Name: _____ Date: _____

The Weaverbird's Crooked Nest

Circle group

Every spring, the weaverbirds of the riverbank built hanging nests from strips of grass. Each nest was round and neat, like a small green lantern. Young Tolo watched the older birds and tried to copy them. His first nest came out lopsided. One side bulged, and the door leaned to the left.

"That will never hold," said a neighbor named Bree. "Tear it down and start again."

Tolo did not want to lose a week. He pulled the knots tight. He added extra grass to the weak side and finished the roof. The nest still looked crooked, and the other birds teased him.

Then came a night of howling wind. Bree's perfect nest swung wildly. Strand by strand, it snapped. By midnight, her home had dropped into the reeds. Cold and wet, she crept to Tolo's nest.

His crooked home had barely moved. The extra knots had made it strong, and its leaning shape slid the wind around it.

He opened the door. "Come in," he said. "There is room, if you do not mind the tilt."

Bree was quiet for a long time. Then she said, "I was wrong about what makes a good home."

Questions

1. What did the weaverbirds use to build their nests?

_____

_____

2. What was wrong with Tolo's first nest?

_____

_____

3. What did Tolo do to make the weak side stronger?

_____

_____

4. What happened to Bree's nest in the wind?

_____

_____

5. Why did Tolo's crooked nest survive the storm?

_____

_____

6. What did Bree learn at the end?

_____

_____

Words to know

lantern: a lamp inside a case that can be hung up
lopsided: uneven, with one side bigger or lower
bulged: stuck out in a round shape
tilt: a slant to one side
reeds: tall grasses that grow in wet ground

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 Weaverbird's Crooked Nest

Triangle group

Every spring, the weaverbirds of the riverbank built hanging nests from long strips of grass. And each nest was round and tidy, like a small green lantern swinging from a branch. Young Tolo watched the older birds work and tried to copy them, but his first nest came out lopsided, with one side bulging and the entrance leaning to the left like a tired chimney. A neighbor named Bree sniffed that it would never hold and told him to tear it down and begin again.

Tolo did not want to waste a whole week. So he tightened the knots, added extra grass along the weak side, and finished the roof. The nest still looked crooked. And the other birds teased him for it.

Then came a night of howling wind. Bree's perfect nest swung wildly while one loose strand after another snapped, and by midnight her home had dropped into the reeds. Cold and wet, she crept toward Tolo's nest, hoping he might make room. His crooked home had barely moved, because all those extra knots had made it strong and its leaning shape slid the wind around it. Tolo opened the entrance and told her there was plenty of space, if she did not mind the tilt. Bree squeezed inside and was quiet for a long time before she admitted that she had been wrong about what makes a good home.

Questions

1. What did the weaverbirds use to build their nests?

_____

_____

2. What was wrong with Tolo's first nest?

_____

_____

3. What did Tolo do to make the weak side stronger?

_____

_____

4. What happened to Bree's nest during the windy night?

_____

_____

5. Why did Tolo's crooked nest survive the storm?

_____

_____

6. What did Bree learn at the end?

_____

_____

Words to know

lantern: a lamp inside a case that can be hung up
lopsided: uneven, with one side bigger or lower
tilt: a slant to one side
reeds: tall grasses that grow in wet ground

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 Weaverbird's Crooked Nest

Square group

Every spring, the weaverbirds that inhabited the riverbank constructed hanging nests from long, flexible strips of grass. And each immaculate nest resembled a small green lantern swaying gently from a branch. Young Tolo studied the older birds as they worked and attempted to imitate their remarkable craftsmanship. But his first nest emerged hopelessly lopsided, with one side bulging outward and the entrance leaning to the left like a weary chimney. A neighbor named Bree sniffed that such a structure would never hold and advised him to tear it down and begin again.

Tolo had no desire to squander an entire week. So he tightened every knot, wove additional grass along the weaker side. And completed the roof. The nest still looked crooked. And the other birds continued to tease him about it.

Then came a night of howling wind. Bree's flawless nest swung violently while one loose strand after another snapped. And by midnight her home had plummeted into the reeds below. Cold and drenched, she crept toward Tolo's nest, hoping that he might make room for her. His crooked home had scarcely moved, because the extra knots had made it remarkably sturdy and its leaning shape deflected the wind around it. Tolo opened the entrance and explained that there was plenty of space, provided she did not mind the tilt. Bree squeezed inside and remained silent for a long time before she finally acknowledged that she had been wrong about what makes a good home.

Questions

1. What did the weaverbirds use to construct their hanging nests?

_____

_____

2. What was wrong with Tolo's first nest?

_____

_____

3. What did Tolo do to strengthen the weaker side?

_____

_____

4. What happened to Bree's nest during the windy night?

_____

_____

5. Why did Tolo's crooked nest withstand the storm?

_____

_____

6. What did Bree come to understand at the end?

_____

_____

Words to know

lantern: a lamp inside a case that can be hung up
lopsided: uneven, with one side bigger or lower
tilt: a slant to one side
reeds: tall grasses that grow in wet ground

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 Weaverbird's Crooked Nest

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

Circle: The Weaverbird's Crooked Nest

Easier · 196 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1.6

1. Strips of grass.
2. It was lopsided, with one side bulging and the door leaning left.
3. He pulled the knots tight and added extra grass.
4. Its strands snapped one by one and it dropped into the reeds.
5. The extra knots made it strong, and its shape slid the wind around it.
6. A nest that looks perfect is not always the one that works best.

Triangle: The Weaverbird's Crooked Nest

This passage · 232 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.7

1. Long strips of grass.
2. It was lopsided, with one side bulging and the entrance leaning to the left.
3. He tightened the knots and added extra grass.
4. Strands snapped one by one until it dropped into the reeds.
5. The extra knots made it strong, and its shape let the wind slide around it.
6. A nest that looks perfect is not always the one that works best.

Square: The Weaverbird's Crooked Nest

Harder · 246 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.3

1. Long, flexible strips of grass.
2. It was lopsided, with one side bulging and the entrance leaning to the left.
3. He tightened every knot and wove in additional grass.
4. Its strands snapped one after another until it plummeted into the reeds.
5. The extra knots made it sturdy, and its leaning shape deflected the wind around it.
6. A nest that looks flawless is not always the one that works best.