Name: _____ Date: _____

Bamboo, the Giant Grass

Circle group

Bamboo can look like a tree, but it is really a grass. It is in the same big plant family as lawn grass, wheat, and rice. The difference is size. Some kinds of bamboo are taller than a house.

The stem of a bamboo plant is called a culm. It is hollow inside. Solid rings called nodes are spaced along it. The nodes work like braces. They make the stem strong even though it is empty in the middle. Light weight and strength make bamboo very useful.

Bamboo is also famous for growing fast. A new shoot pushes up from underground. It already has all of its rings packed inside. It stretches out fast, a bit like a telescope opening. Some kinds grow very tall in just a few months. After that, the stem does not get taller or thicker, but it gets harder.

People use bamboo in many ways. They build scaffolds, fences, and furniture. They weave baskets and make floors and cutting boards. Young shoots of some kinds are cooked and eaten.

Giant pandas eat bamboo, too. Bamboo grows back fast, so it can be harvested again and again from the same patch.

Questions

1. What kind of plant is bamboo?

_____

_____

2. What is a node on a bamboo stem?

_____

_____

3. Why is bamboo strong even though its stem is hollow?

_____

_____

4. How does a new bamboo shoot grow so fast?

_____

_____

5. What are two ways people use bamboo?

_____

_____

6. Why can bamboo be harvested again and again from one patch?

_____

_____

Words to know

culm: the stem of a bamboo plant or other grass
nodes: the solid rings along a bamboo stem
hollow: empty on the inside
scaffolds: frames that workers stand on while they build
harvested: gathered when ready, like a crop

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: _____

Bamboo, the Giant Grass

Triangle group

Bamboo can look like a tree, but it is really a grass. It belongs to the same big plant family as lawn grass, wheat, and rice. The difference is size. Some kinds of bamboo stand taller than a house.

The stem of a bamboo plant is called a culm. It is hollow inside, with solid rings spaced along it called nodes. The nodes act like braces, making the stem strong even though it is empty in the middle. That mix of light weight and strength is one reason bamboo is so useful.

Bamboo is also famous for growing fast. Many plants start with a single shoot that pushes up from underground. The new shoot already has all of its rings packed inside, and it stretches out quickly, a bit like a telescope opening. Some kinds can grow very tall in just a few months. After that, the stem does not get any thicker or taller, but it becomes harder over time.

People use bamboo in many ways. They build scaffolds, fences, and furniture from it. They weave baskets and make floors and cutting boards. Young shoots of certain kinds are cooked and eaten as food.

Giant pandas also eat bamboo. Because it grows back quickly, bamboo is a plant that can be harvested again and again from the same patch.

Questions

1. What kind of plant is bamboo?

_____

_____

2. What is a node on a bamboo stem?

_____

_____

3. Why is bamboo strong even though its stem is hollow?

_____

_____

4. How does a new bamboo shoot grow so fast?

_____

_____

5. What are two ways people use bamboo?

_____

_____

6. Why can bamboo be harvested again and again from the same patch?

_____

_____

Words to know

culm: the stem of a bamboo plant or other grass
nodes: the solid rings along a bamboo stem
hollow: empty on the inside
scaffolds: frames that workers stand on while they build
harvested: gathered when ready, like a crop

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: _____

Bamboo, the Giant Grass

Square group

Bamboo can resemble a tree, but it is actually a grass, belonging to the same enormous plant family as lawn grass, wheat, and rice. What sets it apart is its size, because some kinds of bamboo stand taller than a house.

The stem of a bamboo plant is called a culm. It is hollow inside, with solid rings known as nodes spaced along its length. The nodes function like braces, giving the stem considerable strength even though it is empty in the middle. This combination of light weight and strength is a major reason bamboo is so useful.

Bamboo is also renowned for its rapid growth. Many plants begin as a single shoot that pushes up from underground, and this shoot already has all of its rings packed inside, so it stretches out swiftly, rather like a telescope opening. Certain kinds can reach great heights in only a few months. Afterward, the stem grows no thicker or taller, although it becomes harder as time passes.

People put bamboo to work in countless ways. They construct scaffolds, fences, and furniture from it, weave baskets, and manufacture floors and cutting boards. Young shoots of particular kinds are cooked and eaten as food.

Giant pandas feed on bamboo as well. Since it regrows so quickly, bamboo can be harvested again and again from the same patch.

Questions

1. What kind of plant is bamboo actually?

_____

_____

2. What is a node on a bamboo stem?

_____

_____

3. Why does a hollow bamboo stem have considerable strength?

_____

_____

4. How can a new bamboo shoot stretch out so swiftly?

_____

_____

5. What are two ways people put bamboo to work?

_____

_____

6. Why can bamboo be harvested again and again from the same patch?

_____

_____

Words to know

culm: the stem of a bamboo plant or other grass
nodes: the solid rings along a bamboo stem
hollow: empty on the inside
scaffolds: frames that workers stand on while they build
harvested: gathered when ready, like a crop

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: Bamboo, the Giant Grass

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

Circle: Bamboo, the Giant Grass

Easier · 195 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.3

1. A grass, in the same family as lawn grass, wheat, and rice.
2. A solid ring along the hollow stem.
3. The solid rings work like braces.
4. It already has its rings packed inside and stretches out like a telescope.
5. Any two of scaffolds, fences, furniture, baskets, floors, or food.
6. It grows back fast.

Triangle: Bamboo, the Giant Grass

This passage · 220 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.5

1. A grass, in the same family as lawn grass, wheat, and rice.
2. A solid ring spaced along the hollow stem.
3. The solid rings act like braces.
4. It already has its rings packed inside and stretches out like a telescope.
5. Any two of building scaffolds, fences, furniture, baskets, floors, or food.
6. It grows back quickly.

Square: Bamboo, the Giant Grass

Harder · 223 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.1

1. A grass, belonging to the same family as lawn grass, wheat, and rice.
2. A solid ring spaced along the hollow stem.
3. The solid rings function like braces.
4. It already has all of its rings packed inside and opens like a telescope.
5. Any two of scaffolds, fences, furniture, baskets, floors, or food.
6. It regrows so quickly.