Name: _____ Date: _____

Odalys Takes Every Word Literally for a Day

Circle group

Odalys Reyes was tired of idioms. "Why can't people just say what they mean?" she asked at lunch. "Break a leg. Hit the books. Pull your socks up." Her friend Tobias grinned. He dared her to take every saying literally for one whole Saturday. That was the day of the school carnival.

She said yes. By nine o'clock she was in trouble. The principal called, "Odalys, can you lend a hand at the ticket booth?" She looked at her hand and then at the principal. "Lend it to whom? When would I get it back?" The principal laughed and said, "Just help sell tickets."

At ten, a volunteer shouted, "That jar of marbles is going for a song!" Odalys leaned close and listened. "It is not singing," she said, "and I do not see it going anywhere." Tobias had to cover his mouth.

At noon came the real test. Mrs. Dunmore ran the bake table. She had to go find a missing cash box. "Keep an eye on the chocolate cake," she said. "I will be right back."

Most students would have wandered off. Odalys did exactly as told. She stood by the cake and stared at it. Ten minutes later, a small brown dog crept under the table. He sniffed and reached for the frosting. Odalys saw him at once. "Excuse me," she said, "that is not for you." The dog's owner came and pulled him away.

Mrs. Dunmore came back to a perfect cake and a proud girl. "Well," she said, "this time a literal answer was just right."

Questions

1. What did Tobias dare Odalys to do?

_____

_____

2. What event was happening at school that day?

_____

_____

3. Why did Odalys ask when she would get her hand back?

_____

_____

4. What did Mrs. Dunmore ask Odalys to do at the bake table?

_____

_____

5. How did Odalys's literal thinking help the cake?

_____

_____

6. What did Mrs. Dunmore mean at the end?

_____

_____

Words to know

idioms: sayings whose meaning is different from the words themselves
literally: exactly as the words are written, with no hidden meaning
volunteer: a person who helps without being paid

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: _____

Odalys Takes Every Word Literally for a Day

Triangle group

Odalys Reyes had grown tired of idioms. "Why can nobody just say what they mean?" she asked at lunch, listing examples such as break a leg, hit the books and pull your socks up. Her friend Tobias grinned and dared her to take every saying literally for one entire Saturday, which happened to be the day of the school carnival.

She accepted the challenge, and by nine o'clock she was already in trouble. When the principal called, "Odalys, can you lend a hand at the ticket booth?" she looked down at her own hand and then back at the principal. "Lend it to whom, and when would I get it back?" she asked. The principal laughed and explained that she only needed help selling tickets.

At ten, a volunteer shouted that the jar of marbles was going for a song. Odalys leaned close and listened carefully. "It is not singing at all," she reported, "and I do not see it going anywhere." Tobias had to cover his mouth to keep from laughing out loud.

The real test came at noon. Mrs. Dunmore, who supervised the bake table, was called away to search for a missing cash box. "Keep an eye on the chocolate cake," she said over her shoulder, "and I will be right back."

Most students would have wandered off, but Odalys obeyed to the letter. She planted herself in front of the cake and stared at it without blinking. Ten minutes later, a small brown dog crept under the table, sniffed the air, and stretched toward the frosting. Odalys noticed him instantly and told him firmly that the cake was not for him, and the dog's owner hurried over to lead him away.

When Mrs. Dunmore returned, she found a perfect cake and a very proud girl. "Well," she said, "that is one time when a literal answer was exactly right."

Questions

1. What did Tobias dare Odalys to do?

_____

_____

2. What was the event that day at school?

_____

_____

3. Why did Odalys ask when she would get her hand back?

_____

_____

4. What did Mrs. Dunmore ask Odalys to do at the bake table?

_____

_____

5. How did Odalys's literal thinking help protect the cake?

_____

_____

6. What did Mrs. Dunmore mean by her last comment?

_____

_____

Words to know

idioms: sayings whose meaning is different from the words themselves
literally: exactly as the words are written, with no hidden meaning
volunteer: a person who helps without being paid
obeyed: did what someone asked
instantly: right away, with no delay

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: _____

Odalys Takes Every Word Literally for a Day

Square group

Odalys Reyes had grown thoroughly exasperated by idioms. "Why can nobody simply say what they mean?" she demanded at lunch, listing examples such as break a leg, hit the books and pull your socks up. Her friend Tobias grinned and challenged her to interpret every saying literally for one entire Saturday, which happened to be the day of the school carnival.

She accepted the challenge, and by nine o'clock she was already in considerable trouble. When the principal called, "Odalys, can you lend a hand at the ticket booth?" she glanced down at her own hand and then back at the principal. "Lend it to whom, and when would I get it back?" she inquired. The principal laughed and clarified that she merely needed assistance selling tickets.

At ten, a volunteer shouted that the jar of marbles was going for a song. Odalys leaned close and listened attentively. "It is not singing at all," she reported, "and I do not see it going anywhere." Tobias had to cover his mouth to prevent himself from laughing out loud.

The genuine test arrived at noon. Mrs. Dunmore, who supervised the bake table, was summoned away to search for a missing cash box. "Keep an eye on the chocolate cake," she said over her shoulder, "and I will return momentarily."

Most students would have wandered off, but Odalys obeyed to the letter. She positioned herself directly in front of the cake and stared at it without blinking. Ten minutes later, a small brown dog crept under the table, sniffed the air, and stretched toward the frosting. Odalys noticed him immediately and informed him firmly that the cake was not intended for him, whereupon the dog's owner hurried over to lead him away.

When Mrs. Dunmore returned, she discovered an undamaged cake and a very proud girl. "Well," she remarked, "that is one occasion when a literal answer was exactly right."

Questions

1. What did Tobias dare Odalys to do?

_____

_____

2. What event took place at school on that Saturday?

_____

_____

3. Why did Odalys ask when she would get her hand back?

_____

_____

4. What did Mrs. Dunmore ask Odalys to do at the bake table?

_____

_____

5. How did Odalys's literal thinking help protect the cake?

_____

_____

6. What did Mrs. Dunmore mean by her final remark?

_____

_____

Words to know

idioms: sayings whose meaning is different from the words themselves
literally: exactly as the words are written, with no hidden meaning
volunteer: a person who helps without being paid
obeyed: did what someone asked

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: Odalys Takes Every Word Literally for a Day

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

Circle: Odalys Takes Every Word Literally for a Day

Easier · 261 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.3

1. Take every saying literally for one whole Saturday.
2. The school carnival.
3. She took the words lend a hand literally.
4. Keep an eye on the chocolate cake.
5. She stared at it and saw the dog sneaking toward the frosting.
6. This time, doing exactly what the words said was the right choice.

Triangle: Odalys Takes Every Word Literally for a Day

This passage · 313 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.4

1. Take every saying literally for one whole Saturday.
2. The school carnival.
3. She took the phrase lend a hand literally.
4. Keep an eye on the chocolate cake.
5. She stared at it without leaving, so she saw the dog sneaking toward the frosting.
6. This time, taking the words exactly as said was the right way to do the job.

Square: Odalys Takes Every Word Literally for a Day

Harder · 317 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.2

1. Interpret every saying literally for one entire Saturday.
2. The school carnival.
3. She interpreted the phrase lend a hand literally.
4. Keep an eye on the chocolate cake.
5. She stared at it without leaving, so she spotted the dog reaching for the frosting.
6. On this occasion, following the words exactly was the right way to do the job.