Name: _____ Date: _____

Pebbles in the Library Book Drop

Circle group

For two weeks, Camille found something odd each morning in the library's book drop. Next to the returned novels were small gray pebbles. Each one had a white number painted on it. The first said 1. The next said 2. By Friday she held number nine.

"Someone is counting," she told the librarian, Mr. Ito. "But what?"

Camille put the pebbles in a row on the desk. She checked the stamped dates in the returned books. Every book that day was a mystery or an adventure. That gave her an idea. Maybe the numbers matched a series of books. Maybe someone was keeping a tally of books he or she had read.

On Monday, she came early and hid behind the shelves. At seven forty, a boy of about eight crept up to the slot. He dropped in a thick book. Then he took a stone marked 15 from his pocket.

"Hello," Camille said gently. He jumped and looked at his shoes. "I don't have a card yet," he said. "My mom says I might lose it. So I make my own."

Camille smiled and walked him to the front desk. Mr. Ito stamped a library card with his name, Wes. Wes held it in both hands like glass. Then he put his pebble in the jar by the window. The library kept the jar there from then on.

Questions

1. What did Camille find in the book drop each morning?

_____

_____

2. What kind of books came back with the pebbles?

_____

_____

3. Where did Camille wait to catch the person?

_____

_____

4. Why did Wes not have a library card?

_____

_____

5. What did the pebbles stand for?

_____

_____

6. Why did Wes hold the new card like glass?

_____

_____

Words to know

pebble: a small, smooth stone
librarian: a person who works in and cares for a library
tally: a running count of things, often kept with marks
stamp: to press a mark or a date onto paper

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: _____

Pebbles in the Library Book Drop

Triangle group

Every morning for two weeks, Camille found something peculiar when she emptied the library's book drop. Mixed in with the returned novels were small gray pebbles, each one painted with a white number. The first pebble said 1, the second said 2, and by Friday she was holding number nine.

"Somebody is counting," she told the librarian, Mr. Ito. "But I cannot figure out what."

Camille arranged the pebbles in a row on the desk. She examined the date stamps in the returned books, hoping to find a connection, and she noticed that every book in that day's pile had been either a mystery or an adventure. That gave her an idea. If the numbers matched a series of books, then the person might be keeping a tally of everything he or she had finished reading.

On Monday she arrived early and waited behind the shelves. At seven forty, a boy of about eight crept up to the slot, dropped in a thick book, and then reached into his pocket for a stone marked 15.

"Hello," Camille said gently. He jumped, and then he stared down at his shoes. "I don't have a card yet," he admitted. "My mom says I might lose it, so I make my own."

Camille smiled and walked him to the front desk, where Mr. Ito stamped a library card with the boy's name, Wes. Wes held it in both hands as though it were made of glass. Then he added his pebble to the jar beside the window, which the library kept on display from that day forward.

Questions

1. What did Camille find in the book drop every morning?

_____

_____

2. What kind of books were returned along with the pebbles?

_____

_____

3. Where did Camille wait to catch the person leaving the pebbles?

_____

_____

4. Why did Wes not have a library card?

_____

_____

5. What did the pebbles really stand for?

_____

_____

6. Why did Wes hold the new card in both hands like glass?

_____

_____

Words to know

pebble: a small, smooth stone
librarian: a person who works in and cares for a library
tally: a running count of things, often kept with marks
stamp: to press a mark or a date onto paper
display: to put something where people can see it

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: _____

Pebbles in the Library Book Drop

Square group

Every morning for two weeks, Camille discovered something increasingly peculiar when she emptied the library's book drop. Mixed in with the returned novels were small gray pebbles, each one carefully painted with a white number. The first pebble said 1, the second said 2, and by Friday she was holding number nine.

"Somebody is counting," she told the librarian, Mr. Ito. "But I honestly cannot figure out what."

Camille arranged the pebbles in a neat row on the desk. She examined the date stamps in the returned books, hoping to uncover some kind of connection, and she noticed that every book in that day's pile had been either a mystery or an adventure. That gave her an idea. If the numbers corresponded to a series of books, then the mysterious visitor might be keeping a tally of everything he or she had finished reading.

On Monday she arrived unusually early and waited quietly behind the shelves. At seven forty, a boy of about eight tiptoed up to the slot, dropped in a thick book, and then reached into his pocket for a stone marked 15.

"Hello," Camille said gently. He jumped, and then he stared down at his shoes. "I don't have a card yet," he admitted. "My mom says I might lose it, so I make my own."

Camille smiled and walked him to the front desk, where Mr. Ito stamped a library card with the boy's name, Wes. Wes held it in both hands as though it were made of glass. Then he proudly added his pebble to the jar beside the window, which the library kept on display from that day forward.

Questions

1. What did Camille discover in the book drop every morning?

_____

_____

2. What kinds of books were returned along with the pebbles?

_____

_____

3. Where did Camille wait in order to catch the person leaving the pebbles?

_____

_____

4. Why did Wes not have a library card?

_____

_____

5. What did the pebbles actually represent?

_____

_____

6. Why did Wes hold the new card in both hands as though it were glass?

_____

_____

Words to know

pebble: a small, smooth stone
librarian: a person who works in and cares for a library
tally: a running count of things, often kept with marks
stamp: to press a mark or a date onto paper
display: to put something where people can see it

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: Pebbles in the Library Book Drop

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

Circle: Pebbles in the Library Book Drop

Easier · 226 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.3

1. Small gray pebbles painted with white numbers.
2. Mysteries and adventure stories.
3. Behind the shelves, near the book slot.
4. His mother worried he might lose it.
5. A running count of the books Wes had read.
6. It meant a lot to him, and he feared he would break or lose it.

Triangle: Pebbles in the Library Book Drop

This passage · 261 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.9

1. Small gray pebbles painted with white numbers.
2. Mysteries and adventure stories.
3. Behind the shelves, near the book slot.
4. His mother worried he might lose it.
5. A running count of the books Wes had read.
6. It meant a lot to him, and he was afraid of breaking or losing it.

Square: Pebbles in the Library Book Drop

Harder · 272 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.1

1. Small gray pebbles painted with white numbers.
2. Mysteries and adventure stories.
3. Behind the shelves, near the book slot.
4. His mother worried that he might lose it.
5. A running count of the books Wes had read.
6. It meant a great deal to him, and he was afraid of breaking or losing it.