Name: _____ Date: _____

The Cuttlefish Who Could Not Hide His Mood

Circle group

Along a rocky reef, a young cuttlefish named Sepi had a problem. He thought it was terrible. Like all cuttlefish, his skin could change color fast, and his colors showed how he felt. When he was nervous, gray ripples washed over him. When he was excited, bright stripes flashed on his sides. When he was embarrassed, he blushed a deep, spotty red.

"I wish I could keep my feelings private," he told a hermit crab. "Everyone on this reef can read me like a sign."

The crab tipped his shell. "Is that so bad?"

Sepi thought it was. For weeks, he tried to stay a calm brown. It made him tired. When a shy young shrimp swam by, Sepi hid his friendly stripes. He looked stern and cold, and the shrimp hurried away.

One evening, a school of tiny fish drifted into the reef to find a safe place to rest. They did not know which cracks in the rock were guarded by hungry eels. Sepi saw the danger. He forgot his careful brown and flushed a bright, urgent red. He flashed a warning across his whole body. The little fish understood at once and darted away.

Sepi was amazed. His open colors had said what words could not. The next morning, when the shrimp passed again, he let his friendly stripes ripple, and the shrimp stayed to chat. Being easy to read, he learned, can be a gift to friends who need to understand you.

Questions

1. What did Sepi's skin do when he was nervous?

_____

_____

2. Why did Sepi try to stay brown?

_____

_____

3. What happened when Sepi hid his friendly stripes?

_____

_____

4. How did Sepi warn the tiny fish?

_____

_____

5. Why did the tiny fish understand Sepi at once?

_____

_____

6. What does the story teach?

_____

_____

Words to know

reef: a ridge of rock or coral near the sea surface

stern: serious and strict-looking, not friendly

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 Cuttlefish Who Could Not Hide His Mood

Triangle group

Along a rocky reef, a young cuttlefish named Sepi had a problem that he considered terrible. Like all cuttlefish, his skin could change color in an instant, and his colors seemed to tell everyone exactly how he felt. When he was nervous, ripples of gray washed over his body, when he was excited, bright stripes flashed along his sides, and when he was embarrassed, he blushed a deep, blotchy red.

Sepi complained to a hermit crab that he wished he could keep his feelings private, because everyone on the reef could read him like a sign. The crab tilted his shell thoughtfully and asked whether that was really so bad.

Sepi decided that it was, and he spent weeks trying to stay a calm, steady brown, which exhausted him. Whenever a shy young shrimp swam by, Sepi's effort to hide his friendly stripes made him look stern and unwelcoming, and the shrimp hurried away.

One evening, a school of tiny fish drifted into the reef, searching for a safe place to rest. They did not know which crevices were guarded by hungry eels. Sepi, spotting the danger, forgot his careful brown and flushed a vivid, urgent red, flashing a warning across his whole body. The little fish understood at once and darted away from the hiding place.

Sepi was astonished. His open colors had said what words never could. The next morning, when the shrimp passed again, he let his friendly stripes ripple freely, and the shrimp stayed to chat. He had learned that being easy to read can be a gift to the friends who need to understand you.

Questions

1. What did Sepi's skin do when he was nervous?

_____

_____

2. Why did Sepi try to stay brown?

_____

_____

3. What happened when Sepi hid his friendly stripes?

_____

_____

4. How did Sepi warn the tiny fish?

_____

_____

5. Why did the tiny fish understand Sepi at once?

_____

_____

6. What lesson does the story teach?

_____

_____

Words to know

reef: a ridge of rock or coral near the sea surface
blotchy: covered in uneven spots or patches of color
stern: serious and strict-looking, not friendly
crevices: narrow cracks or openings in rock
astonished: greatly surprised and amazed

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 Cuttlefish Who Could Not Hide His Mood

Square group

Along a rocky reef in the warm shallows, a young cuttlefish named Sepi had a problem that he considered absolutely dreadful. Like all cuttlefish, his skin could change color in an instant, and his colors seemed to announce exactly how he felt to everyone nearby. When he was nervous, ripples of gray washed over his body, when he was excited, bright stripes flashed along his sides, and when he was embarrassed, he blushed a deep, blotchy red.

Sepi complained to a hermit crab that he wished he could keep his feelings private, because everyone on the entire reef could read him like a sign. The crab tilted his shell thoughtfully and inquired whether that was really so very bad.

Sepi decided that it was, and he spent weeks trying to remain a calm, steady brown, which exhausted him completely. Whenever a shy young shrimp swam past, Sepi's attempt to hide his friendly stripes made him look stern and unwelcoming, and the shrimp hurried away without a word.

One evening, a school of tiny fish drifted into the reef, searching for a safe place to rest. They had no idea which crevices were guarded by hungry eels. Sepi, spotting the danger, forgot his careful brown entirely and flushed a vivid, urgent red, flashing a warning across his whole body. The little fish understood at once and darted away from the hiding place.

Sepi was astonished. His open colors had communicated what words never could. The next morning, when the shrimp passed again, he let his friendly stripes ripple freely, and the shrimp stayed to chat. He had learned that being easy to read can be a precious gift to the friends who need to understand you.

Questions

1. What did Sepi's skin do when he was nervous?

_____

_____

2. Why did Sepi try to remain brown?

_____

_____

3. What happened when Sepi hid his friendly stripes?

_____

_____

4. How did Sepi warn the tiny fish?

_____

_____

5. Why did the tiny fish understand Sepi at once?

_____

_____

6. What lesson does the story teach?

_____

_____

Words to know

reef: a ridge of rock or coral near the sea surface
blotchy: covered in uneven spots or patches of color
stern: serious and strict-looking, not friendly
crevices: narrow cracks or openings in rock
astonished: greatly surprised and amazed

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 Cuttlefish Who Could Not Hide His Mood

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

Circle: The Cuttlefish Who Could Not Hide His Mood

Easier · 246 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.1

1. Gray ripples washed over his body.
2. He wanted to keep his feelings private.
3. He looked stern and cold, and the shrimp hurried away.
4. He flushed a bright red and flashed a warning across his body.
5. His colors showed his feelings openly, so the danger was clear without words.
6. Being open about your feelings can help friends understand and trust you.

Triangle: The Cuttlefish Who Could Not Hide His Mood

This passage · 270 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.7

1. Ripples of gray washed over his body.
2. He wanted to keep his feelings private.
3. He looked stern and unwelcoming, and the shrimp hurried away.
4. He flushed a vivid red and flashed a warning across his body.
5. His colors showed his feelings openly, so the danger was clear without words.
6. Being open about your feelings can help your friends understand and trust you.

Square: The Cuttlefish Who Could Not Hide His Mood

Harder · 285 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.8

1. Ripples of gray washed over his body.
2. He wanted to keep his feelings private.
3. He looked stern and unwelcoming, and the shrimp hurried away.
4. He flushed a vivid red and flashed a warning across his whole body.
5. His colors showed his feelings openly, so the danger was clear without words.
6. Being open about your feelings can help your friends understand and trust you.