Name: _____ Date: _____

The Salmon Counter at the Viewing Window

Circle group

Many salmon are born in small streams. They swim out to the sea. Later they swim back to the same rivers to lay eggs. A dam can block the way. So some dams have a fish ladder. A fish ladder is a row of pools like steps. The fish swim or leap up from one pool to the next until they are past the dam.

At some dams, the ladder has a big window. A fish counter sits behind it. The counter watches each fish pass and writes down what kind it is. Some days, the counter sits in a quiet room and watches the water for hours.

The job needs sharp eyes. Some kinds of fish look alike. So the counter looks at the shape of the body, the spots, and the size. A fish may zip by in one second. The counter must choose fast. Cloudy water makes it harder.

Why count the fish? The numbers show how many fish make the trip each year. If the count drops, people can look for the reason and try to help. Cameras can record the window too. A trained counter can check the video with the notes to be sure the totals are right.

Questions

1. What is a fish ladder?

_____

_____

2. What does the fish counter write down?

_____

_____

3. What helps the counter tell fish apart?

_____

_____

4. Why do managers want the numbers each year?

_____

_____

5. Why does cloudy water make the job harder?

_____

_____

6. Why is the counter still useful when cameras record?

_____

_____

Words to know

ladder: a set of steps used to climb up
salmon: a large fish that swims from the sea up rivers to lay eggs
totals: the whole amounts when everything is added up

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 Salmon Counter at the Viewing Window

Triangle group

Many salmon are born in small streams, swim out to the ocean, and then travel back to the same rivers to lay eggs. A dam can block that trip, so some dams have a fish ladder. A fish ladder is a series of pools like steps, and the fish leap or swim from one pool to the next until they are above the dam.

At some dams, one part of the ladder has a large window. Behind it sits a fish counter. The counter's job is to watch each fish pass and write down what kind it is. Many days, the counter sits in a quiet room and watches the water for hours.

It takes sharp eyes. Fish of different kinds may look alike at a glance, so the counter notices the shape of the body, the pattern of spots, and the size. A fish may flash by in a second, and the counter must decide quickly. Murky water or bright reflections make the work harder.

Why count at all? The numbers tell managers how many fish are making the trip each year. If the count drops, people can look for the cause and try to help. Cameras can record the window too, but a trained counter can compare the video with the notes to make sure the totals are right.

Questions

1. What is a fish ladder?

_____

_____

2. What does the fish counter write down?

_____

_____

3. What clues help the counter tell fish apart?

_____

_____

4. Why do managers want the yearly numbers?

_____

_____

5. Why might murky water make the job harder?

_____

_____

6. Why would a counter still be useful when cameras record the window?

_____

_____

Words to know

ladder: a set of steps used to climb up
salmon: a large fish that swims from the sea up rivers to lay eggs
murky: cloudy and hard to see through
managers: people in charge of taking care of something
totals: the whole amounts when everything is added up

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 Salmon Counter at the Viewing Window

Square group

Many salmon are born in small headwater streams, migrate out to the ocean, and then travel all the way back to the same rivers to lay their eggs. A dam can block that journey, which is why some dams are built with a fish ladder. A fish ladder is a series of connected pools arranged like steps, and the fish leap or swim from one pool to the next until they have climbed above the dam.

At certain dams, one section of the ladder includes a large viewing window. Behind that window sits a fish counter, whose responsibility is to watch each fish go by and record exactly what kind it is. On many days, the counter sits in a quiet room and studies the moving water for hours at a time.

The work demands sharp eyes. Different kinds of fish can look remarkably alike at a glance, so the counter pays attention to the shape of the body, the pattern of spots, and the size. A fish may flash past in a single second, and the counter must reach a decision almost instantly. Murky water and bright reflections make that task even harder.

Why go to all this trouble? The numbers tell managers how many fish are completing the trip each year. If the count falls, people can investigate the cause and try to help. Cameras can also record the window, yet a trained counter can compare the footage with the written notes to confirm that the totals are accurate.

Questions

1. What is a fish ladder, and what is it for?

_____

_____

2. What does the fish counter record?

_____

_____

3. Which features help the counter distinguish one kind of fish from another?

_____

_____

4. Why do managers need the yearly numbers?

_____

_____

5. How might murky water and bright reflections affect the counter's work?

_____

_____

6. Why is a trained counter still valuable when cameras record the window?

_____

_____

Words to know

ladder: a set of steps used to climb up
salmon: a large fish that swims from the sea up rivers to lay eggs
murky: cloudy and hard to see through
managers: people in charge of taking care of something
totals: the whole amounts when everything is added up

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 Salmon Counter at the Viewing Window

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

Circle: The Salmon Counter at the Viewing Window

Easier · 204 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2

1. A row of pools like steps that helps fish get past a dam.
2. What kind of fish passes by.
3. The shape of the body, the spots, and the size.
4. They show how many fish make the trip, so people can look for a cause if the count drops.
5. It is hard to see the shape and spots of a fish that zips by.
6. The counter can check the video with the notes to be sure the totals are right.

Triangle: The Salmon Counter at the Viewing Window

This passage · 221 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 4.8

1. A series of pools like steps that lets fish get past a dam.
2. What kind of fish passes the window.
3. The shape of the body, the pattern of spots, and the size.
4. They show how many fish make the trip, so people can look for causes if the count drops.
5. It is harder to see the shape and spots of a fish that passes quickly.
6. A trained counter can check the video against the notes to make sure the totals are right.

Square: The Salmon Counter at the Viewing Window

Harder · 251 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.5

1. A series of connected pools like steps that lets fish climb above a dam.
2. The kind of each fish that passes the window.
3. The shape of the body, the pattern of spots, and the size.
4. They show how many fish complete the trip, so people can investigate if the count falls.
5. They make it harder to see the body shape and spots of a fish that passes quickly.
6. The counter can compare the footage with the notes to confirm the totals are accurate.