Name: _____ Date: _____

The Tortoise Who Kept the Ferry Rope

Circle group

Every morning, a tortoise named Orrin walked down to the bank of the wide brown river. His job was to check the ferry rope. The rope was stretched from one shore to the other, and the ferry pulled itself across by it. Orrin was very slow, so the other animals thought it was a dull job for a dull creature.

"Why not give it to a rabbit?" asked a young hare named Cal. "A rabbit could check it in a minute."

"A rabbit might not look closely," said Orrin.

Cal laughed and raced off. Then one windy morning, Orrin inched along the rope and found a place where the strands were fraying. Most animals would have missed it. Orrin touched each strand, one by one, with his careful nose.

He rang the ferry bell, and the ferrywoman hurried over. She tied a new rope before anyone climbed aboard.

That afternoon, the old rope snapped and floated down the river. Cal watched it go with wide eyes. He had planned to ride the ferry with six friends.

"Thank you for being slow," said Cal quietly.

Orrin smiled. "I am not slow," he said. "I am thorough. Some jobs need speed, and some need patience."

Questions

1. What was Orrin's job each morning?

_____

_____

2. What did Orrin find on the rope on the windy morning?

_____

_____

3. What did Orrin do after he found the problem?

_____

_____

4. What happened to the old rope that afternoon?

_____

_____

5. Why did Cal thank Orrin for being slow?

_____

_____

6. What does Orrin mean when he says he is thorough?

_____

_____

Words to know

ferry: a boat that carries people across water
fraying: coming apart at the edges, like worn thread
strands: thin threads twisted together to make a rope
thorough: careful and complete
patience: being able to wait or work slowly without getting upset

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 Tortoise Who Kept the Ferry Rope

Triangle group

Every single morning, a tortoise named Orrin made his unhurried way down to the bank of the wide brown river. His job was to inspect the ferry rope, which was stretched from one shore to the other and which the ferry used to pull itself across the water. Because Orrin moved so slowly, the other animals considered it a dull job for a dull creature.

"Why not hand it over to a rabbit?" asked a young hare named Cal. "A rabbit could check the whole rope in a minute."

"A rabbit might not look closely enough," said Orrin.

Cal laughed and bounded away. Then, on a windy morning not long afterward, Orrin inched along the rope and discovered a place where the strands were beginning to fray. Most animals would have missed it entirely. Orrin touched each strand, one at a time, with his careful nose.

He rang the ferry bell, and the ferrywoman hurried over. She tied on a new rope before a single passenger had climbed aboard.

That afternoon, the old rope snapped and drifted off down the river. Cal watched it go with wide, frightened eyes. He had been planning to ride the ferry with six of his friends.

"Thank you for being slow," said Cal quietly.

Orrin smiled. "I am not slow," he replied. "I am thorough. Some jobs call for speed, and others call for patience."

Questions

1. What was Orrin's job each morning at the river?

_____

_____

2. What did Orrin discover on the windy morning?

_____

_____

3. What did Orrin do immediately after finding the problem?

_____

_____

4. What happened to the old rope that afternoon?

_____

_____

5. Why did Cal thank Orrin for being slow?

_____

_____

6. What does Orrin mean when he says that he is thorough?

_____

_____

Words to know

ferry: a boat that carries people across water
strands: thin threads twisted together to make a rope
thorough: careful and complete
patience: being able to wait or work slowly without getting upset

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 Tortoise Who Kept the Ferry Rope

Square group

Every single morning, a tortoise named Orrin made his unhurried way down to the bank of the wide brown river, where his responsibility was to inspect the ferry rope that stretched from one shore to the other and that the ferry used to pull itself across the water. Because Orrin moved so slowly, the other animals considered it a dull job for a dull creature.

"Why not hand it over to a rabbit?" asked a young hare named Cal. "A rabbit could check the whole rope in a minute."

"A rabbit might not look closely enough," said Orrin.

Cal laughed and bounded away. Then, on a windy morning not long afterward, Orrin inched along the rope and discovered a place where the strands were beginning to fray, a flaw that most animals would have missed entirely. Orrin touched each strand, one at a time, with his careful nose.

He rang the ferry bell, and the ferrywoman hurried over and tied on a new rope before a single passenger had climbed aboard.

That afternoon, the old rope snapped and drifted off down the river. Cal watched it go with wide, frightened eyes, because he had been planning to ride the ferry with six of his friends.

"Thank you for being slow," said Cal quietly.

Orrin smiled. "I am not slow," he replied. "I am thorough. Some jobs call for speed, and others call for patience."

Questions

1. What was Orrin's job each morning at the river?

_____

_____

2. What did Orrin discover on the windy morning?

_____

_____

3. What did Orrin do immediately after finding the problem?

_____

_____

4. What happened to the old rope that afternoon?

_____

_____

5. Why did Cal thank Orrin for being slow?

_____

_____

6. What does Orrin mean when he says that he is thorough?

_____

_____

Words to know

ferry: a boat that carries people across water
strands: thin threads twisted together to make a rope
thorough: careful and complete
patience: being able to wait or work slowly without getting upset

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 Tortoise Who Kept the Ferry Rope

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

Circle: The Tortoise Who Kept the Ferry Rope

Easier · 203 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3

1. To check the ferry rope.
2. A place where the strands were fraying.
3. He rang the ferry bell so the ferrywoman could replace the rope.
4. It snapped and floated down the river.
5. Orrin's careful checking kept Cal and his friends from a dangerous ferry ride.
6. He does a job carefully and completely so nothing is missed.

Triangle: The Tortoise Who Kept the Ferry Rope

This passage · 231 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.8

1. To inspect the ferry rope.
2. A place where the strands of the rope were beginning to fray.
3. He rang the ferry bell so the ferrywoman could tie on a new rope.
4. It snapped and drifted off down the river.
5. Orrin's careful inspection kept Cal and his friends from a dangerous ferry ride.
6. He does a job carefully and completely so that nothing is overlooked.

Square: The Tortoise Who Kept the Ferry Rope

Harder · 234 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.3

1. To inspect the ferry rope.
2. A place where the strands of the rope were beginning to fray.
3. He rang the ferry bell so the ferrywoman could tie on a new rope.
4. It snapped and drifted off down the river.
5. Orrin's careful inspection kept Cal and his friends from a dangerous ferry ride.
6. He does a job carefully and completely so that nothing is overlooked.