Name: _____ Date: _____

Penelope Pratt Whispers to Turnips

Circle group

Penelope Pratt said she could whisper to turnips. No one could prove she was wrong. Each evening she knelt in her garden. She said softly, "Grow, my darlings, grow." By morning the turnips were twice as big.

By midsummer, the turnips were as big as pumpkins. By the end of summer they were as big as pianos. The neighbors peeked over the fence.

"Penelope," said Mr. Dibble, "you may be whispering too much."

Penelope had a favorite turnip named Hubert. Hubert grew so big that his leaves covered her barn roof. One Thursday, Hubert was so big that Penelope could not open her front door.

"Hubert," she said, "that is enough." She whispered, "Stop growing now." Hubert was a polite turnip, so he stopped.

But now there was a problem. A turnip as big as a house cannot be pulled up. It cannot be moved. One family cannot eat it. So Penelope rang the town bell. Everyone came running with spoons.

The cooks dug a deep hole around the turnip. They filled it with water and carrots. They lit a ring of fires. Hubert simmered into the biggest soup ever. The town ate turnip soup for two weeks. After that, Penelope whispered only to tiny radishes.

Questions

1. What did Penelope whisper to her turnips?

_____

_____

2. What was her favorite turnip called?

_____

_____

3. What problem did Hubert cause?

_____

_____

4. Why is Hubert called a polite turnip?

_____

_____

5. How did the town solve the giant turnip problem?

_____

_____

6. Why did Penelope whisper only to radishes?

_____

_____

Words to know

simmered: cooked gently just below boiling

midsummer: the middle of the summer

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: _____

Penelope Pratt Whispers to Turnips

Triangle group

Penelope Pratt claimed she could whisper to turnips, and the strange part is that nobody could prove her wrong. Every evening she knelt in her garden and murmured, "Grow, my darlings, grow." By morning the turnips were always twice as big as the day before.

By midsummer, the turnips were the size of pumpkins. By the end of the summer they were the size of pianos. Penelope's neighbors peeked over the fence and shook their heads.

"Penelope," said Mr. Dibble, "you may be whispering too much."

But Penelope had one favorite turnip named Hubert. Hubert grew so large that his green leaves covered the roof of her barn, and his round purple top pushed up the roof tiles one by one. One Thursday, Hubert was so large that Penelope could not open her front door.

"Hubert," she said sternly, "that is quite enough." She whispered, "Stop growing now," and Hubert, being a polite turnip, finally stopped.

But now there was a problem. A turnip the size of a house cannot be pulled up, and it cannot be moved. It cannot even be eaten by one family. So Penelope rang the town bell, and everybody came running with spoons.

The town cooks dug a deep hole around the turnip and filled it with water and carrots. They lit a great ring of fires, and Hubert simmered into the biggest soup anyone had ever tasted. The whole town ate turnip soup for two weeks, and Penelope kept whispering only to the tiny radishes after that.

Questions

1. What did Penelope whisper to her turnips?

_____

_____

2. What was the name of Penelope's favorite turnip?

_____

_____

3. What problem did Hubert's size cause?

_____

_____

4. Why was Hubert described as a polite turnip?

_____

_____

5. How did the town solve the problem of a giant turnip?

_____

_____

6. Why did Penelope whisper only to radishes at the end?

_____

_____

Words to know

murmured: spoke in a low, soft voice
sternly: in a serious, strict way
simmered: cooked gently just below boiling
claimed: said that something was true
midsummer: the middle of the summer

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: _____

Penelope Pratt Whispers to Turnips

Square group

Penelope Pratt claimed that she could whisper to turnips, and the peculiar part is that nobody could ever prove her wrong. Every evening she knelt in her garden and murmured, "Grow, my darlings, grow." By morning, the turnips were invariably twice as big as they had been the day before.

By midsummer the turnips were the size of pumpkins, and by the end of the season they were the size of pianos. Penelope's neighbors peeked over the fence and shook their heads in amazement.

"Penelope," said Mr. Dibble, "I suspect that you may be whispering a bit too much."

But Penelope had one favorite turnip, whom she had named Hubert. Hubert grew so enormous that his green leaves blanketed the roof of her barn, and his round purple top pushed up the roof tiles one by one. One Thursday, Hubert became so large that Penelope could not even open her front door.

"Hubert," she said sternly, "that is quite enough." She whispered, "Stop growing now," and Hubert, being a remarkably polite turnip, finally stopped.

Yet a new problem had appeared. A turnip the size of a house cannot be pulled out of the ground, it cannot be moved, and it cannot possibly be eaten by a single family. So Penelope rang the town bell, and everybody came running with spoons.

The town cooks dug a deep trench around the turnip and filled it with water and carrots. They lit a great ring of fires, and Hubert slowly simmered into the largest soup anyone had ever tasted. The whole town feasted on turnip soup for two weeks, and from then on Penelope whispered only to the tiny radishes.

Questions

1. What did Penelope murmur to her turnips each evening?

_____

_____

2. What was the name of Penelope's favorite turnip?

_____

_____

3. What problem did Hubert's enormous size create?

_____

_____

4. Why does the story call Hubert a remarkably polite turnip?

_____

_____

5. How did the town deal with the house-sized turnip?

_____

_____

6. Why did Penelope whisper only to radishes afterward?

_____

_____

Words to know

murmured: spoke in a low, soft voice
sternly: in a serious, strict way
simmered: cooked gently just below boiling
claimed: said that something was true
midsummer: the middle of the summer

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: Penelope Pratt Whispers to Turnips

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

Circle: Penelope Pratt Whispers to Turnips

Easier · 206 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.5

1. Grow, my darlings, grow.
2. Hubert.
3. He was so big that Penelope could not open her front door.
4. He stopped growing when she asked.
5. They cooked him into a huge soup and ate it.
6. Radishes are small, so no more giants would grow.

Triangle: Penelope Pratt Whispers to Turnips

This passage · 253 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.9

1. Grow, my darlings, grow.
2. Hubert.
3. He grew so big that Penelope could not open her front door.
4. He stopped growing as soon as Penelope asked him to.
5. They cooked him into a huge soup and everyone ate it.
6. Radishes are small, so she would not have another giant vegetable.

Square: Penelope Pratt Whispers to Turnips

Harder · 277 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.6

1. Grow, my darlings, grow.
2. Hubert.
3. Penelope could not open her front door.
4. He stopped growing as soon as Penelope politely asked him to.
5. They cooked it into an enormous soup and everyone ate it.
6. Radishes are tiny, so she would not grow another giant vegetable.