Name: _____ Date: _____

The Secretary Bird's Tall Grass Clock

Circle group

A secretary bird is a tall bird with long legs. It hunts on foot in the grassland. A secretary bird named Sefu was always in a hurry. He stomped through the grass at dawn. He said he never caught anything.

A small warthog watched him one morning. "You are so loud," she said. "Every grasshopper hears you coming."

"I cannot waste time," said Sefu. "The day is short."

"Try this," said the warthog. "Stand still until the sun touches that tall acacia tree. Do not move."

Sefu thought this was silly, but he stood. He felt itchy. Slowly the grass got quiet. A beetle crept out. A lizard stretched on a stone. Then a grasshopper hopped by his foot. Sefu stepped quickly and caught it.

"That was easy," he said.

"Waiting was the work," said the warthog.

After that, Sefu used the acacia as his clock. He still walked a lot each day, but he stopped to listen first. His meals got bigger, and his mornings got calm.

Questions

1. How does a secretary bird hunt?

_____

_____

2. Why was Sefu not catching anything?

_____

_____

3. What did the warthog tell Sefu to do?

_____

_____

4. What happened after the grass got quiet?

_____

_____

5. What did the warthog mean by "Waiting was the work"?

_____

_____

6. How did Sefu use the acacia tree after that?

_____

_____

Words to know

grassland: a wide, open place covered mostly with grass

acacia: a tree with a flat top that grows in warm, dry places

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 Secretary Bird's Tall Grass Clock

Triangle group

A secretary bird is a tall bird with long legs that hunts on foot across the grassland. A secretary bird named Sefu was always in a hurry. He marched through the grass at dawn, stomping and rushing, and he complained that he never caught anything.

A small warthog watched him one morning. "You are so loud," she said. "Every grasshopper in the field hears you coming."

"I cannot waste time," said Sefu. "The day is short."

"Then try something," said the warthog. "Stand still where you are until the sun touches that tall acacia tree. Do not move at all."

Sefu thought this was silly, but he stood. He felt itchy and restless. Slowly the grass quieted. A beetle crept out. A lizard stretched on a stone. Then a grasshopper hopped right by his foot. Sefu stepped, quick and quiet, and caught it.

"Why, it was easy," he said.

"Waiting was the work," said the warthog.

After that, Sefu used the acacia as his clock. He still walked a great deal each day, but he always paused to listen first. His meals grew bigger, and his mornings grew calm.

Questions

1. How does a secretary bird hunt?

_____

_____

2. Why was Sefu not catching anything?

_____

_____

3. What did the warthog tell Sefu to do?

_____

_____

4. What happened after the grass grew quiet?

_____

_____

5. What did the warthog mean by "Waiting was the work"?

_____

_____

6. How did Sefu use the acacia tree afterward?

_____

_____

Words to know

grassland: a wide, open place covered mostly with grass
restless: unable to stay calm or still
acacia: a tree with a flat top that grows in warm, dry places
complained: said that something was wrong or unfair

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 Secretary Bird's Tall Grass Clock

Square group

A secretary bird is a tall bird with remarkably long legs that hunts on foot across the open grassland. A secretary bird named Sefu was perpetually in a hurry. He marched through the grass at dawn, stomping and rushing, and he grumbled that he never managed to catch anything.

A small warthog watched him one morning. "You are so loud," she remarked. "Every grasshopper in the field hears you coming."

"I cannot afford to waste time," said Sefu. "The day is short."

"Then try something," said the warthog. "Stand perfectly still, right where you are, until the sun touches that tall acacia tree. Do not move at all."

Sefu thought this was ridiculous, but he stood there anyway. He felt itchy and restless. Gradually the grass grew quiet. A beetle crept into view, and a lizard stretched out on a warm stone. Then a grasshopper hopped right beside his foot. Sefu stepped forward, swift and silent, and caught it.

"Why, that was easy," he said.

"Waiting was the work," replied the warthog.

From then on, Sefu used the acacia as his clock. He still walked a great deal each day, but he always paused to listen first. His meals grew larger, and his mornings grew calm.

Questions

1. How does a secretary bird hunt across the grassland?

_____

_____

2. Why was Sefu not managing to catch anything?

_____

_____

3. What did the warthog suggest that Sefu do?

_____

_____

4. What happened once the grass grew quiet?

_____

_____

5. What did the warthog mean when she said "Waiting was the work"?

_____

_____

6. How did Sefu make use of the acacia tree from then on?

_____

_____

Words to know

grassland: a wide, open place covered mostly with grass
restless: unable to stay calm or still
acacia: a tree with a flat top that grows in warm, dry places

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 Secretary Bird's Tall Grass Clock

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

Circle: The Secretary Bird's Tall Grass Clock

Easier · 168 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.3

1. On foot, in the grassland.
2. He was loud and in a hurry, so the grasshoppers heard him.
3. Stand still until the sun touched the tall acacia tree.
4. A beetle, a lizard, and a grasshopper came out.
5. Standing still and being patient is what made the catch possible.
6. As a clock to tell him how long to wait before he moved.

Triangle: The Secretary Bird's Tall Grass Clock

This passage · 189 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.1

1. On foot, across the grassland.
2. He was loud and rushed, so the grasshoppers heard him coming.
3. Stand still until the sun touched the tall acacia tree.
4. A beetle, a lizard, and a grasshopper came out.
5. Staying still and patient was the part that really made the catch possible.
6. As a clock to tell him how long to wait before moving.

Square: The Secretary Bird's Tall Grass Clock

Harder · 206 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.3

1. On foot.
2. He was loud and rushed, so every grasshopper heard him coming.
3. Stand perfectly still until the sun touched the tall acacia tree.
4. A beetle, a lizard, and a grasshopper appeared.
5. Staying still and patient was the part that actually made the catch possible.
6. As a clock that told him how long to wait before moving.