Name: _____ Date: _____

Mortimer the Parrot Shouts Overdue

Circle group

The Elm Street Library had one big rule. The rule was silence. Then Mrs. Hobb, the head librarian, got a green parrot named Mortimer. After that, the library was not silent.

Mortimer could repeat what he heard. He always did it at the wrong time. When the mayor came in to borrow a cookbook, Mortimer squawked, "Overdue! Overdue!" He had heard Mrs. Hobb say it to someone else that morning. The mayor turned red. He checked his pockets for the book he had returned a month ago.

When a boy tiptoed by, Mortimer boomed, "Shhh!" Three people jumped. When a sleepy grandfather dozed over his paper, Mortimer yelled, "Fire!" The grandfather nearly fell off his chair. It was only a word from a dragon story. But the room scrambled anyway.

Mrs. Hobb had to fix this. She did not want to send Mortimer away. He was good company on rainy days. So she taught him one friendly word. Each morning she stood by the door and said, "Welcome." Each time Mortimer said it, he got a sunflower seed.

By Friday, Mortimer said "Welcome!" to every visitor. The mayor laughed. The grandfather smiled. The boy tiptoed in with a grin. Mortimer was the best greeter the library ever had.

Questions

1. What was the big rule at the library?

_____

_____

2. Why did Mortimer shout overdue at the mayor?

_____

_____

3. What did Mortimer yell at the sleepy grandfather?

_____

_____

4. Why did Mortimer's words cause trouble?

_____

_____

5. How did Mrs. Hobb teach Mortimer a new word?

_____

_____

6. Why was Welcome a good word for him?

_____

_____

Words to know

librarian: a person who takes care of a library
squawked: made a loud, harsh cry like a bird
dozed: slept lightly for a short time
greeter: a person who welcomes visitors

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: _____

Mortimer the Parrot Shouts Overdue

Triangle group

The Elm Street Library had one big rule, and that rule was silence. Then Mrs. Hobb, the head librarian, adopted a green parrot named Mortimer. After that, silence was a thing of the past.

Mortimer could repeat whatever he heard, and he always did it at the worst moment. When the mayor came in to borrow a cookbook, Mortimer squawked, "Overdue! Overdue!" He had heard Mrs. Hobb say it to someone else that morning. The mayor turned bright red. He checked his pockets for a book he had returned a month ago.

When a boy tiptoed past the reading corner, Mortimer boomed, "Shhh!" Three people jumped. When a sleepy grandfather dozed over a newspaper, Mortimer yelled, "Fire!" and the grandfather nearly fell off his chair. It was only a word from a story about a dragon, but the whole room scrambled anyway.

Mrs. Hobb decided that something had to change. She did not want to send Mortimer away, because he was good company on rainy days. So she spent a week teaching him one friendly word. Each morning she stood by the door and said, "Welcome." Mortimer got a sunflower seed every time he said it back.

By Friday, Mortimer greeted every visitor with a cheerful "Welcome!" The mayor laughed. The grandfather smiled. The boy tiptoed in with a grin. Mortimer became the best greeter the library had ever had.

Questions

1. What was the most important rule at the Elm Street Library?

_____

_____

2. Why did Mortimer shout overdue at the mayor?

_____

_____

3. What did Mortimer yell at the sleepy grandfather?

_____

_____

4. Why did Mortimer's words cause so much trouble?

_____

_____

5. How did Mrs. Hobb teach Mortimer a new word?

_____

_____

6. Why was Welcome a good word for Mortimer to learn?

_____

_____

Words to know

librarian: a person who takes care of a library
adopted: took in and made part of the family or group
squawked: made a loud, harsh cry like a bird
dozed: slept lightly for a short time
greeter: a person who welcomes visitors

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: _____

Mortimer the Parrot Shouts Overdue

Square group

The Elm Street Library had one rule that mattered considerably more than all the others, and that rule was silence. Then Mrs. Hobb, the head librarian, adopted a green parrot named Mortimer, and from that moment on silence became a thing of the past.

Mortimer possessed a remarkable talent for repeating whatever he overheard, and he invariably repeated it at the worst possible moment. When the mayor walked in to borrow a cookbook, Mortimer squawked, "Overdue! Overdue!" because he had heard Mrs. Hobb say the word to someone else earlier that morning. The mayor turned bright red and anxiously checked his pockets for a book that he had returned a month before.

When a boy tiptoed past the reading corner, Mortimer boomed, "Shhh!" so loudly that three people jumped and a whole shelf of dictionaries trembled. When a sleepy grandfather dozed over his newspaper, Mortimer yelled, "Fire!" and the poor man nearly tumbled off his chair. It was merely a word that Mortimer had picked up from a story about a dragon, but the entire room scrambled anyway.

Mrs. Hobb concluded that something had to change. She had no wish to send Mortimer away, since he was wonderful company on rainy afternoons, so she devoted a week to teaching him a single friendly word. Every morning she stood beside the door and said "Welcome" in her warmest voice, rewarding Mortimer with a sunflower seed each time he repeated it.

By Friday, Mortimer greeted every visitor with a cheerful "Welcome!" The mayor laughed, the grandfather smiled, and the boy tiptoed in with a grin. Mortimer had become the best greeter the library had ever known.

Questions

1. What was the most important rule at the Elm Street Library?

_____

_____

2. Why did Mortimer shout overdue when the mayor arrived?

_____

_____

3. What did Mortimer yell when the grandfather dozed over his newspaper?

_____

_____

4. Why did Mortimer's talent for repeating words cause so much trouble?

_____

_____

5. How did Mrs. Hobb teach Mortimer a friendly new word?

_____

_____

6. Why did Welcome turn out to be a good word for Mortimer to learn?

_____

_____

Words to know

librarian: a person who takes care of a library
adopted: took in and made part of the family or group
squawked: made a loud, harsh cry like a bird
dozed: slept lightly for a short time
greeter: a person who welcomes visitors

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: Mortimer the Parrot Shouts Overdue

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

Circle: Mortimer the Parrot Shouts Overdue

Easier · 208 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.8

1. Silence.
2. He had heard Mrs. Hobb say it that morning.
3. Fire.
4. He said what he heard at the wrong time.
5. She said Welcome each day and gave him a seed when he said it.
6. It is friendly and does not scare anyone.

Triangle: Mortimer the Parrot Shouts Overdue

This passage · 230 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.3

1. Silence.
2. He had heard Mrs. Hobb say it to someone else that morning.
3. Fire.
4. He repeated what he heard without understanding when to say it.
5. She said Welcome every morning and gave him a sunflower seed each time he repeated it.
6. It fits any visitor and never startles or embarrasses anyone.

Square: Mortimer the Parrot Shouts Overdue

Harder · 274 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 9.8

1. Silence.
2. He had heard Mrs. Hobb say the word to someone else earlier that morning.
3. Fire.
4. He repeated what he heard without understanding when it was appropriate.
5. She said Welcome every morning and rewarded him with a sunflower seed each time he repeated it.
6. It suits every visitor and never startles or embarrasses anyone.