

# Nonfiction Assessments

The following assessments have been designed to provide immediate formative information to teachers so that they can respond to students' learning needs.

1. **Read closely** to determine what the text says **explicitly** and to **make logical inferences** from it; **cite specific textual evidence** when writing or speaking to **support conclusions** drawn from the text.
2. Determine **central ideas or themes** of a text and analyze their development; **summarize** the key supporting details and ideas.

There are three levels of the same text, one for each of the following grades:  
Grades 3-4      Grades 5-6      Grades 7-8

They are designed for use at those combined levels because their readability level (using the Fry formula) is at the lower of the two levels so that the emphasis of the assessment is not on text level but on students' ability to process text so that the teachers can identify processing needs. They all include the same texts, so they can be used by readers at different levels within a classroom

The answer keys are different for each two-grade level because the complexity of the responses will vary by grade level. In addition, the nonfiction questions also are varied at each two-grade level because of the complexity of reading nonfiction.

## Comprehensive Non-Fiction Assessments

Reading for Grades 3-4	p. 2
Comprehensive Questions	p. 3
Answer Key Grades 3-4	p. 4
Reading for Grades 5-6	p. 5
Comprehensive Questions	p. 6
Answer Key Grades 5-6	p. 7
Reading for Grades 7-8	p. 8
Comprehensive Questions	p. 9
Answer Key Grades 7-8	p. 10

## **Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable**

G3-4

Before there was a city of Chicago, a man came here to start a business. It was very hard to live here then. There were no stores. There were no streets. It was very cold in the winter and hot in the summer. There was a lot of snow in winter, too. So, it was hard to travel then. In spring, there was a lot of rain and mud, which made it hard to travel as well.

### **Building a Trading Post**

Then Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable came to this place. He is a really great African American hero who lived here long ago. DuSable built a cabin on the Chicago River. He started a business by trading with Native Americans. He opened a trading post here in the late 1770s. A trading post is a place where people bring things they have and trade them for things they need. At first, it was just a small home. But he stayed for more than 20 years. He added to it. It grew. So did his business.

Getting things to Chicago was hard. Chicago was many miles away from any city. At first, DuSable traded only with the Native Americans and explorers. He would give them tools and other goods and he would get back things that they grew, hunted, or made. Point du Sable's trading post helped explorers to keep going. They could buy supplies at his post. This would let them travel further.

### **Helping Chicago Grow**

That trading post helped start Chicago as a city. When families moved to Chicago, they could get what they needed at the trading post. People who come to a new place and build homes are settlers. To live in this area, settlers needed his business. As more settlers moved here, the trading post became more important.

Settlers got many things from the trading post to start their homes. DuSable sold blankets, butter, furs, knives, cloth, and guns. Settlers and Native Americans traded or paid money for those things. The settlers still needed supplies, so they kept coming to the trading post.

Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable left Chicago in 1800 and moved to another place. He sold his trading post so it stayed open. It was an important place in Chicago. Many people needed it.

### **Leaving a Legacy**

DuSable left a legacy. A legacy is something that lasts. His trading post helped people settle in Chicago and stay here, too. That is why Chicago called him the "father" of the city. He made it possible for the city to start.

Today there is a harbor named for DuSable. There is a park too. That park is near where he started the first Chicago business. His trading post was the starting point for making the town that became today's big city. So his trading post is the most important business in Chicago's history. Chicago is a wonderful city. DuSable is a very important part of Chicago's history.

# COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT: **Non-Fiction** 3-4

*This assessment can be used with any nonfiction.. It emphasizes CCSSR1, Read Closely, then make logical inferences with evidence, and CCSSR2, Determine theme and summarize supporting details and ideas.*

1. **What is the topic?** \_\_\_\_\_  
*The topic is not the title.* What is the topic that the passage explains?

2. **Infer the main idea of a paragraph:** What is the main idea of the first paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think that is the main idea of the first paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. **Identify Important Information:** What is a very important fact in the passage?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think it is important? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. **Classify Fact and Opinion:** What is an opinion in the passage?

\_\_\_\_\_

*Explain: How do you know it is an opinion?*

\_\_\_\_\_

5. **Infer the main idea of a passage.** What is the main idea of the whole passage?  
What is the idea the writer wants you to understand about the topic?

\_\_\_\_\_

Support your answer. Explain why you think that is the main idea.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT: Answer Key Non-Fiction 3-4

*This assessment can be used with any nonfiction.. It emphasizes CCSSR1, Read Closely, then make logical inferences with evidence, and CCSSR2, Determine theme and summarize supporting details and ideas.*

## 1. What is the topic?

*The topic is not the title. What is the topic that the passage explains?*

*Appropriate responses: DuSable's life or DuSable's trading post or similar answer emphasizing that it is about DuSable.*

## 2. Infer the main idea of a paragraph: What is the main idea of the first paragraph?

*Appropriate responses: It was difficult to live in Chicago; long ago living in Chicago was hard.*

## 3. Identify Important Information: What is a very important fact in the passage?

Answers should include important information such as, DuSable set up a trading post; people needed the trading post; the trading post helped Chicago grow.

Why do you think it is important? Students should explain that the fact helps support the main idea or helps them understand the reading.

## 4. Classify Fact and Opinion: What is an opinion in the passage?

Students may identify any of these opinions:

He is a really great African American hero

*His trading post is the most important business in Chicago's history.*

*Chicago is a wonderful city.*

*DuSable is a very important part of Chicago's history.*

Explain: How do you know it is an opinion? *Students should respond that it is not a fact.*

## 5. Infer the main idea of a passage. What is the main idea of the whole passage?

What is the idea the writer wants you to understand about the topic?

Students may identify these ideas or similar ideas:

- One person can make a big difference.
- DuSable met many challenges.
- DuSable helped many people.

Support your answer. Explain why you think that is the main idea. Use facts from the reading.

*Students should identify at least two facts that directly support the idea they identify.*

*Note: If students have difficulty responding to this question, you could use a graphic organizer to have them identify the main idea of one paragraph and then note information that supports it.*

*Then they can do the same activity with information from several paragraphs that support one idea of the whole passage.*

Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable came to Chicago more than 220 years ago when it was very small. He faced many problems. It must have been hard to live in Chicago then, because winters were snowy, and then spring the ground was muddy. There were no stores or streets, and people had to make what they needed. People had to get their own food and build their own homes. DuSable still came.

### **Building a Trading Post**

DuSable chose to come here because he had an idea that it would be a good place for a business. He would build a trading post. A trading post is a kind of business. People get things they need there by trading. They trade things they have for things they need.

DuSable built his trading post himself. To do that, he had plan how big it would be, and then he had to get the wood to build it. Building that trading post was a lot of hard work, but he never gave up.

DuSable chose a good location for the trading post at a place where the river and the lake met. That way people could get to it by boat as well as on land. In those days, people in the area traveled by foot on pathways or by boat.

DuSable traded with the Potawatomi. They are Native Americans who had lived in the area for many years. He traded tools to them for furs they got by hunting animals. They were glad he had started his business.

### **Helping Chicago Grow**

DuSable traded with settlers, too. A settler is a person who moves to a place and builds a home. Settlers bring some things with them, but they need many things to set up their homes. They needed furniture and food. DuSable made furniture and sold food that he got by trading. Settlers found what they needed at the trading post, so his business was very important. It helped people get started and helped them when they ran out of things they needed. If there were no trading post, it would have been very hard to stay here.

DuSable must have known that Chicago was going to grow. He saw more settlers moving here every year. His business was an important place to everyone who came to live here. It was essential.

### **A Chicago Legacy**

DuSable left Chicago in 1800. He sold the trading post. So the business he started was still open. People could get what they needed to live in Chicago. That business was the most important place in Chicago. It was a very small town. But it would grow. A legacy is what someone leaves to other people. DuSable's legacy is important. His trading post started Chicago's progress. His choice to come here made a big difference. He helped people come here to stay. 1968 Chicago called him the "Father of Chicago". Today there is a museum named for him. There is a DuSable Park, too. People remember what he did. He was the most important person in Chicago's history.

# COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT: Non-Fiction 5-6

*This assessment can be used with any nonfiction.. It emphasizes CCSSR1, Read Closely, then make logical inferences with evidence, and CCSSR2, Determine theme and summarize supporting details and ideas.*

1. **What is the topic?** \_\_\_\_\_  
*The topic is not the title.* What is the topic that the passage explains?

2. **Infer the main idea of a paragraph:** What is the main idea of the first paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think that is the main idea of the first paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. **Identify Important Information:** What is a very important fact in the passage?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think it is important? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. **Classify Fact and Opinion:** What is an opinion in the passage?

\_\_\_\_\_

*Explain: How do you know it is an opinion?*

\_\_\_\_\_

5. **Infer the main idea of a passage.** What is the main idea of the whole passage?  
What is the idea the writer wants you to understand about the topic?

\_\_\_\_\_

Support your answer. Explain why you think that is the main idea.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT: Answer Key Non-Fiction 5-6

*This assessment can be used with any nonfiction.. It emphasizes CCSSR1, Read Closely, then make logical inferences with evidence, and CCSSR2, Determine theme and summarize supporting details and ideas.*

## 1. What is the topic?

*The topic is not the title.* What is the topic that the passage explains?

*Appropriate responses include: How DuSable changed Chicago; How DuSable helped people live in Chicago; similar topics.*

## 2. Infer the main idea of a paragraph: What is the main idea of the first paragraph? Underline information in the paragraph that supports it.

*Appropriate responses: it was difficult to live in Chicago or DuSable faced many problems. Students should underline information that identifies problems or challenges.*

## 3. Identify Important Information: What is a very important fact in the passage?

Answers should include important information such as, DuSable set up a trading post; people needed the trading post; the trading post helped Chicago grow.

Why do you think it is important? Students should explain that the fact helps support the main idea or helps them understand the reading.

## 4. Classify Fact and Opinion: What is an opinion in the passage?

Students should identify this opinion.

*He was the most important person in Chicago's history.*

Explain: How do you know it is an opinion? *Students should respond that it is not a fact.*

## 5. Infer the main idea of a passage. What is the main idea of the whole passage?

What is the idea the writer wants you to understand about the topic?

Students may identify these ideas or similar ideas:

- One person can make a big difference.
- DuSable met many challenges.
- DuSable helped many people.
- DuSable's legacy is most important to Chicago's progress.

Support your answer. Explain why you think that is the main idea. Use facts from the reading.

*Students should identify at least two facts that directly support the idea they identify.*

*Note: If students have difficulty responding to this question, you could use a graphic organizer to have them identify the main idea of one paragraph and then note information that supports it.*

*Then they can do the same activity with information from several paragraphs that support one idea of the whole passage.*

## **Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable**

G7-8

Jean Baptiste Pointe DuSable came to Chicago more than 220 years ago. Chicago was a very small place then, living here was a struggle--it was a time of great challenge. The environment was challenging—each season brought problems. Winters were harsh, spring was a time of rain and mud, and summer was hot and full of mosquitoes. There were no stores or really any pathways you could use to move about easily. So it was difficult to get everything you needed to survive. DuSable must have been a visionary, someone who sees possibilities even when there are problems.

### **Building a Trading Post**

He had come from a distant land, Haiti, and traveled a long way to this place. DuSable chose to come here because it was a place where he could start a business that would prosper. He would build a trading post that he expected would be a very successful business. There was no other trading post here at that time. He thought it was a place of great possibility, that many people would move here, and they all would need a trading post. His trading post was the starting point for Chicago's progress. This entrepreneur made it possible to expand the community that would become the city in which millions live today.

DuSable built his trading post himself using his own labor and abilities, using local resources to construct it from wood. First he chose a strategic location, a place where the river and lake converged. That enabled people to reach the post more easily by water. Probably it was easier to get there by water than by land, since it was so muddy in spring and in winter there were deep snows. But in winter the river would be frozen, making it impassable. So it still was a struggle, in every season.

DuSable traded with the Potawatomi, Native Americans who had lived in this area for many years before the first settlements by pioneers from Europe and other places. He traded tools to them for furs they got by hunting animals, using spears, arrows, and traps until they were able to get guns and other metal tools. With the trading post came new technologies that would make it easier to hunt and live in the area.

### **From Vision to Legacy**

DuSable traded with settlers who were moving to this area and brought hopes but also many needs. His business enabled them to stay here, so that's why his idea is most important to Chicago's growth. They moved here without all the tools and supplies they would need to build homes and survive in the challenging environment. Soon after DuSable opened his business, more and more pioneers moved to this location to settle. DuSable's vision was correct—Chicago was becoming a destination that would keep growing. He saw more settlers moving here every year; the post was an important place to all of them.

DuSable sold the trading post and moved on in 1800. He left a legacy, however. The trading post had been a kind of anchor of the growing community. In 1968 Chicago declared DuSable the "Father of Chicago". I think that is a well-deserved tribute. DuSable is responsible for Chicago's start, so he enabled it to make progress. Chicago became the greatest city of the United States, where world's fairs would take place. Without his vision, would Chicago be the great city it is today? Review the facts and come to your own conclusion.



# COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT: Non-Fiction 7-8

*This assessment can be used with any nonfiction.. It emphasizes CCSSR1, Read Closely, then make logical inferences with evidence, and CCSSR2, Determine theme and summarize supporting details and ideas.*

1. **What is the topic?** \_\_\_\_\_  
*The topic is not the title.* What is the topic that the passage explains?

2. **Infer the main idea of a paragraph:** What is the main idea of the first paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

Why do you think that is the main idea of the first paragraph?

\_\_\_\_\_

3. **Evaluate the Importance of Information:** What are the two most important facts?

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Why is each one important? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. **Classify Fact and Opinion:** What is an opinion in the passage?

\_\_\_\_\_

*Explain: How do you know it is an opinion?*

\_\_\_\_\_

5. **Infer the main idea of a passage.** What is the main idea of the whole passage?  
What is the idea the writer wants you to understand about the topic?

\_\_\_\_\_

Support your answer. Explain why you think that is the main idea.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT: Non-Fiction 7-8 KEY

*This assessment can be used with any nonfiction.. It emphasizes CCSSR1, Read Closely, then make logical inferences with evidence, and CCSSR2, Determine theme and summarize supporting details and ideas.*

## 1. What is the topic?

*The topic is not the title. What is the topic that the passage explains?*

*Appropriate responses include: How DuSable changed Chicago; How DuSable helped people live in Chicago; DuSable's Life*

## 2. Infer the main idea of a paragraph: What is the main idea of the first paragraph? Underline information in the paragraph that supports it.

*Appropriate responses: it was difficult to live in Chicago or DuSable faced many problems. Students should underline information that identifies problems or challenges.*

## 3 Evaluate the Importance of Information: What are the two most important facts? Answers should include important information such as, DuSable set up a trading post; people needed the trading post; the trading post helped Chicago grow; DuSable faced great challenges.

*Why do you think each one important? Students should explain that the facts help support the main idea of the passage or helps them understand the situation. The purpose of this question is to determine if students can identify information that is relatively more important than other facts in nonfiction.*

## 4. Classify Fact and Opinion: What is an opinion in the passage?

Students should identify one of these opinions.

*That is a well-deserved tribute*

*Chicago is the greatest city of the United States*

Explain: How do you know it is an opinion? *Students should respond that it is not a fact.*

## 5. Infer the main idea of a passage. What is the main idea of the whole passage?

What is the idea the writer wants you to understand about the topic?

Students may identify these ideas or similar ideas:

- One person can make a big difference.
- DuSable met many challenges.
- DuSable helped many people.
- DuSable's legacy is most important to Chicago's progress.

Support your answer. Explain why you think that is the main idea. Use facts from the reading.

*Students should identify at least two facts that directly support the idea they identify.*

*Note: If students have difficulty responding to this question, you could use a graphic organizer to have them identify the main idea of one paragraph and then note information that supports it.*

*Then they can do the same activity with information from several paragraphs that support one idea of the whole passage.*