

SCARECROWS

One sure sign of the fall season is the sight of scarecrows everywhere. Scarecrows are used for practical reasons by farmers, and as decorations by many people. You can find scarecrows on farms and in yards, and also on t-shirts, sweatshirts, and other clothing.

Scarecrows were first used over 2000 years ago by farmers who needed to keep birds out of their fields. Crows and blackbirds were always eating the vegetable crops grown by farmers. The farmers had to do something to stop the crows from coming into the fields. They made these human-like objects out of anything they could find. They used sticks, hay, and pine straw, and dressed the scarecrows in old clothing. The farmers tried their best to make these creations look like real people in a field or garden. They hoped that the crows would see the "person" standing in the field and be afraid of it.

Scarecrows are still seen today, but most farmers use other things now to get rid of pesky animals. Scarecrows are more often a decoration, and a way to mark the beginning of fall.

PAGE 2

ANSWER THE QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS STORY:

1. When did farmers first begin using scarecrows in their fields?
 - a. last year
 - b. 10 years ago
 - c. 2000 years ago
 - d. every fall

2. Why did the farmers need scarecrows?
 - a. the crops were dying
 - b. they were cute
 - c. the sun was too hot
 - d. crows ate the crops

3. What time of year do we see scarecrows?
 - a. winter
 - b. fall
 - c. summer
 - d. spring

4. How do we usually use scarecrows today?
 - a. out of anything we find
 - b. in cities
 - c. as decorations
 - d. both a and c

5. Which of the following is NOT used to make a scarecrow?
 - a. hay
 - b. sticks
 - c. clothing
 - d. food

6. What do farmers use today to get rid of pesky animals?
 - a. food
 - b. dogs
 - c. things other than scarecrows
 - d. fish