Name: _____ Date: _____

The Panama Hat That Is Made in Ecuador

Circle group

A Panama hat sounds like it comes from Panama. But the best ones are made in Ecuador. Ecuador is a country in South America. Long ago, many of the hats were sold in Panama to people who were on their way somewhere else. That is how they got the name.

People weave these hats by hand. They use the toquilla palm. It grows in warm, wet places in Ecuador. The weaver cuts the green leaves and splits them into thin strips. Then the strips are boiled. After that, they dry in the shade. They turn pale. They get soft and strong, like thread.

Weaving a hat takes a long time. A plain hat may take a few days. A very fine hat can take months. A tight weave makes a better hat. A fine hat can be rolled up and it will spring back. These hats are light and cool for sunny days.

Questions

1. In which country are the best known Panama hats made?

_____

_____

2. Which plant do the weavers use to make the hats?

_____

_____

3. What happens to the thin strips after they are boiled?

_____

_____

4. What makes a hat better?

_____

_____

5. Why are they called Panama hats if they are made in Ecuador?

_____

_____

6. Why might a fine hat take months to make?

_____

Words to know

toquilla: a kind of palm whose leaves are used for making hats

strips: long, thin pieces cut from something larger

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 Panama Hat That Is Made in Ecuador

Triangle group

A Panama hat sounds as if it should come from Panama. But the best known ones are made in Ecuador, a country in South America. The name stuck because many of the hats were sold in Panama long ago, to travelers who were heading to other places.

These hats are woven by hand. The weaver starts with the toquilla palm, a plant that grows in the warm, damp parts of Ecuador. The long green leaves are cut and split into thin strips. The strips are boiled and then hung up to dry in the shade. As they dry, they turn pale and become soft but strong, almost like fine thread.

Weaving a hat takes patience. A simple hat may take a few days, and a very fine hat can take months. The tighter the weave, the better the hat is thought to be. A very fine hat can even be rolled up and then spring back into shape. Hats like these are light and cool, which makes them perfect for sunny days.

Questions

1. In which country are the best known Panama hats made?

_____

_____

2. Which plant do the weavers use to make the hats?

_____

_____

3. What happens to the thin strips after they are boiled?

_____

_____

4. According to the passage, what makes a hat better?

_____

_____

5. Why do people call the hats Panama hats if they are made in Ecuador?

_____

_____

6. Why might a very fine hat take months to finish?

_____

_____

Words to know

woven: made by crossing strips or threads over and under each other
toquilla: a kind of palm whose leaves are used for making hats
strips: long, thin pieces cut from something larger
patience: the ability to keep going calmly when a job takes a long time

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 Panama Hat That Is Made in Ecuador

Square group

A Panama hat sounds as though it ought to come from Panama, yet the most admired ones are produced in Ecuador, a country on the western edge of South America. The name became attached to the hats because so many of them were sold in Panama long ago, to travelers who were on their way to other destinations.

Each hat is woven entirely by hand. The weaver begins with the toquilla palm, a plant that thrives in the warm, damp regions of Ecuador. The long green leaves are cut and split into narrow strips, which are boiled and then hung up to dry in the shade. As they dry, the strips lose their green color and turn pale, becoming soft yet remarkably strong, almost like fine thread.

Weaving a hat demands great patience. A simple hat may take a few days to finish, while an especially fine one can take several months. The tighter the weave, the more highly the hat is valued. A very fine hat can even be rolled up and will spring back into its proper shape afterward. Hats of this kind are light and cool, which makes them ideal for bright, sunny days.

Questions

1. In which country are the best known Panama hats made?

_____

_____

2. Which plant do the weavers use to make the hats?

_____

_____

3. What is done with the strips after they are boiled?

_____

_____

4. What makes a hat more highly valued?

_____

_____

5. How did the hats come to be called Panama hats?

_____

_____

6. Why would a very fine hat take several months to finish?

_____

_____

Words to know

woven: made by crossing strips or threads over and under each other
toquilla: a kind of palm whose leaves are used for making hats
strips: long, thin pieces cut from something larger
patience: the ability to keep going calmly when a job takes a long time

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 Panama Hat That Is Made in Ecuador

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

Circle: The Panama Hat That Is Made in Ecuador

Easier · 153 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.2

1. Ecuador.
2. The toquilla palm.
3. They dry in the shade.
4. A tight weave.
5. Many were sold in Panama long ago to people on their way to other places.
6. It is woven by hand with a very tight weave, so it takes many careful steps.

Triangle: The Panama Hat That Is Made in Ecuador

This passage · 172 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.3

1. Ecuador.
2. The toquilla palm.
3. They are hung up to dry in the shade.
4. A tighter weave.
5. Many were sold in Panama long ago to travelers heading to other places.
6. It is woven by hand with a very tight weave, so it needs many small, careful steps.

Square: The Panama Hat That Is Made in Ecuador

Harder · 197 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.5

1. Ecuador.
2. The toquilla palm.
3. They are hung up to dry in the shade.
4. A tighter weave.
5. Many were sold in Panama long ago to travelers heading to other places.
6. It is woven by hand with a very tight weave, which needs many small, careful steps.