Name: _____ Date: _____

The Substitute Who Could Not Stop Punning

Circle group

On Monday, Mr. Lathrop walked into room 14. The eighth graders thought he would be a plain substitute with a clipboard. He wrote his name on the board. Then he said he hoped everyone had a "grate" day, because the cheese lesson was moved to Friday. Nobody laughed. Marisol whispered that he was joking.

He was, and he did not stop. Devon asked where to put his homework. Mr. Lathrop said to put it on the desk, because the paper was tired and wanted to lie down. When the bell rang, he said time flies when you are having fun, and the clock was still waiting for its wings. By lunch the class thought he was the most tiring teacher ever. By afternoon they kept score on the whiteboard.

Then Marisol had an idea. She told the class to answer each pun with a bigger one. Mr. Lathrop said the math problem was "adding up." Devon said it was a real "sum-thing." Then Mr. Lathrop said the grammar quiz was "a verb of caution." The room groaned and cheered. By the end of the day he was laughing so hard he had to sit down. He said no class had ever fought back before. They made a deal. Puns came in the warm-up. Serious lessons came after. On Friday, he left a note. It said, "It was a pleasure to teach you. Please do not 'pun-ish' the next substitute."

Questions

1. What kind of teacher did the students think they would get?

_____

_____

2. What did Mr. Lathrop say about the clock?

_____

_____

3. What was Marisol's idea?

_____

_____

4. What deal did the class make?

_____

_____

5. Why did the students keep score on the whiteboard?

_____

_____

6. Why did Mr. Lathrop laugh so hard?

_____

_____

Words to know

substitute: a teacher who fills in for the regular teacher
pun: a joke that plays on words that sound alike

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 Substitute Who Could Not Stop Punning

Triangle group

When Mr. Lathrop walked into room 14 on Monday morning, the eighth graders expected an ordinary substitute with a clipboard and a sigh. Instead he wrote his name on the board, turned around, and said that he hoped everyone had a "grate" day, because the cheese lesson had been moved to Friday. Nobody laughed. A few students stared at him as if he had spoken in another language, and Marisol whispered that she was fairly sure he was joking.

He was, and he did not stop. When Devon asked where to hand in his homework, Mr. Lathrop said to put it on the desk because the paper was "tired" and wanted to lie down. When the bell rang, he announced that time flies, but only when you are having fun, and that the clock was probably still waiting for its wings. By lunch the class had decided that he was the most exhausting teacher they had ever met, and by afternoon they had started keeping score on the whiteboard.

Then Marisol had an idea. She asked the class to answer every pun with a bigger one. When Mr. Lathrop said that the math problem was "adding up," Devon replied that it was a real "sum-thing." When he said that the grammar quiz was "a verb of caution," the whole room groaned and cheered together. By the end of the day he was laughing so hard that he had to sit down, and he admitted that no class had ever fought back before. The students made a deal: puns during the warm-up, serious lessons afterward. On Friday, Mr. Lathrop left a note on the board that read, "It was a pleasure to teach you. Please do not 'pun-ish' the next substitute."

Questions

1. What kind of teacher did the students expect on Monday?

_____

_____

2. What did Mr. Lathrop say about the clock?

_____

_____

3. What idea did Marisol have?

_____

_____

4. What deal did the students make with Mr. Lathrop?

_____

_____

5. Why did the students keep score on the whiteboard?

_____

_____

6. Why did Mr. Lathrop laugh so hard at the end of the day?

_____

_____

Words to know

substitute: a teacher who fills in for the regular teacher
exhausting: making you feel very tired
announced: told something to everyone in a clear way
admitted: agreed that something was true
pun: a joke that plays on words that sound alike

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 Substitute Who Could Not Stop Punning

Square group

When Mr. Lathrop strolled into room 14 on Monday morning, the eighth graders anticipated an unremarkable substitute equipped with a clipboard and a weary sigh. Instead, he wrote his name across the board, turned around, and expressed his hope that everyone would have a "grate" day, since the cheese lesson had unfortunately been postponed until Friday. Nobody laughed. Several students stared at him as though he had spoken in a foreign language, and Marisol murmured that she was reasonably certain he was joking.

He was, and he showed no sign of stopping. When Devon asked where to submit his homework, Mr. Lathrop advised him to leave it on the desk because the paper was "tired" and wished to lie down. When the bell rang, he declared that time flies, but only when you are having fun, and that the clock was presumably still waiting for its wings. By lunchtime the class had concluded that he was the most exhausting teacher they had ever encountered, and by the afternoon they had begun keeping a running tally on the whiteboard.

Then Marisol came up with a plan. She urged her classmates to answer every pun with a bigger one. When Mr. Lathrop remarked that the math problem was "adding up," Devon retorted that it was a genuine "sum-thing." When he observed that the grammar quiz was "a verb of caution," the entire room groaned and cheered at the same moment. By the end of the day he was laughing so hard that he was forced to sit down, and he confessed that no class had ever fought back before. The students negotiated a deal: puns during the warm-up, serious lessons afterward. On Friday, Mr. Lathrop left a farewell note on the board that read, "It was a pleasure to teach you. Please do not 'pun-ish' the next substitute."

Questions

1. What kind of substitute did the students anticipate on Monday?

_____

_____

2. What did Mr. Lathrop declare about the clock?

_____

_____

3. What plan did Marisol come up with?

_____

_____

4. What deal did the students negotiate with Mr. Lathrop?

_____

_____

5. Why did the students keep a tally on the whiteboard?

_____

_____

6. Why did Mr. Lathrop laugh so hard that he had to sit down?

_____

_____

Words to know

substitute: a teacher who fills in for the regular teacher
exhausting: making you feel very tired
pun: a joke that plays on words that sound alike

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 Substitute Who Could Not Stop Punning

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

Circle: The Substitute Who Could Not Stop Punning

Easier · 241 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 2.6

1. A plain substitute with a clipboard.
2. That it was still waiting for its wings.
3. To answer each pun with a bigger pun.
4. Puns in the warm-up and serious lessons after.
5. They were tired of the puns and wanted to count them.
6. The class had fought back with puns, which no class had done before.

Triangle: The Substitute Who Could Not Stop Punning

This passage · 292 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 7

1. An ordinary substitute with a clipboard and a sigh.
2. That it was probably still waiting for its wings.
3. She suggested answering every pun with a bigger pun.
4. Puns were allowed during the warm-up and serious lessons came afterward.
5. They were tired of the puns and wanted to track how many he made.
6. The class had finally fought back with puns of their own, which no class had done before.

Square: The Substitute Who Could Not Stop Punning

Harder · 308 words · Flesch-Kincaid grade 8.5

1. An unremarkable substitute with a clipboard and a weary sigh.
2. That it was presumably still waiting for its wings.
3. She urged the class to answer every pun with a bigger one.
4. Puns during the warm-up and serious lessons afterward.
5. They found the puns exhausting and wanted to count them.
6. The class had finally fought back with puns, which no class had ever done.