

Stone Soup

Three soldiers were walking home after a war. Before them, lay a village where they hoped to find food and shelter. The villagers had seen the soldiers coming from afar. "Soldiers are always hungry," they said to themselves. Quickly they hid all their food.

When the three soldiers asked, the villagers replied, "We have none to spare. It has been a poor harvest and we barely have enough for ourselves." The soldiers had a quick discussion and the first soldier then turned to the village elders. "Your tired fields have left you nothing to share, so we will share what little we have: the secret of how to make stone soup."

The villagers were intrigued and soon a fire was put to the village's greatest iron pot as the soldiers dropped in three large stones. They filled the pot with water and started boiling it.

When the water in the pot was boiling, the soldiers announced that the soup was almost ready but that it needed salt and pepper. Thoroughly curious, the villagers produced what they had requested.

"If only we had a few carrots," the second soldier sighed.

A woman quipped that she had a few carrots and returned with a large sack of carrots. The soldiers cut up the carrots before adding them in together with the salt and pepper.

The soldiers bemoaned loudly that if only they had cabbages or beef then the soup would taste that much better. Gradually the villagers produced the food and the soup was ready. All of them sat down to a sumptuous meal. The villagers gladly sheltered the soldiers for the night.

In the morning the three soldiers awoke to find the entire village standing before them. At their feet lay a satchel of the village's best breads and cheese. "You have given us the greatest of gifts: the secret of how to make soup from stones", said an elder, "and we shall never forget." The third soldier turned to the crowd, and said: "There is no secret, but this is certain: it is only by sharing that we may make a feast".

Adapted from Stone Soup

1. What were the soldiers hoping for when they were approaching the village?

2. Which word has the same meaning as “bemoaned”? Circle either (A) or (B).

The old widow lamented the terrible fate bestowed upon her.
(A) **(B)**

3. How did the villagers show their unwillingness to help when they knew the soldiers were coming?

For question 4, write 1, 2, 3 or 4 in the brackets.

4. What excuse did the villagers give to the soldiers when they asked for food?

- (1) They barely had enough for themselves as they gave most away.
- (2) They had none to spare as harvest was poor.
- (3) They had hidden their food from thieves.
- (4) They were afraid of starvation.

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5. Which word in the passage has the same meaning as 'full of curiosity'?

6. Why did the soldiers have to deceive the villagers into producing the food?

Answers

1. What were the soldiers hoping for when they were approaching the village?

The soldiers were hoping to find food and shelter.

2. Which word has the same meaning as “bemoaned”? Circle either (A) or (B).

The old widow lamented the terrible fate bestowed upon her.

(A)

(B)

3. How did the villagers show their unwillingness to help when they knew the soldiers were coming?

The villagers quickly hid their food when they saw the soldiers coming from afar.

For question 4, write 1, 2, 3 or 4 in the brackets.

4. What excuse did the villagers give to the soldiers when they asked for food?

(5) They barely had enough for themselves as they gave most away.

(6) They had none to spare as harvest was poor.

(7) They had hidden their food from thieves.

(8) They were afraid of starvation.

(2)

5. Which word in the passage has the same meaning as 'full of curiosity'?

intrigued

6. Why did the soldiers have to deceive the villagers into producing the food?

The soldiers wanted to eat but the villagers were unwilling to share their food.
