Name: _____ Date: _____

The Beep From the Old Water Tower

Circle group

Jamal was trying the new handheld radio he got for his birthday. He picked up a strange sound. It was a steady beep, once every ten seconds. It never changed. He wrote the time in his logbook. He turned the dial and found it again in the same place.

"It's not a person," he told his friend Sol. "It's a machine, and it's close."

The signal got louder when Jamal pointed the antenna one way. It got softer when he turned it. So the boys walked down Mill Road. At each corner, they stopped to listen and marked which way made the beep strongest. Their path bent toward the edge of town. There, the old water tower stood behind a fence.

They did not climb the fence. Sol pointed to the "No Entry" sign. Instead, Jamal stood at the gate and held up the radio. The signal was loudest there. It had to come from the tower.

They went to the town office and told what they found. A clerk made a call and thanked them. "That is a small weather sensor," she said. "A repair crew hung it up last month. It sends a beep to show the battery still works."

On the way home, Sol grinned. "You solved a mystery with a birthday present."

Questions

1. What did Jamal pick up on his new radio?

_____

_____

2. How did the boys find which way the signal came from?

_____

_____

3. Why did the boys not climb the fence?

_____

_____

4. What made the beep?

_____

_____

5. How did Jamal know the beep came from a machine?

_____

_____

6. Why did the boys go to the town office?

_____

_____

Words to know

logbook: a notebook for recording what you observe and when
antenna: a rod or wire that sends or picks up radio signals
signal: a message or sound sent from one place to another
sensor: a device that detects something, such as weather
clerk: an office worker who helps people and keeps records

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 Beep From the Old Water Tower

Triangle group

Jamal was testing the handheld radio that he had received for his birthday when he picked up an unfamiliar sound. It was a steady beep that repeated once every ten seconds, and it never varied. He wrote the time in his logbook, turned the dial away, and found the signal again right where he had left it.

"It's not a person," he told his friend Sol. "It's a machine, and it must be somewhere nearby."

The signal grew louder when Jamal pointed the antenna in one direction and softer when he turned it in another. The boys therefore walked down Mill Road, pausing at each corner to listen and to note which direction made the beep strongest. Their route gradually bent toward the edge of town, where the old water tower rose behind a tall fence.

They did not attempt to climb the fence, because Sol pointed out the "No Entry" sign. Instead, Jamal stood at the gate and held the radio high above his head. The signal was at its loudest, so it had to be coming from the tower itself.

The two of them walked to the town office and described what they had found. A clerk made a phone call and then thanked them warmly. "That is a small weather sensor," she explained. "A repair crew hung it up last month, and it sends out a beep to let them know that the battery is still working."

On the way home, Sol grinned. "You solved a mystery with a birthday present."

Questions

1. What did Jamal pick up on his new radio?

_____

_____

2. How did the boys figure out which way the signal was coming from?

_____

_____

3. Why did the boys not climb the fence?

_____

_____

4. What was making the beep?

_____

_____

5. How did Jamal know the beep came from a machine and not a person?

_____

_____

6. Why did the boys go to the town office instead of searching the tower themselves?

_____

_____

Words to know

logbook: a notebook for recording what you observe and when
antenna: a rod or wire that sends or picks up radio signals
signal: a message or sound sent from one place to another
sensor: a device that detects something, such as weather
clerk: an office worker who helps people and keeps records

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 Beep From the Old Water Tower

Square group

Jamal was testing the handheld radio that he had received for his birthday when he picked up a completely unfamiliar sound. It was a steady beep that repeated once every ten seconds, and it never varied in the slightest. He carefully recorded the time in his logbook, turned the dial away, and then found the signal again right where he had left it.

"It's not a person," he told his friend Sol. "It's a machine, and it must be somewhere fairly nearby."

The signal grew louder whenever Jamal pointed the antenna in one direction and softer whenever he turned it in another. The boys therefore walked down Mill Road, pausing at each corner to listen and to note which direction made the beep strongest. Their route gradually bent toward the edge of town, where the old water tower rose behind a tall chain-link fence.

They did not attempt to climb the fence, because Sol pointed out the "No Entry" sign. Instead, Jamal stood at the gate and held the radio high above his head. The signal was at its loudest, so it clearly had to be coming from the tower itself.

The two of them walked to the town office and described everything that they had found. A clerk made a phone call and then thanked them warmly. "That is a small weather sensor," she explained. "A repair crew hung it up last month, and it sends out a beep to let them know that the battery is still working."

On the way home, Sol grinned. "You solved an entire mystery with a birthday present."

Questions

1. What unfamiliar sound did Jamal pick up on his new radio?

_____

_____

2. How did the boys work out which direction the signal was coming from?

_____

_____

3. Why did the boys not climb the fence?

_____

_____

4. What was producing the beep?

_____

_____

5. How did Jamal conclude that the beep came from a machine rather than a person?

_____

_____

6. Why did the boys visit the town office instead of searching the tower themselves?

_____

_____

Words to know

logbook: a notebook for recording what you observe and when
antenna: a rod or wire that sends or picks up radio signals
signal: a message or sound sent from one place to another
sensor: a device that detects something, such as weather
clerk: an office worker who helps people and keeps records

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 Beep From the Old Water Tower

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

Circle: The Beep From the Old Water Tower

Easier · 216 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.1

1. A steady beep once every ten seconds.
2. The beep got louder or softer as Jamal pointed the antenna, and they checked at corners.
3. There was a No Entry sign, so they stayed outside and held up the radio.
4. A small weather sensor put on the tower by a repair crew.
5. It repeated at the same steady rhythm and never changed.
6. They wanted to be careful and asked an adult who knew about the tower.

Triangle: The Beep From the Old Water Tower

This passage · 254 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 5.9

1. A steady beep once every ten seconds.
2. They noticed it got louder or softer as Jamal pointed the antenna, and they stopped at corners to check.
3. There was a No Entry sign, so they stayed outside and held the radio up.
4. A small weather sensor placed on the tower by a repair crew.
5. It repeated at the same steady rhythm and never changed.
6. They were being careful and wanted an adult who knew about the tower to explain.

Square: The Beep From the Old Water Tower

Harder · 266 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.9

1. A steady beep once every ten seconds.
2. They noticed it grew louder or softer as Jamal pointed the antenna, and they stopped at corners to compare.
3. A No Entry sign warned them away, so they stayed outside and held the radio up.
4. A small weather sensor placed on the tower by a repair crew.
5. It repeated at the same steady rhythm and never changed.
6. They were being careful and wanted an adult who knew about the tower to explain.