Name: _____ Date: _____

Captain Pennywhistle's Very Short Ocean Voyage

Circle group

Captain Barnaby Pennywhistle liked to say that he had sailed the seven seas. He said he had outrun three storms and once wrestled a whale to a draw. The truth was that he lived beside Muddlewick Pond. It was about as wide as a football field. His ship was a washtub with a sail made from a bedsheet.

Wilma and Otis, two young kids, knew all this. They also loved listening to him. Each afternoon they sat on the dock while the captain told a giant story. Each afternoon he added one more impossible detail.

On Saturday, the captain decided to prove his bravery. He would cross the whole ocean, which was his name for the pond. "Stand back, mates," he called. "The great voyage begins!" He climbed into the washtub, raised his sail, and pushed off the dock with a pole.

Halfway across, the washtub began to wobble. Water trickled in through a crack. "Sea monster!" the captain shouted. He pointed at two orange feet paddling under the water. A goose waddled out of the reeds, looked at him, and honked.

Wilma and Otis looked at each other. Wilma grabbed a bucket. Otis tossed a rope. "Captain," Otis called, "hold on to your ship!" They pulled the washtub to shore. Wilma scooped out the water, and Otis patched the crack with tape.

The captain was quiet for a minute. Then he said, "It was the finest, most terrifying voyage of my career." The goose honked again. Wilma decided that meant he agreed.

Questions

1. What did Captain Pennywhistle say he had done?

_____

_____

2. What was the captain's ship really?

_____

_____

3. What name did the captain use for the pond?

_____

_____

4. What was the sea monster the captain saw?

_____

_____

5. How did Wilma and Otis help?

_____

_____

6. Why do you think the captain called the trip terrifying?

_____

_____

Words to know

trickled: flowed in a thin, slow stream

waddled: walked with short steps that rock from side to side

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: _____

Captain Pennywhistle's Very Short Ocean Voyage

Triangle group

Captain Barnaby Pennywhistle liked to say that he had sailed the seven seas, outrun three typhoons, and once wrestled a whale to a draw. In truth, he lived beside Muddlewick Pond, which was about as wide as a football field, and his ship was a washtub with a sail made from a bedsheet.

The pond's two youngest residents, Wilma and Otis, knew all this. They also loved listening to him. Every afternoon they sat on the dock while the captain told another gigantic story, and every afternoon he added one more impossible detail.

On Saturday, the captain decided to prove his bravery by crossing the entire ocean, which was his name for the pond. "Stand back, mates," he called. "The great voyage begins!" He climbed into the washtub, raised his sail, and pushed off the dock with a pole.

Halfway across, the washtub started to wobble. Water trickled in through a crack the captain had never noticed. "Sea monster!" he shouted, pointing at a pair of orange feet paddling just under the surface. A goose waddled out of the reeds, looked at him, and honked.

Wilma and Otis exchanged a glance. Wilma grabbed a bucket from the dock, and Otis tossed a rope across the water. "Captain," Otis called, "hold on to your ship!" They pulled the washtub back to shore, where Wilma bailed out the water and Otis patched the crack with a strip of tape.

The captain was quiet for a long minute. Then he declared, "It was the finest, most terrifying voyage of my career." The goose honked again, which Wilma decided meant he agreed.

Questions

1. What did Captain Pennywhistle claim he had done?

_____

_____

2. What was the captain's ship really?

_____

_____

3. What did the captain call the pond?

_____

_____

4. What did the captain think the sea monster was?

_____

_____

5. How did Wilma and Otis help the captain?

_____

_____

6. Why do you think the captain called the trip terrifying?

_____

_____

Words to know

typhoons: very strong storms with powerful winds over the sea
residents: people or animals that live in a place
trickled: flowed in a thin, slow stream
waddled: walked with short steps that rock from side to side
bailed: scooped water out of a boat

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: _____

Captain Pennywhistle's Very Short Ocean Voyage

Square group

Captain Barnaby Pennywhistle liked to proclaim that he had sailed the seven seas, outrun three typhoons, and once wrestled a whale to a draw. In truth, he lived beside Muddlewick Pond, which was scarcely wider than a football field, and his vessel was a washtub fitted with a sail sewn from a bedsheet.

The pond's two youngest residents, Wilma and Otis, understood all this perfectly well. They also adored listening to him. Every afternoon they perched on the dock while the captain spun another gigantic yarn, and every afternoon he tacked on one more impossible detail.

On Saturday, the captain resolved to prove his bravery by crossing the entire ocean, which was his grand name for the pond. "Stand back, mates," he bellowed. "The great voyage begins!" He climbed into the washtub, hoisted his sail, and shoved off from the dock with a long pole.

Halfway across, the washtub started to wobble. Water trickled in through a crack that the captain had never noticed. "Sea monster!" he shrieked, pointing at a pair of orange feet paddling just beneath the surface. A goose waddled out of the reeds, regarded him with disdain, and honked.

Wilma and Otis exchanged a glance. Wilma seized a bucket from the dock, and Otis hurled a rope across the water. "Captain," Otis called, "hold on to your ship!" They hauled the washtub back to shore, where Wilma bailed out the water and Otis patched the crack with a strip of tape.

The captain was silent for a long minute. Then he declared, "It was the finest, most terrifying voyage of my entire career." The goose honked again, which Wilma decided meant he agreed.

Questions

1. What did Captain Pennywhistle proclaim that he had done?

_____

_____

2. What was the captain's vessel in reality?

_____

_____

3. What grand name did the captain give the pond?

_____

_____

4. What was the sea monster that the captain pointed at?

_____

_____

5. In what ways did Wilma and Otis help the captain?

_____

_____

6. Why do you think the captain called the trip terrifying?

_____

_____

Words to know

typhoons: very strong storms with powerful winds over the sea
residents: people or animals that live in a place
trickled: flowed in a thin, slow stream
waddled: walked with short steps that rock from side to side
bailed: scooped water out of a boat

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: Captain Pennywhistle's Very Short Ocean Voyage

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

Circle: Captain Pennywhistle's Very Short Ocean Voyage

Easier · 253 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.6

1. He said he sailed the seven seas, outran storms, and wrestled a whale.
2. A washtub with a bedsheet sail.
3. The ocean.
4. It was a goose paddling near the boat.
5. They pulled the washtub to shore, scooped out the water, and patched the crack.
6. He likes to exaggerate to make his small adventures sound big.

Triangle: Captain Pennywhistle's Very Short Ocean Voyage

This passage · 268 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.9

1. He said he had sailed the seven seas, outrun typhoons, and wrestled a whale.
2. A washtub with a sail made from a bedsheet.
3. The ocean.
4. It was really a goose paddling near the boat.
5. They pulled the washtub to shore, bailed out the water, and patched the crack.
6. He likes to exaggerate, and he wanted his adventures to sound big even though the trip was small.

Square: Captain Pennywhistle's Very Short Ocean Voyage

Harder · 277 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.5

1. He claimed he had sailed the seven seas, outrun typhoons, and wrestled a whale to a draw.
2. A washtub fitted with a sail sewn from a bedsheet.
3. The ocean.
4. It was really a goose paddling just beneath the boat.
5. They hauled the washtub to shore, bailed out the water, and patched the crack with tape.
6. He loves to exaggerate, so he made a tiny pond trip sound like a huge adventure.