Explain Events, Procedures, and Ideas

Grade 4 Reading Worksheet

Name _____ Date _____

Read the text. Circle the answer to each How question.

READ THIS FIRST

From Fleece to Yarn

A warm wool sweater begins on the back of a sheep. Turning that wool into yarn takes several steps. Each step has a reason.

The first step is shearing. Once a year, usually in spring, a shearer clips the sheep's thick coat, called a fleece. Shearing does not hurt the sheep. It is a little like getting a haircut. In fact, it helps the sheep stay cool through the summer. A skilled shearer can remove a whole fleece in one piece in just a few minutes.

Next, the fleece is skirted. Workers spread it on a table and pull away the dirtiest edges. These parts are often full of burrs and bits of hay.

Then the wool must be washed. Raw wool is greasy because sheep make an oil called lanolin. Lanolin protects the sheep from rain, but it makes the wool sticky and hard to work with. Workers soak the wool in hot, soapy water to remove the grease and dirt. They must be careful not to stir it too much. Rubbing hot, wet wool makes the fibers tangle and mat together into felt.

After the wool dries, it is carded. Carding means brushing the wool between two boards covered with tiny wire teeth. This step pulls apart the clumps and lines the fibers up in the same direction. The result is a soft, fluffy roll.

Now the wool is ready for spinning. A spinner pulls out a few fibers at a time and twists them together. The twist is what makes yarn strong. A single wool fiber breaks easily, but hundreds of twisted fibers grip one another tightly. Long ago, people spun with a simple stick called a spindle. Later, spinning wheels made the work faster. Today, most yarn is spun by machines in factories.

Finally, the yarn may be dyed. Some dyes come from plants, such as onion skins or indigo leaves. The yarn is wound into balls, ready for knitting.

1. According to the text, how does shearing help the sheep?

   It makes the sheep produce more lanolin.

   It helps the sheep stay cool through the summer.

   It keeps burrs out of the sheep's coat.

   It protects the sheep from spring rain.

2. How have spinning tools changed over time?

Spinning has always been done by hand with a spindle.

Spinning wheels replaced factory machines.

Machines came first, then spinning wheels, and later simple spindles.

Spindles came first, then spinning wheels, and now factory machines.

3. How do workers wash the wool?

They soak it in hot, soapy water to clean it.

They spread it flat on a long table and sort it.

They brush it between two boards with wire teeth.

They rub it hard until the fibers tangle together.

4. How does a spinner make yarn from loose wool?

by brushing the fibers between two boards

by pulling out a few fibers and twisting them

by soaking the fibers in hot, soapy water

by clipping the fibers off the sheep's back

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Answer Key - Grade 4 Reading Worksheet

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