Name: _____ Date: _____

The Goat That Ate the Mayor's Speech

Circle group

Mayor Odell Brisk worked on her speech for a week. It had fourteen pages. She wanted to welcome the new bridge in the town of Little Mudge. On the day of the ribbon cutting, she put the pages on a table behind the stage. Then she went to greet the crowd.

Nobody saw Biscuit. He was a goat from the bakery next door. He had slipped his rope again. Paper smelled a bit like toast to him, so he ate it. When the mayor came to the microphone, only one corner of page one was left.

"Friends," she said. Then she looked at her empty hands. The crowd waited. A little boy giggled. The mayor felt scared, but a joke came out. "I had a long speech," she said, "but this bridge has a critic. He liked my words. They were tasty."

Everyone laughed. The mayor kept going. She said a good bridge, like a good speech, should be short. You should cross it before lunch. Then she cut the ribbon. Biscuit walked onto the stage and ate that too.

Everyone said it was the best speech ever in Little Mudge. Next year the town gave Biscuit a small medal and a bucket of oats. The mayor never wrote more than one page again.

Questions

1. What was the mayor's speech supposed to welcome?

_____

_____

2. Who owned Biscuit the goat?

_____

_____

3. Why did Biscuit eat the paper?

_____

_____

4. What did the mayor do when she saw her empty hands?

_____

_____

5. Why did the crowd like such a short speech?

_____

_____

6. Why did the mayor never write more than one page again?

_____

_____

Words to know

ribbon: a long strip of cloth that is cut to open something new
microphone: a tool that makes a voice louder
critic: a person who judges and talks about the work of others

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 Goat That Ate the Mayor's Speech

Triangle group

Mayor Odell Brisk had practiced her speech for a whole week, and it was fourteen pages long, because she wanted to welcome the new bridge to the town of Little Mudge in a truly memorable way. On the morning of the ribbon cutting, she laid the pages on a table behind the stage and went to shake hands with the enormous crowd.

Nobody noticed Biscuit, the mischievous goat who belonged to the bakery next door. Biscuit had slipped his rope again, and since paper smelled a little like toast to him, he wandered over and began to munch. By the time the mayor stepped up to the microphone, the table was bare except for one corner of page one.

"Friends," she began, and then she looked down at her empty hands. The crowd waited patiently while a small boy in the front row giggled. The mayor felt a wave of panic, but something else came out of her mouth. "I had a long speech," she said, "but it seems this bridge has a critic, and he found my words very tasty."

The audience roared with laughter, and Mayor Brisk kept going. She explained that a good bridge, like a good speech, should be short enough to cross before lunch. Then she cut the ribbon, and Biscuit, who had wandered onto the stage, ate that too.

Everyone agreed it was the best speech Little Mudge had ever heard. The following year, the town presented Biscuit with a tiny medal and a bucket of oats, and the mayor never wrote more than one page again.

Questions

1. What was the mayor's speech supposed to welcome?

_____

_____

2. Who owned Biscuit the goat?

_____

_____

3. Why did Biscuit eat the paper?

_____

_____

4. What did the mayor do when she saw her empty hands?

_____

_____

5. Why did the crowd enjoy such a short speech?

_____

_____

6. Why did the mayor never write more than one page again?

_____

_____

Words to know

ribbon: a long strip of cloth that is cut to open something new
microphone: a tool that makes a voice louder
panic: a sudden feeling of fear that is hard to control
critic: a person who judges and talks about the work of others
audience: the people who gather to watch or listen

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 Goat That Ate the Mayor's Speech

Square group

Mayor Odell Brisk had rehearsed her address for an entire week, and by the end it had grown to fourteen pages, because she hoped to welcome the new bridge into the town of Little Mudge in a truly unforgettable fashion. On the morning of the ribbon cutting, she arranged the pages on a table behind the stage and set off to shake hands with the enormous, cheerful crowd.

What nobody noticed was Biscuit, the mischievous goat who belonged to the bakery next door. Biscuit had slipped his rope yet again, and since paper smelled faintly of toast to him, he wandered over and began to munch contentedly. By the time the mayor stepped up to the microphone, nothing remained on the table except a single corner of page one.

"Friends," she began, and then she glanced down at her empty hands. The crowd waited patiently while a small boy in the front row giggled. A wave of panic washed over the mayor, yet something entirely different escaped from her mouth. "I had a long speech," she said, "but it appears this bridge has a critic, and he found my words delicious."

The audience erupted in laughter, and Mayor Brisk carried on with new confidence. She explained that a good bridge, like a good speech, ought to be short enough to cross before lunch. Then she cut the ribbon, and Biscuit, who had wandered onto the stage by then, devoured that as well.

Everyone agreed that it was the finest speech Little Mudge had ever heard. The following year, the grateful town presented Biscuit with a tiny medal and a bucket of oats, and the mayor never again wrote more than a single page.

Questions

1. What was the mayor's speech supposed to welcome?

_____

_____

2. Who owned Biscuit the goat?

_____

_____

3. Why did Biscuit eat the paper?

_____

_____

4. What did the mayor do when she saw her empty hands?

_____

_____

5. Why did the crowd enjoy such a brief speech?

_____

_____

6. Why did the mayor never again write more than one page?

_____

_____

Words to know

ribbon: a long strip of cloth that is cut to open something new
microphone: a tool that makes a voice louder
panic: a sudden feeling of fear that is hard to control
critic: a person who judges and talks about the work of others
audience: the people who gather to watch or listen

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 Goat That Ate the Mayor's Speech

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

Circle: The Goat That Ate the Mayor's Speech

Easier · 214 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.6

1. The new bridge in the town of Little Mudge.
2. The bakery next door.
3. It smelled a bit like toast to him.
4. She made a joke about a critic and kept talking.
5. The mayor used humor and kept it short, so it was funny.
6. She learned that a short speech can work well.

Triangle: The Goat That Ate the Mayor's Speech

This passage · 263 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7

1. The new bridge in the town of Little Mudge.
2. The bakery next door.
3. He was hungry, and the paper smelled a little like toast.
4. She made a joke about the bridge having a critic and kept talking.
5. The mayor handled the mix-up with humor and kept it brief, so it felt fresh and funny.
6. She learned that a short speech can work better than a long one.

Square: The Goat That Ate the Mayor's Speech

Harder · 283 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.6

1. The new bridge in the town of Little Mudge.
2. The bakery next door.
3. He was hungry, and the paper smelled faintly of toast to him.
4. She joked that the bridge had a critic who found her words delicious, and she carried on.
5. The mayor handled the mix-up with humor and kept her words short, which made the speech fresh and funny.
6. She learned that a short speech can be more effective than a long one.