Name: _____ Date: _____

Trail Marker Fourteen Has Vanished

Circle group

The class had followed yellow paint marks through the woods all morning. Grace was proud that she had counted each one. Marker thirteen stood by a boulder. Marker fourteen, by the park map, should be at the next fork. But at the fork, the post was gone.

"Now what?" asked Ravi. Two paths curved away between the trees. Neither one had paint.

Their guide, Ms. Alvarez, smiled and folded her arms. "Stay here and use what you know. I will answer questions, but you decide."

Grace opened the map on a flat rock. "The trail should bend north here. The creek should be on our right," she said. Ravi held up his compass and turned. The left path went north. The right path went east. Then they listened. They heard water behind the trees on the left path. So the creek was on that side.

"That does not match," said Grace. "We want the creek on our right."

"Not if we look the other way," said Ravi. He turned around. From that way, the creek was on the right. The path to the south led back to the parking lot, and the map showed that ahead of them. Now they were sure. The trail went on by the left path.

Fifty steps along it, they saw the missing sign. It lay in the ferns. Ms. Alvarez propped it up against a tree.

Questions

1. What marked the trail the class followed?

_____

_____

2. What was missing at the fork?

_____

_____

3. What did Grace and Ravi use to pick a path?

_____

_____

4. Where did they find the missing sign?

_____

_____

5. Why did Ms. Alvarez let the students decide?

_____

_____

6. Why did Grace and Ravi check where the creek was?

_____

_____

Words to know

boulder: a very large rock
fork: a place where a path splits into two
compass: a tool with a needle that shows which way is north
propped: held something up by leaning it against a support

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: _____

Trail Marker Fourteen Has Vanished

Triangle group

The class had been following yellow paint blazes through the forest all morning, and Grace was proud that she had counted every single one. Marker thirteen stood beside a large boulder, and marker fourteen, according to the park map, should have been waiting at the next fork, but when the group arrived there, the post was simply gone.

"Now what?" asked Ravi. Two paths curved away between the trees, and neither of them carried any paint.

Their guide, Ms. Alvarez, smiled and folded her arms. "Everybody stay here and use what you already know. I will answer questions, but the decision belongs to you."

Grace unfolded the map on a flat rock. "The trail should bend north at this point, and the creek should be on our right," she said. Ravi raised his compass and turned in a slow circle, discovering that the left path headed north while the right one pointed east. Then they listened, and the faint sound of running water drifted from the trees behind the left path, so the creek was on that side.

"That does not match," said Grace. "We need the creek on our right."

"Unless we are facing the wrong direction," said Ravi. He turned around, and from that position the creek was on the right, while the path to the south led back toward the parking lot that the map showed behind them, so at last they were certain that the trail continued along the left path.

Fifty steps further on, they spotted the missing sign lying in the ferns, and Ms. Alvarez propped it up against a tree.

Questions

1. What marked the trail the class was following?

_____

_____

2. What was missing at the fork?

_____

_____

3. What tools did Grace and Ravi use to decide which way to go?

_____

_____

4. Where did they finally find the missing sign?

_____

_____

5. Why did Ms. Alvarez let the students decide instead of telling them?

_____

_____

6. Why did Grace and Ravi stop and check the creek before choosing a path?

_____

_____

Words to know

blaze: a painted mark on a tree used to show a trail
boulder: a very large rock
fork: a place where a path splits into two
compass: a tool with a needle that shows which way is north
propped: held something up by leaning it against a support

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: _____

Trail Marker Fourteen Has Vanished

Square group

The class had been following yellow paint blazes through the forest all morning, and Grace took considerable pride in the fact that she had counted every single one of them. Marker thirteen stood beside an enormous boulder, and marker fourteen, according to the park map, should have been waiting at the next fork, but when the group finally arrived there, the post was simply gone.

"Now what?" asked Ravi. Two paths curved away between the towering trees, and neither of them carried even a single stroke of paint.

Their guide, Ms. Alvarez, smiled and folded her arms. "Everybody stay right here and use everything that you already know. I will gladly answer questions, but the decision belongs entirely to you."

Grace unfolded the map on a flat rock. "The trail should bend north at this point, and the creek should be on our right," she said carefully. Ravi raised his compass and turned in a slow circle, and he discovered that the left path headed toward the north while the right one pointed away toward the east. Then they both listened, and the faint sound of running water drifted from the trees behind the left path, which meant that the creek lay on that side.

"That doesn't match," said Grace. "We need the creek on our right."

"Unless we are facing the wrong direction," said Ravi. He turned around, and from that position the creek was on the right, while the path to the south led back toward the parking lot that the map showed behind them. At last they were certain that the trail continued along the left path.

Fifty steps further on, they spotted the missing sign lying among the ferns, and Ms. Alvarez gratefully propped it back up against a tree.

Questions

1. What marked the trail that the class was following?

_____

_____

2. What was missing at the fork?

_____

_____

3. Which tools and clues did Grace and Ravi use to choose a path?

_____

_____

4. Where did they eventually find the missing sign?

_____

_____

5. Why did Ms. Alvarez allow the students to decide for themselves?

_____

_____

6. Why did Grace and Ravi pause to locate the creek before choosing a path?

_____

_____

Words to know

blaze: a painted mark on a tree used to show a trail
boulder: a very large rock
fork: a place where a path splits into two
compass: a tool with a needle that shows which way is north
propped: held something up by leaning it against a support

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: Trail Marker Fourteen Has Vanished

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

Circle: Trail Marker Fourteen Has Vanished

Easier · 232 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 1

1. Yellow paint blazes on trees and posts.
2. Marker fourteen, the trail post.
3. A park map and a compass, along with the sound of the creek.
4. Lying in the ferns along the left path.
5. She wanted them to practice using the map, compass, and clues.
6. The creek's place was a clue that could show if they were going the right way.

Triangle: Trail Marker Fourteen Has Vanished

This passage · 267 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 6.2

1. Yellow paint blazes on trees and posts.
2. Marker fourteen, the trail post.
3. A park map and a compass, along with the sound of the creek.
4. Lying in the ferns along the left path.
5. She wanted them to practice using the map, compass, and clues themselves.
6. The creek's position was a clue that could confirm whether they were heading the right way.

Square: Trail Marker Fourteen Has Vanished

Harder · 294 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.3

1. Yellow paint blazes on trees and posts.
2. Marker fourteen, the trail post.
3. A park map, a compass, and the sound of the creek.
4. Lying among the ferns along the left path.
5. She wanted them to practice using the map, compass, and clues on their own.
6. The creek's position was a clue that could confirm whether they were heading the right way.