Name: _____ Date: _____

Aunt Winifred's Weather Knee

Circle group

In the dry valley of Cobble Flats, people said Aunt Winifred Tuck had the best knee in the country. When rain was coming, her left knee gave a creak. You could hear it across three fences! Before a thunderstorm, it did a drumroll. Before snow, it whistled, and the children ran for their mittens. The weather office in the city had forty scientists. It was wrong half the time. So the whole valley trusted the knee.

Then one summer Winifred bumped her knee on a pie cart. After that, it gave strange signals. On Monday it creaked, drummed and whistled all at once. That seemed to mean rain, thunder and snow before supper. The mayor canceled the town picnic. But the sky stayed blue, and the pies went stale. People said the famous knee had retired.

Winifred was a sensible woman. She went to the doctor. The doctor said the knee was not broken. It was tired. For years it had carried heavy crates of apples and pies up the hill. It needed rest, a cushion and a helper. Winifred hired a strong boy named Teddy. In a week, the knee was calm again. It still grumbled when a cloud drifted by. But its forecasts were good once more, and the picnic was held on a day the knee said would be sunny.

Questions

1. Which knee told Winifred about the weather?

_____

_____

2. What did the knee do before a thunderstorm?

_____

_____

3. What made the knee give strange signals?

_____

_____

4. What did the doctor say about the knee?

_____

_____

5. Why did people trust the knee more than the weather office?

_____

_____

6. How can you tell this is a tall tale?

_____

_____

Words to know

forecasts: predictions about what the weather will be
drumroll: a quick, rattling beat of a drum

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: _____

Aunt Winifred's Weather Knee

Triangle group

Folks in the dry valley of Cobble Flats liked to say that Aunt Winifred Tuck owned the most accurate knee in the whole country. Whenever rain was on its way, her left knee gave a creak so loud that neighbors could hear it across three fences. Before a thunderstorm, it performed a little drumroll. Before snow, it let out a long, shivering whistle, and the children would run for their mittens. The weather office in the city had cost a fortune and employed forty scientists, yet it was wrong about half the time, so the entire valley trusted the knee instead.

Trouble arrived one summer when Winifred bumped that knee against a pie cart. From then on it gave only confusing signals. On Monday it creaked, drummed and whistled all at once, which seemed to promise rain, thunder and snow before supper. The mayor canceled the town picnic in a panic. The sky stayed perfectly blue, the pies went stale, and people began to mutter that the famous knee had finally retired without telling anyone.

Winifred, who was a practical woman, visited the doctor, and the doctor gave a simple answer. The knee was not broken. It was exhausted from years of carrying heavy crates of apples and pies up the hill. The cure was rest, a cushion, and a helper to do the lifting. Winifred hired a strong boy named Teddy, and within a week the knee settled down. It still grumbled in a low, offended mumble whenever a cloud drifted past, but the forecasts were as sharp as ever, and the picnic was rescheduled for a day the knee swore would be sunny.

Questions

1. Which of Winifred's knees predicted the weather?

_____

_____

2. What did the knee do before a thunderstorm?

_____

_____

3. What caused the knee to give confusing signals?

_____

_____

4. What did the doctor say was wrong with the knee?

_____

_____

5. Why did the valley trust the knee more than the weather office?

_____

_____

6. How can you tell that the story is a tall tale?

_____

_____

Words to know

accurate: correct and free of mistakes
forecasts: predictions about what the weather will be
practical: sensible and good at solving real problems
exhausted: completely worn out and tired
drumroll: a quick, rattling beat of a drum

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: _____

Aunt Winifred's Weather Knee

Square group

Residents of the arid valley of Cobble Flats liked to boast that Aunt Winifred Tuck possessed the most dependable knee in the entire country. Whenever rain was approaching, her left knee emitted a creak so resounding that neighbors could hear it across three separate fences. Before a thunderstorm, it performed a modest drumroll. Before snow, it released a long, shivering whistle, and the children would scramble for their mittens. The weather office in the city had cost a small fortune and employed forty scientists, yet it was mistaken about half the time, so the whole valley placed its faith in the knee instead.

Disaster struck one summer when Winifred collided with a pie cart and bruised that very knee. From then on it produced only baffling signals. On Monday it creaked, drummed and whistled simultaneously, which appeared to promise rain, thunder and snow before supper. The mayor, in a panic, canceled the annual town picnic. The sky remained perfectly blue, the pies went stale, and residents began to mutter that the celebrated knee had retired without informing anyone.

Winifred, who was a thoroughly practical woman, consulted the doctor, and the doctor offered a straightforward diagnosis. The knee was not broken at all. It was simply exhausted from years of hauling heavy crates of apples and pies up the hill. The prescription was rest, a soft cushion, and a helper to do the lifting. Winifred hired a sturdy boy named Teddy, and within a week the knee had settled down. It still grumbled in a low, offended mumble whenever a cloud drifted past, but its forecasts were as sharp as ever, and the picnic was rescheduled for a day that the knee swore would be sunny.

Questions

1. Which of Winifred's knees forecast the weather?

_____

_____

2. What did the knee do before a thunderstorm?

_____

_____

3. What caused the knee to produce baffling signals?

_____

_____

4. What was the doctor's diagnosis?

_____

_____

5. Why did the valley trust the knee over the weather office?

_____

_____

6. What features show that the story is a tall tale?

_____

_____

Words to know

forecasts: predictions about what the weather will be
practical: sensible and good at solving real problems
exhausted: completely worn out and tired
drumroll: a quick, rattling beat of a drum

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: Aunt Winifred's Weather Knee

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

Circle: Aunt Winifred's Weather Knee

Easier · 223 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.9

1. Her left knee told her.
2. It did a drumroll.
3. Winifred bumped it on a pie cart.
4. It was not broken, only tired from carrying heavy crates.
5. The office was wrong half the time, and the knee was usually right.
6. It makes big, silly claims, like a knee heard across three fences that beats forty scientists.

Triangle: Aunt Winifred's Weather Knee

This passage · 275 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.3

1. Her left knee predicted the weather.
2. It performed a little drumroll.
3. Winifred bumped it against a pie cart.
4. Nothing was broken, but it was exhausted from carrying heavy crates.
5. The office was wrong about half the time, while the knee was usually right.
6. It exaggerates, such as a knee that can be heard across three fences and forecasts better than forty scientists.

Square: Aunt Winifred's Weather Knee

Harder · 285 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 9

1. Her left knee forecast the weather.
2. It performed a modest drumroll.
3. Winifred collided with a pie cart and bruised it.
4. The knee was not broken but exhausted from hauling heavy crates.
5. The office was mistaken about half the time, while the knee had been dependable.
6. It exaggerates, with a knee audible across three fences that outperforms forty scientists.