Name: _____ Date: _____

The Purple Dye from Sea Snails

Circle group

Long ago, purple was a hard color to get. Cloth in other colors could be dyed with plants and berries. But a deep purple came from a small sea snail.

The Phoenicians were sailors and traders. They lived on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. One of their cities was Tyre. Workers there collected the snails from the sea. A snail makes a liquid in its body. Workers took out the liquid and left it in the sun. It changed color and turned purple.

Many snails were needed to dye even a small piece of cloth. So the cloth cost a lot. Only rich people and rulers could buy it. Wearing purple showed that a person had wealth and power.

The dye was strong. The color did not fade easily.

Questions

1. Where did the deep purple dye come from?

_____

_____

2. Who were the Phoenicians?

_____

_____

3. What happened to the snail's liquid in the sun?

_____

_____

4. Who could buy purple cloth?

_____

_____

5. Why did purple cloth cost so much?

_____

_____

6. What did wearing purple show about a person?

_____

_____

Words to know

dyed: colored by soaking in a coloring liquid
Phoenicians: a people of the ancient world who sailed and traded
traders: people who buy and sell goods
rulers: leaders who are in charge of a country or land

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 Purple Dye from Sea Snails

Triangle group

Long ago, the color purple was very hard to get. Cloth in other colors could be dyed with plants and berries. But a deep, lasting purple came from an odd place. It came from a small sea snail.

The Phoenicians were skilled sailors and traders who lived on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea. One of their cities was called Tyre. Workers there collected the snails from the sea. A snail makes a liquid inside its body. When workers took out this liquid and left it in the sun, it changed color and turned purple.

Many snails were needed to dye even a small piece of cloth. That made the cloth very costly. Only rich people and rulers could buy it. Wearing purple showed that a person had wealth and power.

The dye was also strong. The color did not fade easily, even after the cloth had been worn for years.

Questions

1. Where did the deep purple dye come from?

_____

_____

2. Who were the Phoenicians?

_____

_____

3. What happened to the snail's liquid in the sun?

_____

_____

4. Who could afford purple cloth?

_____

_____

5. Why was purple cloth so costly?

_____

_____

6. What did wearing purple show about a person?

_____

_____

Words to know

dyed: colored by soaking in a coloring liquid
Phoenicians: a people of the ancient world who sailed and traded
traders: people who buy and sell goods
costly: costing a lot of money
rulers: leaders who are in charge of a country or land

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 Purple Dye from Sea Snails

Square group

Long ago, the color purple was remarkably difficult to obtain. Cloth in other colors could be dyed with plants and berries, but a deep, lasting purple came from a surprising source, a small sea snail.

The Phoenicians were skilled sailors and traders who lived along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea, and one of their great cities was called Tyre. Workers there gathered the snails from the sea. Each snail makes a liquid inside its body, and when workers removed this liquid and left it in the sun, it gradually changed color and turned purple.

An enormous number of snails was needed to dye even a small piece of cloth, which made the finished cloth extremely costly. Only wealthy people and rulers could afford to buy it, so wearing purple became a sign of riches and power.

The dye was also very strong, and the color did not fade easily, even after the cloth had been worn for years.

Questions

1. Where did the deep, lasting purple dye come from?

_____

_____

2. Who were the Phoenicians?

_____

_____

3. What happened to the snail's liquid when it was left in the sun?

_____

_____

4. Who could afford to buy purple cloth?

_____

_____

5. Why was purple cloth so costly?

_____

_____

6. What did wearing purple become a sign of?

_____

_____

Words to know

dyed: colored by soaking in a coloring liquid
Phoenicians: a people of the ancient world who sailed and traded
traders: people who buy and sell goods
costly: costing a lot of money
rulers: leaders who are in charge of a country or land

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 Purple Dye from Sea Snails

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

Circle: The Purple Dye from Sea Snails

Easier · 131 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3

1. A small sea snail.
2. Sailors and traders who lived on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea.
3. It changed color and turned purple.
4. Only rich people and rulers.
5. Many snails were needed to dye even a small piece of cloth.
6. That the person had wealth and power.

Triangle: The Purple Dye from Sea Snails

This passage · 152 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.9

1. A small sea snail.
2. Skilled sailors and traders who lived on the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea.
3. It changed color and turned purple.
4. Only rich people and rulers.
5. Many snails were needed to dye even a small piece of cloth.
6. That the person had wealth and power.

Square: The Purple Dye from Sea Snails

Harder · 160 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 9

1. A small sea snail.
2. Skilled sailors and traders who lived along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean Sea.
3. It changed color and turned purple.
4. Only wealthy people and rulers.
5. An enormous number of snails was needed to dye even a small piece of cloth.
6. Riches and power.