Name: _____ Date: _____

The Tortoise Who Kept the Market Clock

Circle group

In the animal market of Brindle Hollow, there was a tall clock with a big brass bell. Every day at noon, someone had to wind the clock and ring the bell. Then the sellers knew when to open their stalls. For many seasons, a quick hare named Flint did the job.

One year, Flint said he was too busy. Nobody else wanted the task. It was boring and took patience. At last a tortoise named Orrin stepped up. "I will do it," he said. "I am slow, but I am steady."

Some animals worried. A tortoise took a long time to climb the stairs. On his first day, Orrin left his burrow two hours early. He climbed every step, wound the clock, and rang the bell right at noon.

Day after day he did the same. Rain or heat, he was there. The sellers began to plan their day by his bell. The market ran better than ever.

Months later, Flint came back. He had often been late, because he dashed in at the last second. He watched Orrin and said quietly, "You never miss."

"I never rush," said Orrin. "That is how I never miss."

Questions

1. What did the keeper of the clock have to do each day?

_____

_____

2. Who kept the clock before Orrin?

_____

_____

3. Why did Orrin leave his burrow two hours early?

_____

_____

4. What happened to the market after Orrin took the job?

_____

_____

5. Why had Flint often been late?

_____

_____

6. What does Orrin mean when he says he never rushes so he never misses?

_____

_____

Words to know

steady: regular and not changing

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 Market Clock

Triangle group

In the animal market of Brindle Hollow, there was a tall clock with a great brass bell, and every day at noon someone had to wind the clock and ring the bell so that the vendors would know when to open their stalls. For many seasons, a quick hare named Flint had done the job. One year, he announced that he was too busy and would no longer wind the clock, and nobody else wanted the task because it was tedious and took patience.

At last a tortoise named Orrin stepped forward and said that he was slow but steady. Some animals worried that a tortoise would take far too long to climb the clock tower stairs. On his first day, Orrin left his burrow two hours early, crept up every step, wound the clock slowly, and rang the bell exactly at noon. Day after day he did the same, in rain or in heat, and the vendors began to set their own routines by the sound of his bell. The market ran more smoothly than it ever had.

Months later, Flint wandered back. He had often been late, because he had trusted himself to dash in at the last second. He watched Orrin wind the clock and said quietly that Orrin never missed. Orrin answered that he never rushed, and that this was how he never missed.

Questions

1. What did the person who kept the clock have to do each day?

_____

_____

2. Who kept the clock before Orrin?

_____

_____

3. Why did Orrin leave his burrow two hours early on the first day?

_____

_____

4. What happened to the market after Orrin took the job?

_____

_____

5. Why had Flint often been late?

_____

_____

6. What does Orrin mean when he says he never rushes so he never misses?

_____

_____

Words to know

vendors: people who sell things at a market
tedious: boring and slow because it takes so long
steady: regular and not changing
routines: things you do in the same way each day
announced: told everyone something in a clear way

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 Market Clock

Square group

In the bustling animal market of Brindle Hollow stood a tall clock with a great brass bell. And every day at noon someone had to wind the clock and ring the bell so that the vendors would know precisely when to open their stalls. For many seasons, a quick hare named Flint had performed this duty. One year, he announced that he was far too busy to continue winding the clock, and nobody else wanted the responsibility, since it was tedious and demanded considerable patience.

At last a tortoise named Orrin stepped forward and declared that although he was slow, he was steady. Some animals fretted that a tortoise would surely take an enormous amount of time to climb the clock tower stairs. On his first day, Orrin left his burrow two hours early, crept up every step, wound the clock slowly and carefully, and rang the bell at exactly noon. Day after day he repeated the same routine through rain and sweltering heat. And the vendors began to organize their entire day around the sound of his bell. The market ran more smoothly than it ever had before.

Months later, Flint wandered back to the tower. He had frequently been late, because he had trusted himself to dash in at the last possible second. He watched Orrin wind the clock and remarked quietly that Orrin never missed. Orrin replied that he never rushed. And that this was precisely how he never missed.

Questions

1. What did the keeper of the clock have to do every day at noon?

_____

_____

2. Who had kept the clock before Orrin?

_____

_____

3. Why did Orrin leave his burrow two hours early on his first day?

_____

_____

4. What happened to the market once Orrin took over the job?

_____

_____

5. Why had Flint frequently been late?

_____

_____

6. What does Orrin mean by saying he never rushes and so never misses?

_____

_____

Words to know

vendors: people who sell things at a market
tedious: boring and slow because it takes so long
steady: regular and not changing
announced: told everyone something in a clear way

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 Market Clock

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

Circle: The Tortoise Who Kept the Market Clock

Easier · 196 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.4

1. Wind the clock and ring the bell at noon.
2. A hare named Flint.
3. He was slow and needed extra time to climb the stairs.
4. It ran better because the sellers could count on his bell.
5. He dashed in at the last second.
6. By leaving early and going steadily, he always arrives on time.

Triangle: The Tortoise Who Kept the Market Clock

This passage · 228 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.8

1. Wind the clock and ring the bell at noon.
2. A hare named Flint.
3. He was slow and needed extra time to climb the tower stairs.
4. It ran more smoothly because the vendors could count on his bell.
5. He trusted himself to dash in at the last second.
6. By leaving early and going steadily, he always arrives on time.

Square: The Tortoise Who Kept the Market Clock

Harder · 243 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.8

1. Wind the clock and ring the bell.
2. A quick hare named Flint.
3. He was slow and needed extra time to climb the tower stairs.
4. It ran more smoothly because the vendors could depend on his bell.
5. He trusted himself to dash in at the last possible second.
6. By leaving early and moving steadily, he always arrives on time.