



WORKSHEET

Tweenbots



Imagine the busy streets of New York City, an enormous place with millions of people. Every day, the streets are congested with people going about their daily lives. Now imagine a small robot in the middle of all of those people rolling down a busy sidewalk. Most people would not even notice the ten-inch smiling robot, called a Tweenbot, rolling along the street. This strange machine may interest some people, while others would ignore it completely. A researcher interested in studying how helpful people really are uses such robots in her experiments that take place on the streets of New York.





The Tweenbots experiment is the idea and creation of Kacie Kinzer. Kinzer's idea was to make a robot that could navigate the city and reach its destination only if it was aided by pedestrians. Tweenbots rely on the kindness of warm-hearted strangers. Made simply of cardboard, wheels, and a device to turn the wheels, the Tweenbots face many dangers on the city streets. They could be run over by cars or smashed by careless kids. Kinzer thought her little robots might even be seen as some kind of terrorist device. The only real protection a Tweenbot has is its friendly smile. In addition to that, each of Kinzer's robots is fitted with a flag that displays instructions for the robot's destination. The only way these robots will reach their final point is if someone lends them a hand. Tweenbots are essentially a social experiment aimed at providing people a chance to show how caring they are.





daily basis, people in New York City are often in a hurry to get around. However, the Tweenbots, through their inability to look after themselves, took people out of their normal routines. The people who noticed the helpless little robots were actually interested in helping the Tweenbots find their way home. Tweenbots move at a constant speed and can only go in a straight line. If one was to get stuck, or was going in the wrong direction, it would be up to strangers to free it or turn it in the right direction. Surprisingly, no Tweenbot was lost or damaged, and each one arrived at its target in good condition. In fact, most people treated the robot in a gentle manner, and some even treated it as though it were a small living being.

Even if you were in a rush to go somewhere, would you stop and help a Tweenbot successfully reach its destination?

Name _____ Class _____ No. _____ Date _____