Name: _____ Date: _____

Heron Feels Left Out

Reading level 7 (3rd grade) · 277 words

The pond friends had a new game. It was called Plop. Heron had never heard of it.

You ran down the bank and jumped in. Whoever made the biggest splash won.

Newt played. Duck played. Muskrat said he was only there to keep the score.

Heron stood at the edge on one leg, as usual. Nobody asked her to join. Nobody said she could not.

She watched Newt dash past, then Duck, then Newt again. Her game had always been to stand still.

Her feet were cold in the shallows. She said nothing. Her feathers were flat against her back.

At snack time, everybody was out of breath. "You should have seen my splash," said Duck.

"I did," said Heron, very quietly. She had. Muskrat looked at her for a moment.

That night, Heron stood at the edge a long while. The water went dark. The stars came out.

In the morning she walked to the log. "Come and watch me fish," she said. It was the longest thing she had said all week.

They stood in a row at the shallows. Heron was still as a post. Duck lasted three breaths and then sneezed.

The water did not move. A minnow came, then closer. Muskrat stopped scratching his ear.

Then Heron's neck shot out like a spear. Newt jumped. Up came a silver fish.

Nobody quacked. Nobody splashed. "Do it again," whispered Duck, and Heron did.

After that, they played Plop at noon. At dusk, everybody tried to stand like Heron.

Newt lasted until a fly landed on his nose. Duck lasted until she thought about it. Heron stood on one leg and did not move.

Questions

1. What was the new game called?

A. Hop
B. Plop
C. Splash

2. Why was Heron not in the game?

A. Nobody asked her
B. She was asleep
C. She was away

3. What did Heron do the next morning?

A. She went away
B. She played Plop
C. She asked them to watch her fish

4. What happened when Heron's neck shot out?

A. Duck fell in
B. Newt jumped
C. The log broke

5. Who stood still the longest at dusk?

A. Duck
B. Heron
C. Newt

6. In this story, what does "still" mean?

A. Not moving
B. Very loud
C. Going fast

Words to know

spear: a pointed stick
shallows: low water
minnow: tiny fish
score: count of points
still: not moving

Answer key: Heron Feels Left Out

1. B. Plop
2. A. Nobody asked her
3. C. She asked them to watch her fish
4. B. Newt jumped
5. B. Heron
6. A. Not moving