The Science Fair

Grade 3
Reading comprehension · Fiction

Name: _____ Date: _____

Read the passage carefully. You may read it more than once. Then answer the questions.

Jamal wanted to win a ribbon at the science fair. Last year, his volcano had not worked, and he still remembered how the fake lava had dribbled down the side instead of bursting out. This year, he wanted a project that would really teach him something.

One night after dinner, Jamal spilled a glass of juice. His mom grabbed a paper towel, but it did not soak up much. She grabbed another kind, and it worked much better. That gave Jamal an idea. For his project, he decided to find out which kind of paper towel soaked up the most water. He tested three brands.

He poured the same amount of water on each towel and measured how much water was left in the cup. He tested each brand three times to make sure his results were correct. The first two towels worked about the same. The third towel soaked up almost twice as much water. Jamal made a chart to show his results, and his little sister helped him glue it onto a big poster board.

On the day of the fair, a judge asked him why he used the same amount of water each time. “So the test would be fair,” Jamal explained. “If I changed the water, I would not know which towel was really best.” The judge nodded and wrote something on her clipboard. At the end of the day, Jamal won a blue ribbon. On the way home, he was already thinking about next year’s question.

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The Science Fair

Grade 3
Questions

Name: _____ Date: _____

Circle the best answer. Then complete the writing at the end.

1. [Right There] What question did Jamal try to answer?
a) Which ball bounces the highest?
b) Which plant grows the fastest?
c) Which paper towel soaks up the most water?

2. [Think and Search] Why did Jamal use the same amount of water each time?
a) because he ran out of water
b) because the judge told him to
c) to make the test fair

3. [Word Meaning] In the story, “measured” means...
a) painted
b) threw away
c) found out how much

4. [Think About It] What can you tell about the judge?
a) She did not listen.
b) She was angry with Jamal.
c) She liked Jamal’s answer.

5. [Cause and Effect] What gave Jamal the idea for his project?
a) His mom cleaned up spilled juice with paper towels.
b) He read about it in a book.
c) His teacher gave him the idea.

6. [Think and Search] Why did Jamal test each brand three times?
a) because he had extra time
b) to make sure his results were correct
c) because the judge asked him to

Write About It. What was the most important idea in “The Science Fair”? Use two details from the text.

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The Science Fair — Answer Key

Grade 3
Reading comprehension

1. What question did Jamal try to answer?

c) Which paper towel soaks up the most water?

2. Why did Jamal use the same amount of water each time?

c) to make the test fair

3. In the story, “measured” means...

c) found out how much

4. What can you tell about the judge?

c) She liked Jamal’s answer.

5. What gave Jamal the idea for his project?

a) His mom cleaned up spilled juice with paper towels.

6. Why did Jamal test each brand three times?

b) to make sure his results were correct

Write About It: Answers will vary. Look for two accurate details from the text.

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