Name: _____ Date: _____

Big Bertha and the Runaway Laundry

Circle group

Everyone in Dustpan Flats knew that Bertha Plunk had the biggest sneeze in the county. First came a tickle. Then she took a long breath. The breath pulled the curtains right off the windows.

One Monday, Bertha hung her laundry on a line. The line went from the barn to the windmill. Shirts, socks, and long striped pajamas flapped in the sun. Then some dandelion fluff floated up her nose.

"Ah," she said. "Ahhh. AH-CHOOOO!"

The sneeze blew the socks off the line. It sent the shirts over the hills. The pajamas flew far away. They landed on a clock tower in the next county. They hung there like a flag.

Bertha felt bad. She walked to the next county with a basket. But the people there had been kind. They had found her laundry. They had washed it and folded it. They put it on a table with a sign. The sign said, "Found: one windy morning."

"Leave the pajamas up there," the mayor said. "They show us which way the wind blows."

Bertha laughed. Now she hangs her laundry indoors on dandelion days.

Questions

1. What made Bertha sneeze?

_____

_____

2. Where did Bertha hang her laundry?

_____

_____

3. Where did the pajamas land?

_____

_____

4. What had the people in the next county done with the laundry?

_____

_____

5. Why did the mayor want the pajamas to stay on the tower?

_____

_____

6. Why does Bertha hang her laundry indoors on dandelion days?

_____

_____

Words to know

county: a part of a state with its own local government
windmill: a tall building with big blades that turn in the wind
dandelion: a yellow flower that turns into a ball of white fluff

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: _____

Big Bertha and the Runaway Laundry

Triangle group

Everyone in Dustpan Flats agreed that Bertha Plunk had the biggest sneeze in the whole county. It always started with a tickle, then a wobble, then a long breath that pulled the curtains right off the windows.

One Monday, Bertha hung her laundry on a line that stretched from the barn to the windmill. Forty shirts, thirty socks, and one very long pair of striped pajamas flapped in the sun. Then a puff of dandelion fluff floated up her nose.

"Ah," she said. "Ahhh. AH-CHOOOO!"

The sneeze blew every sock off the line. It sent the shirts sailing over the hills. The striped pajamas flew so far that they landed on a clock tower in the next county, where they hung like a flag.

Bertha felt terrible. She marched all the way to the next county with an empty basket. But the people there had already been clever. They had collected her laundry, washed it, folded it, and stacked it on a table with a sign that said, "Found: one windy morning."

"Leave the pajamas up there," the mayor said. "They show us which way the wind blows."

Bertha laughed so hard she almost sneezed again. Now she hangs her laundry indoors on dandelion days.

Questions

1. What made Bertha sneeze?

_____

_____

2. Where did Bertha hang her laundry?

_____

_____

3. Where did the striped pajamas land?

_____

_____

4. What had the people in the next county done with the laundry?

_____

_____

5. Why did the mayor want to keep the pajamas on the tower?

_____

_____

6. Why does Bertha hang her laundry indoors on dandelion days?

_____

_____

Words to know

county: a part of a state with its own local government
windmill: a tall building with big blades that turn in the wind
dandelion: a yellow flower that turns into a ball of white fluff
clever: quick and smart at solving a problem
stretched: reached out across a long distance

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: _____

Big Bertha and the Runaway Laundry

Square group

Everyone in Dustpan Flats agreed that Bertha Plunk possessed the most tremendous sneeze in the entire county. It always began with a tickle, followed by a wobble, and then a long, dramatic breath that tugged the curtains right off the windows.

One Monday morning, Bertha pinned her laundry to a line that stretched from the barn all the way to the windmill. Forty shirts, thirty socks, and one extraordinarily long pair of striped pajamas flapped cheerfully in the sunshine. Just then, a puff of dandelion fluff drifted up her nose.

"Ah," she said. "Ahhh. AH-CHOOOO!"

The sneeze blasted every sock off the line and sent the shirts sailing over the distant hills. The striped pajamas traveled so far that they landed on a clock tower in the next county, where they dangled like a flag.

Bertha was mortified. She marched all the way to the neighboring county carrying an empty basket. However, the people there had already been wonderfully clever. They had gathered up her laundry, washed it, folded it, and stacked it neatly on a table beside a sign that read, "Found: one windy morning."

"Leave the pajamas up there," the mayor suggested. "They show us which way the wind is blowing."

Bertha laughed so hard that she nearly sneezed again. From that day on, she has hung her laundry indoors whenever the dandelions are in bloom.

Questions

1. What caused Bertha to sneeze?

_____

_____

2. Where had Bertha hung her laundry that morning?

_____

_____

3. Where did the striped pajamas end up?

_____

_____

4. What had the people in the next county done with Bertha's laundry?

_____

_____

5. Why did the mayor suggest leaving the pajamas on the tower?

_____

_____

6. Why does Bertha now hang her laundry indoors when dandelions bloom?

_____

_____

Words to know

county: a part of a state with its own local government
windmill: a tall building with big blades that turn in the wind
dandelion: a yellow flower that turns into a ball of white fluff
clever: quick and smart at solving a problem
stretched: reached out across a long distance

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: Big Bertha and the Runaway Laundry

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

Circle: Big Bertha and the Runaway Laundry

Easier · 186 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.7

1. Dandelion fluff floated up her nose.
2. On a line from the barn to the windmill.
3. On a clock tower in the next county.
4. They washed it and folded it.
5. They showed which way the wind blows.
6. She does not want another sneeze to blow it away.

Triangle: Big Bertha and the Runaway Laundry

This passage · 206 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.1

1. A puff of dandelion fluff floated up her nose.
2. On a line from the barn to the windmill.
3. On a clock tower in the next county.
4. They washed it, folded it, and stacked it on a table.
5. They showed which way the wind blows, like a flag.
6. She does not want another sneeze to blow it away.

Square: Big Bertha and the Runaway Laundry

Harder · 229 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6

1. A puff of dandelion fluff drifted up her nose.
2. On a line stretching from the barn to the windmill.
3. On a clock tower in the next county.
4. They gathered it, washed it, folded it, and stacked it on a table.
5. They worked like a flag and showed which way the wind was blowing.
6. She wants to prevent another sneeze from blowing it away.