Name: _____ Date: _____

The Cave Drawings Behind the Waterfall Trail

Circle group

Ruth and her older cousin Caleb hiked the Maple Falls trail each summer. This year, Ruth saw a small side path she had never seen. A wooden sign, half hidden by ferns, said, "Look closely."

They followed the path to a ledge behind the waterfall. Cool spray touched their faces. On the wet stone wall, someone had drawn pictures in white chalk. There was a sun, a fish, a bent tree, and a bird.

"Is it a code?" Ruth asked.

Caleb looked at the pictures. "Maybe they show the trail in order. The sun is the trailhead, where the morning light comes first. The fish is the stream. The bent tree is the old oak, and the bird..."

"The bird is the lookout tower," Ruth said. "Birds fly high."

They followed the clues. At the tower, they found a brown notebook in a plastic bag. A pencil was tied to it. Hikers had written their names and favorite parts of the trail.

Ruth wrote, "Ruth and Caleb. We love the waterfall." Then she put the notebook back for the next hikers.

Questions

1. What did the wooden sign say?

_____

_____

2. What was drawn on the wall?

_____

_____

3. What was at the lookout tower?

_____

_____

4. What was the bent tree?

_____

_____

5. Why was the notebook in a plastic bag?

_____

_____

6. Why did Ruth put the notebook back?

_____

_____

Words to know

ledge: a narrow, flat shelf of rock
trailhead: the place where a hiking trail begins
lookout: a high place used for watching over a wide area

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 Cave Drawings Behind the Waterfall Trail

Triangle group

Ruth and her older cousin Caleb hiked the Maple Falls trail every summer. This year, Ruth noticed that the path had a small side branch she had never seen. A wooden sign, nearly hidden by ferns, said only, "Look closely."

They followed the little path to a ledge behind the waterfall. Cool spray misted their faces. On the damp stone wall, someone had drawn a row of pictures with white chalk: a sun, a fish, a bent tree, and a bird.

"Is it a code?" Ruth asked.

Caleb studied the pictures. "Maybe it shows the order of the trail. Sun means the trailhead, where the morning light shines first. Fish is the stream. The bent tree is the old oak, and the bird..."

"The bird is the lookout tower," Ruth finished. "Because birds fly high."

They followed the clues one by one. At the tower, they found a brown notebook inside a plastic bag, with a pencil tied to it. Hikers had written their names and favorite parts of the trail on its pages.

Ruth added her own words: "Ruth and Caleb. We love the waterfall." Then she tucked the notebook safely back for the next explorers.

Questions

1. What did the wooden sign say?

_____

_____

2. What did the cousins find on the damp stone wall?

_____

_____

3. What did the cousins find at the lookout tower?

_____

_____

4. What was the bent tree in the code?

_____

_____

5. Why was the notebook kept inside a plastic bag?

_____

_____

6. Why did Ruth put the notebook back?

_____

_____

Words to know

ledge: a narrow, flat shelf of rock
misted: covered with a fine spray of tiny drops
trailhead: the place where a hiking trail begins
lookout: a high place used for watching over a wide area

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 Cave Drawings Behind the Waterfall Trail

Square group

Ruth and her older cousin Caleb hiked the Maple Falls trail together every summer. This year, Ruth noticed a narrow side branch of the path that she had never seen before. A wooden sign, nearly concealed by ferns, said only, "Look closely."

They followed the little path to a ledge tucked behind the waterfall. Cool spray misted their faces. On the damp stone wall, someone had drawn a row of pictures in white chalk: a sun, a fish, a bent tree, and a bird.

"Do you think it is a code?" Ruth asked.

Caleb studied the pictures carefully. "Perhaps it shows the order of the trail. The sun must mean the trailhead, where the morning light shines first. The fish is the stream. The bent tree is the old oak, and the bird..."

"The bird is the lookout tower," Ruth finished, "because birds fly high."

They followed the clues one by one. At the tower, they discovered a brown notebook sealed inside a plastic bag, with a pencil tied to it. Previous hikers had recorded their names and their favorite parts of the trail on its pages.

Ruth added her own message: "Ruth and Caleb. We love the waterfall." Then she tucked the notebook safely back into place for the next explorers.

Questions

1. What did the wooden sign say?

_____

_____

2. What had someone drawn on the damp stone wall?

_____

_____

3. What did the cousins discover at the lookout tower?

_____

_____

4. What did the bent tree stand for in the code?

_____

_____

5. Why was the notebook sealed inside a plastic bag?

_____

_____

6. Why did Ruth put the notebook back?

_____

_____

Words to know

ledge: a narrow, flat shelf of rock
misted: covered with a fine spray of tiny drops
trailhead: the place where a hiking trail begins
lookout: a high place used for watching over a wide area

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 Cave Drawings Behind the Waterfall Trail

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

Circle: The Cave Drawings Behind the Waterfall Trail

Easier · 181 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2

1. "Look closely."
2. A sun, a fish, a bent tree, and a bird.
3. A brown notebook in a plastic bag.
4. The old oak.
5. The bag kept the pages dry.
6. So the next hikers could find it and write in it.

Triangle: The Cave Drawings Behind the Waterfall Trail

This passage · 197 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.3

1. "Look closely."
2. Chalk pictures of a sun, a fish, a bent tree, and a bird.
3. A brown notebook in a plastic bag with a pencil.
4. The old oak.
5. The bag kept the pages dry near the spray and weather.
6. So the next hikers could find it and write in it too.

Square: The Cave Drawings Behind the Waterfall Trail

Harder · 212 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.3

1. "Look closely."
2. A sun, a fish, a bent tree, and a bird, in white chalk.
3. A brown notebook sealed in a plastic bag, with a pencil.
4. The old oak.
5. The bag protected the pages from water and weather.
6. So the next hikers could find it and add their own words.