Name: _____ Date: _____

The Magpie's Button Jar

Circle group

Ilsa the magpie loved shiny things. Every day she searched the village and carried something home to her jar. She collected bottle caps, bits of foil, a silver thimble, and fifty-three buttons in all colors.

One evening, she noticed a small red button on the windowsill of the tailor's shop. It gleamed like a berry. Ilsa swooped down and snatched it.

The next morning, she heard crying. The tailor's daughter, Wren, was kneeling in the street with a coat in her arms. "The last button is missing," she sobbed. "Papa needs it ready by noon, and there are no more red ones."

Ilsa looked at her jar. The red button glowed at the top, brighter than all the rest. Suddenly it did not look so beautiful. It looked like a heavy weight.

She did not enjoy giving it up. But she picked the button out, flew to the street, and dropped it in Wren's open hand.

Wren gasped and then laughed. She sewed the button on in a minute. The coat was finished long before noon.

That evening, Ilsa sat beside her jar. It had fewer shiny things now, yet she felt lighter. Treasure is only treasure when it does not cost someone else a worry.

Questions

1. What did Ilsa the magpie like to collect?

_____

_____

2. Where did Ilsa find the red button?

_____

_____

3. Why was Wren crying in the street?

_____

_____

4. How did Ilsa fix the problem?

_____

_____

5. Why did the red button stop looking beautiful to Ilsa?

_____

_____

6. Why did Ilsa feel lighter even with fewer treasures?

_____

_____

Words to know

magpie: a black and white bird that likes shiny objects
thimble: a small cap that protects a finger while sewing
gleamed: shone brightly
swooped: flew down quickly
tailor: a person who makes or fixes clothes

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 Magpie's Button Jar

Triangle group

Ilsa the magpie adored shiny things. Every single day she searched the village from end to end and carried some new treasure back to her jar. She had collected bottle caps, scraps of foil, a silver thimble, and fifty-three buttons in every imaginable color.

One evening, she noticed a small red button resting on the windowsill of the tailor's shop. It gleamed like a ripe berry in the fading light. Ilsa swooped down and snatched it before she had time to think.

The next morning, she heard someone crying. The tailor's daughter, Wren, was kneeling in the middle of the street with a coat clutched in her arms. "The last button is missing," she sobbed. "Papa must have this ready by noon, and we have no other red buttons."

Ilsa looked at her jar. The red button glowed at the very top, brighter than all the rest. Suddenly, however, it no longer seemed beautiful. It seemed like a heavy weight.

She was reluctant to give it up. Nevertheless, she picked the button out, flew down to the street, and dropped it into Wren's open hand.

Wren gasped, and then she laughed with relief. She sewed the button on in a single minute, and the coat was finished long before noon.

That evening, Ilsa sat beside her jar. It held fewer shiny things than before, yet she felt remarkably light. Treasure is only treasure when it does not cost someone else a worry.

Questions

1. What did Ilsa the magpie adore collecting for her jar?

_____

_____

2. Where was the red button when Ilsa found it?

_____

_____

3. Why was Wren crying in the middle of the street?

_____

_____

4. How did Ilsa solve the problem?

_____

_____

5. Why did the red button suddenly seem like a heavy weight to Ilsa?

_____

_____

6. Why did Ilsa feel remarkably light even though her jar held fewer treasures?

_____

_____

Words to know

magpie: a black and white bird that likes shiny objects
thimble: a small cap that protects a finger while sewing
gleamed: shone brightly
swooped: flew down quickly
tailor: a person who makes or fixes clothes

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 Magpie's Button Jar

Square group

Ilsa the magpie adored shiny things, so every single day she searched the village from end to end and carried some new treasure back to her jar. She had collected bottle caps, scraps of foil, a silver thimble, and fifty-three buttons in every imaginable color.

One evening, she noticed a small red button resting on the windowsill of the tailor's shop, gleaming like a ripe berry in the fading light, and she swooped down and snatched it before she had time to think.

The next morning, she heard someone crying. The tailor's daughter, Wren, was kneeling in the middle of the street with a coat clutched in her arms. "The last button is missing," she sobbed. "Papa must have this ready by noon, and we have no other red buttons."

Ilsa looked at her jar, where the red button glowed at the very top, brighter than all the rest. Suddenly, however, it no longer seemed beautiful; instead, it seemed like a heavy weight.

She was reluctant to give it up. Nevertheless, she picked the button out, flew down to the street, and dropped it into Wren's open hand.

Wren gasped, and then she laughed with relief. She sewed the button on in a single minute, and the coat was finished long before noon.

That evening, Ilsa sat beside her jar, which held fewer shiny things than before, yet she felt remarkably light. Treasure is only truly treasure when it does not cost someone else a worry.

Questions

1. What did Ilsa the magpie adore collecting for her jar?

_____

_____

2. Where was the red button when Ilsa found it?

_____

_____

3. Why was Wren crying in the middle of the street?

_____

_____

4. How did Ilsa solve the problem?

_____

_____

5. Why did the red button suddenly seem like a heavy weight to Ilsa?

_____

_____

6. Why did Ilsa feel remarkably light even though her jar held fewer treasures?

_____

_____

Words to know

magpie: a black and white bird that likes shiny objects
thimble: a small cap that protects a finger while sewing
swooped: flew down quickly
tailor: a person who makes or fixes clothes

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 Magpie's Button Jar

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

Circle: The Magpie's Button Jar

Easier · 207 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.5

1. Shiny things like buttons, bottle caps, and foil.
2. On the windowsill of the tailor's shop.
3. The last button on her father's coat was missing and it was due by noon.
4. She flew down and dropped the red button into Wren's hand.
5. She knew it had caused Wren's trouble, and that made it feel heavy.
6. She had done the right thing and no longer carried guilt.

Triangle: The Magpie's Button Jar

This passage · 243 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.1

1. Shiny things such as bottle caps, foil, a thimble, and buttons.
2. Resting on the windowsill of the tailor's shop.
3. The last button on her father's coat was missing and it had to be ready by noon.
4. She flew down and dropped the red button into Wren's open hand.
5. She understood that taking it had caused Wren's trouble, and she felt guilty.
6. She had done the right thing, so she no longer carried the weight of guilt.

Square: The Magpie's Button Jar

Harder · 247 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.1

1. Shiny things such as bottle caps, foil, a thimble, and buttons.
2. Resting on the windowsill of the tailor's shop.
3. The last button on her father's coat was missing and it had to be ready by noon.
4. She flew down and dropped the red button into Wren's open hand.
5. She understood that taking it had caused Wren's trouble, and she felt guilty.
6. She had done the right thing, so she no longer carried the weight of guilt.