Name: _____ Date: _____

The Jar of Ugly Buttons

Circle group

Lou kept a jar of buttons on her desk. Some were shiny. Some were plain. A few were odd. One was shaped like a tooth. One was chipped and orange. One was gray with two crooked holes.

One morning, Lou went to the library. Her friend Pia decided to help. She sorted the jar. She threw the ugliest buttons into the recycling bin. "Now it looks neat," she thought.

Lou came back. She looked at the jar. Her face went still. "Where is my tooth button?" she asked.

"I got rid of the ugly ones," said Pia proudly.

"Those were my favorites," said Lou. She walked away.

Pia felt her stomach sink. After school, she dug through the bin. The custodian had not come yet. She found all six buttons. They were a little sticky from a yogurt cup. She washed them in the sink. That night, she glued them onto a wooden frame around a photo of the two friends.

The next morning, Pia gave it to Lou. "I am sorry. I thought ugly meant bad. But ugly just means they are yours."

Lou smiled. She hung the frame above her desk.

Questions

1. What did Pia do with the ugliest buttons?

_____

_____

2. Where was Lou when Pia sorted the jar?

_____

_____

3. How did Pia get the buttons back?

_____

_____

4. What did Pia make with the buttons?

_____

_____

5. Why did Lou walk away?

_____

_____

6. What did Pia learn about the word ugly?

_____

_____

Words to know

crooked: bent or not straight
custodian: a person who cleans and takes care of a building
sorted: put things into groups or an order
frame: a border that goes around a picture

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 Jar of Ugly Buttons

Triangle group

Lou kept a jar of buttons on her desk. Some were shiny and some were plain, but a few were truly odd: one was shaped like a tooth, one was chipped and orange, and one was gray with two crooked holes.

One morning, while Lou was at the library, her friend Pia decided to help. She sorted the whole jar and threw the ugliest buttons into the classroom recycling bin. "Now it looks neat," she thought.

When Lou came back, she looked at the jar, and her face went very still. "Where is my tooth button?" she asked.

"I got rid of the ugly ones," said Pia proudly.

"Those were my favorites," said Lou. She walked away.

Pia felt her stomach sink. After school, she dug through the bin before the custodian came to empty it. She found all six buttons, a little sticky from a yogurt cup. She washed them in the sink. That night, she glued them onto a wooden frame around a photo of the two friends.

The next morning, Pia handed it over. "I am sorry. I thought ugly meant bad. But ugly just means they are yours."

Lou smiled. She hung the frame above her desk, and the tooth button grinned from the top corner.

Questions

1. What did Pia do with the ugliest buttons?

_____

_____

2. Where was Lou when Pia sorted the jar?

_____

_____

3. How did Pia get the buttons back?

_____

_____

4. What did Pia make with the buttons?

_____

_____

5. Why did Lou walk away after Pia spoke?

_____

_____

6. What did Pia learn about the word ugly?

_____

_____

Words to know

crooked: bent or not straight
custodian: a person who cleans and takes care of a building
sorted: put things into groups or an order
frame: a border that goes around a picture

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 Jar of Ugly Buttons

Square group

Lou kept a jar of buttons on her desk. Some were glossy and some were plain, but a few were downright peculiar. One was shaped like a tooth. One was chipped and orange. One was gray, with two crooked holes that did not quite line up.

One morning, while Lou was away at the library, her friend Pia decided to be helpful. She sorted the entire jar and tossed the ugliest buttons into the classroom recycling bin. "Now it looks much neater," she thought.

When Lou returned, she stared at the jar, and her face went very still. "Where is my tooth button?" she asked.

"I got rid of all the ugly ones," Pia announced proudly.

"Those were my favorites," said Lou, and she walked away.

Pia felt her stomach sink. After school, she dug through the bin before the custodian arrived to empty it. She found all six buttons, a little sticky from a yogurt cup. She washed them in the sink, and that night she glued them onto a wooden frame surrounding a photo of the two friends.

The next morning, Pia handed it over. "I am truly sorry. I thought ugly meant bad. But ugly only means that they are yours."

Lou smiled. She hung the frame above her desk, and the tooth button grinned from the top corner.

Questions

1. What did Pia do with the ugliest buttons?

_____

_____

2. Where was Lou while Pia sorted the jar?

_____

_____

3. How did Pia manage to get the buttons back?

_____

_____

4. What did Pia make with the buttons?

_____

_____

5. Why did Lou walk away after Pia spoke so proudly?

_____

_____

6. What did Pia come to understand about the word ugly?

_____

_____

Words to know

crooked: bent or not straight
custodian: a person who cleans and takes care of a building
sorted: put things into groups or an order
frame: a border that goes around a picture

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 Jar of Ugly Buttons

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

Circle: The Jar of Ugly Buttons

Easier · 193 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1

1. She threw them into the recycling bin.
2. At the library.
3. She dug through the bin before the custodian came.
4. A wooden frame around a photo of the two friends.
5. She was hurt. The buttons were her favorites.
6. Something odd can still matter to the person who loves it.

Triangle: The Jar of Ugly Buttons

This passage · 210 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.9

1. She threw them into the classroom recycling bin.
2. At the library.
3. She dug through the bin before the custodian came to empty it.
4. A wooden frame around a photo of the two friends.
5. She was hurt because the buttons Pia threw out were her favorites.
6. A thing that looks odd can still matter a lot to the person who loves it.

Square: The Jar of Ugly Buttons

Harder · 222 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.5

1. She tossed them into the classroom recycling bin.
2. Away at the library.
3. She dug through the bin before the custodian arrived to empty it.
4. A wooden frame around a photo of the two friends.
5. She was hurt because the buttons Pia discarded were her favorites.
6. Something that looks odd can still mean a great deal to the person who loves it.