Name: _____ Date: _____

The Dung Beetle Who Rolled Straight Home

Circle group

At the edge of the grassland, a dung beetle named Odo made a ball. It was a perfect ball. Dung beetles roll their balls away so no one can snatch them. Then they bury them for food. Odo wanted to roll his ball in a straight line to a patch of soft sand.

But there were stones and roots in the way. Each time Odo pushed, the ball slid to the side. He went in circles. He was hot and tired. He did not want anyone to see he was lost.

An old beetle named Madi walked by. "You are pushing hard," she said. "Do you want to hear a trick?"

Odo hung his head. "I can do it myself."

"Of course," said Madi kindly. "But I climb on top of the ball and look around. Then I can pick a clear path."

Odo climbed up. He saw the sand and a smooth track. He thanked Madi and rolled straight home. Asking for help did not make him small. It made the road short.

Questions

1. Why do dung beetles roll their balls away?

_____

_____

2. Where did Odo want to roll his ball?

_____

_____

3. What made the ball slide to the side?

_____

_____

4. What trick did Madi share?

_____

_____

5. Why did Odo say he could do it himself?

_____

6. What does the last sentence mean?

Words to know

grassland: a wide, open place covered mostly with grass
snatch: to grab something quickly
roots: the parts of a plant that grow underground
track: a narrow path or trail

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 Dung Beetle Who Rolled Straight Home

Triangle group

On the edge of the grassland, a dung beetle named Odo had made a perfect ball, and he was very proud of it. Dung beetles roll their balls away from the crowd so that no one can snatch them, and then they bury them to use as food. Odo meant to roll his ball in a straight line to a patch of soft sand.

But there were stones and roots in the way, and each time Odo pushed, the ball slid sideways until he found himself going in circles. He grew hot and tired, and he did not want anyone to see that he was lost.

An old dung beetle named Madi was passing by. "You look like you are pushing very hard," she said. "Would you like to hear a trick that helped me when I was young?"

Odo hung his head. "I can do it myself."

"Of course you can," said Madi kindly. "But I find that it helps to climb on top of the ball and look around, because then you can choose a clear path."

Odo climbed up. From there he spotted the sand, and a smooth track leading right to it. He thanked Madi, hopped down, and rolled straight home. Asking for help, he learned, did not make him small. It made the road shorter.

Questions

1. Why do dung beetles roll their balls away from the crowd?

_____

_____

2. Where did Odo want to roll his ball?

_____

_____

3. What kept making the ball slide sideways?

_____

_____

4. What trick did Madi share with Odo?

_____

_____

5. Why did Odo first say he could do it himself?

_____

_____

6. What does the last sentence mean?

_____

_____

Words to know

grassland: a wide, open place covered mostly with grass
snatch: to grab something quickly
roots: the parts of a plant that grow underground
track: a narrow path or trail

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 Dung Beetle Who Rolled Straight Home

Square group

On the edge of the sprawling grassland, a dung beetle named Odo had fashioned a perfect ball, and he was enormously proud of it. Dung beetles roll their balls away from the crowd so that no rival can snatch them, and then they bury them to use as food. Odo intended to roll his ball in a perfectly straight line to a patch of soft sand.

Unfortunately, there were stones and tangled roots in the way, and each time Odo pushed, the ball veered sideways until he found himself traveling in circles. He grew hot and exhausted, and he did not want anyone to notice that he was lost.

An elderly dung beetle named Madi happened to be passing by. "You look as though you are pushing very hard," she said. "Would you care to hear a trick that helped me when I was young?"

Odo hung his head. "I can do it myself."

"Of course you can," said Madi kindly. "Still, I have found that it helps to climb on top of the ball and look around, because then you can choose a clear path."

Odo clambered up. From that height he spotted the sand, along with a smooth track that led right to it. He thanked Madi, hopped down, and rolled straight home. Asking for help, he learned, did not make him small. It made the road shorter.

Questions

1. Why do dung beetles roll their balls away from the crowd?

_____

_____

2. Where did Odo intend to roll his ball?

_____

_____

3. What caused the ball to veer sideways?

_____

_____

4. What trick did Madi share with Odo?

_____

_____

5. Why did Odo insist at first that he could do it himself?

_____

_____

6. What is the meaning of the final sentence of the story?

_____

_____

Words to know

grassland: a wide, open place covered mostly with grass
snatch: to grab something quickly
roots: the parts of a plant that grow underground
track: a narrow path or trail

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 Dung Beetle Who Rolled Straight Home

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

Circle: The Dung Beetle Who Rolled Straight Home

Easier · 174 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 0.4

1. So that no one can snatch them.
2. To a patch of soft sand.
3. Stones and roots in the way.
4. Climb on top of the ball and look around to pick a clear path.
5. He did not want anyone to see that he was lost.
6. Asking for help made the job easier instead of making him look weak.

Triangle: The Dung Beetle Who Rolled Straight Home

This passage · 220 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.8

1. So that no one can snatch them.
2. To a patch of soft sand.
3. Stones and roots in the way.
4. Climb on top of the ball and look around to choose a clear path.
5. He did not want anyone to see that he was lost.
6. Asking for help made the job easier and faster instead of making him look weak.

Square: The Dung Beetle Who Rolled Straight Home

Harder · 230 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.2

1. So that no rival can snatch them.
2. To a patch of soft sand.
3. Stones and tangled roots in the way.
4. Climb on top of the ball and look around in order to choose a clear path.
5. He did not want anyone to notice that he was lost.
6. Asking for help made the task easier and quicker instead of making him seem weak.