Name: _____ Date: _____

The Cliffhanger Notebook

Circle group

Theo and Ravi were best friends. They had been friends since kindergarten. They lived next door to each other. They planned something new every day.

Then Ravi's family bought a house across town. On moving day, Theo carried the last lamp to the truck. He tried hard not to cry.

That night, the house next door was dark. Theo felt like a sock that lost its match.

The next week, a thick package came in the mail. Inside was a green notebook. On the first page, Ravi had written, "Chapter One: The robot butler woke up in the wrong house. He saw a huge shadow in the door, and then..." The page stopped in the middle of the sentence.

Theo grinned. He grabbed a pencil and wrote Chapter Two. The shadow was a very tall cat. Then he stopped in the middle of an exciting sentence, too. He mailed the notebook back.

Now the notebook goes back and forth every week. Neither boy likes to wait. But being far apart made the story better. Each boy has to wait, and wonder, and write.

Questions

1. How long had Theo and Ravi been friends?

_____

_____

2. What came in the mail the next week?

_____

_____

3. Where did Ravi stop writing on the first page?

_____

_____

4. What was the shadow in Theo's chapter?

_____

_____

5. Why did Theo feel like a sock that lost its match?

_____

_____

6. Why do both boys stop in the middle of an exciting sentence?

_____

_____

Words to know

package: a box or parcel that is mailed to someone
chapter: one part of a book or story
grinned: smiled with a big, wide smile
wonder: to think about something and want to know more

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 Cliffhanger Notebook

Triangle group

Theo and Ravi had been best friends since kindergarten. They lived next door to each other, and they planned something new every day.

Then Ravi's family bought a house across town. On moving day, Theo carried the last lamp to the truck and tried hard not to cry.

That night, the house next door was dark. Theo felt like a sock that had lost its match.

The next week, a thick package came in the mail. Inside was a green notebook. On the first page, Ravi had written, "Chapter One: The robot butler woke up in the wrong house. He saw a huge shadow in the doorway, and then..." The page stopped in the middle of the sentence.

Theo grinned. He grabbed a pencil and wrote Chapter Two. He made the shadow turn out to be a very tall cat. Then he stopped in the middle of an exciting sentence, too, and mailed the notebook back.

Now the notebook travels back and forth every week. Neither boy can stand waiting to find out what happens next. Being far apart has made the story better, because each boy has to wait, and wonder, and write.

Questions

1. How long had Theo and Ravi been best friends?

_____

_____

2. What came in the mail the next week?

_____

_____

3. Where did Ravi stop writing on the first page?

_____

_____

4. What did Theo make the shadow turn out to be?

_____

_____

5. Why did Theo feel like a sock that had lost its match?

_____

_____

6. Why do both boys stop in the middle of an exciting sentence?

_____

_____

Words to know

package: a box or parcel that is mailed to someone
chapter: one part of a book or story
grinned: smiled with a big, wide smile
wonder: to think about something and want to know more

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 Cliffhanger Notebook

Square group

Theo and Ravi had been inseparable since kindergarten. They lived in neighboring houses, and every single day they came up with some new scheme to carry out together.

Then Ravi's family bought a house on the far side of town. On moving day, Theo carried the very last lamp out to the truck and tried with all his might not to cry.

That night, the house next door sat dark and silent. Theo felt like a sock that had lost its match.

The following week, a thick package arrived in the mail. Inside was a green notebook. On the first page, Ravi had written, "Chapter One: The robot butler woke up in the wrong house. He saw a huge shadow looming in the doorway, and then..." The page stopped right in the middle of the sentence.

Theo grinned. He grabbed a pencil and wrote Chapter Two, and he made the shadow turn out to be a very tall cat. Then he, too, stopped in the middle of an exciting sentence before mailing the notebook back.

Now the notebook travels back and forth every week, and neither boy can bear waiting to learn what happens next. Being far apart has actually made the story better, because each boy has to wait, and wonder, and write.

Questions

1. How long had Theo and Ravi been inseparable?

_____

_____

2. What arrived in the mail the following week?

_____

_____

3. Where did Ravi's writing stop on the first page?

_____

_____

4. What did Theo make the shadow turn out to be?

_____

_____

5. Why did Theo feel like a sock that had lost its match?

_____

_____

6. Why does each boy stop in the middle of an exciting sentence before mailing the notebook?

_____

_____

Words to know

package: a box or parcel that is mailed to someone
chapter: one part of a book or story
grinned: smiled with a big, wide smile
wonder: to think about something and want to know more

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 Cliffhanger Notebook

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

Circle: The Cliffhanger Notebook

Easier · 183 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.5

1. Since kindergarten.
2. A thick package with a green notebook.
3. In the middle of a sentence.
4. A very tall cat.
5. He missed Ravi. They were a pair, and now Theo was alone.
6. It makes the other boy want to write back fast.

Triangle: The Cliffhanger Notebook

This passage · 194 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.8

1. Since kindergarten.
2. A thick package with a green notebook inside.
3. In the middle of a sentence.
4. A very tall cat.
5. He missed Ravi. They were a pair, and now Theo was alone.
6. It makes the other boy want to write back quickly to find out what happens.

Square: The Cliffhanger Notebook

Harder · 214 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.5

1. Since kindergarten.
2. A thick package with a green notebook inside.
3. Right in the middle of a sentence.
4. A very tall cat.
5. He missed Ravi. The two friends were a pair, and now Theo was left alone.
6. It makes the other boy eager to write back quickly to find out what happens.