoe. Ocean swells travel in steady paths, and an experienced sailor could feel which direction they were coming from. Birds provided further clues. Some birds fly out to sea in search of fish and return to land at night, so if a sailor spotted them heading home, land was close by.

These skilled navigators are known as wayfinders. They carried all of this knowledge in their heads, and older wayfinders taught younger ones, so the skill was passed down through many families.

Questions

1. What tools did the island sailors lack?

_____

_____

2. How did the sailors use the stars after dark?

_____

_____

3. What could an experienced sailor feel beneath the canoe?

_____

_____

4. What are these skilled navigators known as?

_____

_____

5. What did it tell a sailor to see birds heading home at night?

_____

_____

6. Why was it important for older wayfinders to teach younger ones?

_____

_____

Words to know

compass: a tool with a needle that shows which way is north
horizon: the line where the sky seems to meet the sea
swells: long, smooth waves that roll across the ocean
wayfinders: sailors who find their way by nature's signs
canoes: long, narrow boats

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: Finding Islands Without a Map

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

Circle: Finding Islands Without a Map

Easier · 136 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.4

1. Maps or compasses.
2. They watched where the stars rose, and used them like road signs.
3. The waves, and which way they came from.
4. Wayfinders.
5. Land was near.
6. The knowledge was only in their heads, so it would be lost if it was not taught.

Triangle: Finding Islands Without a Map

This passage · 163 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.6

1. Maps or compasses.
2. They watched where the stars rose and set, and used them like road signs.
3. The waves, or ocean swells, and which way they were coming from.
4. Wayfinders.
5. Land was near.
6. The knowledge was only in their heads, so it would be lost if it was not taught.

Square: Finding Islands Without a Map

Harder · 182 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.1

1. Maps and compasses.
2. They studied where the stars rose and set, and used them as a kind of road sign.
3. The ocean swells, and which direction they were coming from.
4. Wayfinders.
5. That land was close by.
6. The knowledge was carried only in their heads, so it would be lost if it was not taught.