Name: _____ Date: _____

Snowshoe Tracks to the Closed Weather Station

Circle group

On the school ski trip, Calla and her cousin Jonas saw snowshoe tracks. The tracks left the trail and went up to a small gray building. A sign said the old weather station was closed for the winter. The tracks puzzled them. No one should be there.

"Let us tell Ms. Ferrant," Calla said. They skied back to the group. The teacher listened. Then she walked up with them.

The tracks ended at the door. Crumbs lay by the step. A bird feeder made from a plastic bottle hung near the window. It was full of sunflower seeds. Through the glass they saw a tidy table with a thermometer, a notebook, and a pencil.

"Someone still works here," Ms. Ferrant said softly.

Then a woman in a thick red jacket came around the corner with a bucket. She was Dr. Sato. She was a volunteer. Every morning she wrote down the temperature and the snow depth for a long study. The station was closed to visitors in winter, but the readings went on. She put up the feeder because the chickadees kept her company.

"These records are older than I am," she said. "If I miss a day, there is a gap."

She let them watch the next reading from the door. Jonas wrote the number in his notebook and grinned. The chickadees flew down to eat.

Questions

1. What did Calla and Jonas see near the trail?

_____

_____

2. What hung near the window?

_____

_____

3. Who was working at the station?

_____

_____

4. Why did Dr. Sato say missing a day would matter?

_____

_____

5. Why did the sign say closed if someone was working there?

_____

_____

6. What does the feeder tell you about Dr. Sato?

_____

_____

Words to know

snowshoe: a wide frame worn on a boot to walk on deep snow

volunteer: a person who works without being paid

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: _____

Snowshoe Tracks to the Closed Weather Station

Triangle group

During the school ski trip, Calla and her cousin Jonas noticed a line of snowshoe tracks that led away from the trail and up toward a small gray building. A sign on the wall said the old weather station had been shut for the winter, so the tracks puzzled them. Nobody was supposed to go there.

"Let us tell Ms. Ferrant," Calla said, and they skied back to the group. The teacher listened closely and then walked up with them, planting her poles carefully as she climbed.

The tracks ended at the door. Beside the step lay a scatter of fresh crumbs, and near the window hung a bird feeder made from a plastic bottle, filled with sunflower seeds. Through the glass they saw a tidy table set with a thermometer, a notebook, and a pencil.

"Someone is still working here," Ms. Ferrant said quietly.

As if she had heard them, a woman in a thick red jacket came around the corner, carrying a bucket. She introduced herself as Dr. Sato, a volunteer who recorded the temperature and snow depth every morning for a long-term study. The station was closed to visitors in winter, but the measurements never stopped, and she had set up the feeder because the chickadees kept her company.

"Those records are older than I am," she said. "Missing a single day would leave a gap in the data."

She invited them to watch the next reading from the doorway, and Jonas wrote the number in his own notebook, grinning, as the chickadees fluttered down to eat.

Questions

1. What did Calla and Jonas notice leading toward the gray building?

_____

_____

2. What was hanging near the window?

_____

_____

3. Who was working at the station?

_____

_____

4. Why did Dr. Sato say missing a single day would matter?

_____

_____

5. Why did the sign say the station was closed even though someone was working there?

_____

_____

6. What does the feeder tell you about Dr. Sato?

_____

_____

Words to know

snowshoe: a wide frame worn on a boot to walk on deep snow
scatter: a small number of things spread around
volunteer: a person who works without being paid
long-term: lasting or continuing over many years
data: facts and numbers collected to study something

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: _____

Snowshoe Tracks to the Closed Weather Station

Square group

During the school ski trip, Calla and her cousin Jonas noticed a line of snowshoe tracks that led away from the main trail and up toward a small gray building. A sign on the wall announced that the old weather station had been shut for the winter, so the tracks puzzled them considerably, since nobody was supposed to be anywhere near it.

"Let us tell Ms. Ferrant," Calla said, and they skied back to rejoin the group. The teacher listened closely and then climbed up with them, planting her poles carefully in the deep snow.

The tracks ended at the door. Beside the step lay a scatter of fresh crumbs, and near the window hung a bird feeder fashioned from a plastic bottle and filled with sunflower seeds. Through the glass they glimpsed a tidy table set with a thermometer, a notebook, and a sharpened pencil.

"Someone is still working here," Ms. Ferrant said quietly.

As if she had overheard them, a woman in a thick red jacket came around the corner, carrying a bucket. She introduced herself as Dr. Sato, a volunteer who recorded the temperature and snow depth every single morning for a long-term study. The station was closed to visitors in winter, but the measurements never stopped, and she had put up the feeder because the chickadees kept her company during the long, quiet hours.

"Those records are older than I am," she said. "Missing even one day would leave a permanent gap in the data."

She invited them to observe the next reading from the doorway, and Jonas copied the number into his own notebook, grinning, as the chickadees fluttered down to eat.

Questions

1. What did Calla and Jonas notice leading away from the main trail?

_____

_____

2. What was hanging near the window of the building?

_____

_____

3. Who was working at the weather station?

_____

_____

4. Why did Dr. Sato say that missing a single day would matter?

_____

_____

5. How could the sign say the station was closed while someone worked there?

_____

_____

6. What does the feeder reveal about Dr. Sato's personality?

_____

_____

Words to know

snowshoe: a wide frame worn on a boot to walk on deep snow
scatter: a small number of things spread around
volunteer: a person who works without being paid
long-term: lasting or continuing over many years
data: facts and numbers collected to study something

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: Snowshoe Tracks to the Closed Weather Station

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

Circle: Snowshoe Tracks to the Closed Weather Station

Easier · 227 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 3.1

1. A line of snowshoe tracks leading to a gray building.
2. A bird feeder made from a plastic bottle, full of sunflower seeds.
3. Dr. Sato, a volunteer who wrote down temperature and snow depth.
4. It would leave a gap in a long set of records.
5. It was closed to visitors, but the readings still went on every day.
6. She is kind and likes the chickadees keeping her company.

Triangle: Snowshoe Tracks to the Closed Weather Station

This passage · 261 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7.6

1. A line of snowshoe tracks.
2. A bird feeder made from a plastic bottle, filled with sunflower seeds.
3. Dr. Sato, a volunteer who recorded temperature and snow depth.
4. It would leave a gap in a long-term set of records.
5. It was closed to visitors, but the measurements continued every morning.
6. She is kind and enjoys the chickadees keeping her company in the snow.

Square: Snowshoe Tracks to the Closed Weather Station

Harder · 278 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 9.1

1. A line of snowshoe tracks heading toward a small gray building.
2. A bird feeder fashioned from a plastic bottle and filled with sunflower seeds.
3. Dr. Sato, a volunteer who recorded temperature and snow depth each morning.
4. It would leave a permanent gap in a long-term set of records.
5. It was closed to visitors, but the daily measurements continued without a break.
6. She is kind and enjoys the company of the chickadees during quiet hours.