

Prairie Farmers

Common Core Anchor Reading Standard 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.

Read this prairie journal and figure out how farmers changed this environment.

June 10th Today, we put up a fence. It will keep our cows out of our cornfield. The cows and horses have lots of grass to eat in the prairie. It makes a great pasture. Father says it's a good place for them. We just have a small farm because it's hard to plow the ground. But at least we don't have to cut down trees.

July 4th It's independence day. The corn is very high. The prairie grasses are even higher. I saw so many butterflies today. It was so hot that we went to the creek for the day.

August 21st It has not rained for three weeks. I got so tired carrying buckets of water to the squash plants. I wonder how the prairie plants stay green without the rain.

September 30th The prairie is very dry. We cleared a path between the prairie and our garden. Mother says that the lightning will catch the dry grass on fire and we need to protect our home.

October 15th Mother was right about the fire. The lightning came. The fire burned the whole prairie. All I can see there is burned land. It's a wonder that the plants can grow back again.

December 20th Our fire went out today. We had to go to the Johnsons' to get a coal to restart the fire. I'll be more careful to watch the fire so it does not go out again.

January 20th Another snowy day. We are almost out of firewood. I went with Tom to look for wood. We looked near the creek. Last week we found some branches there. I guess they had floated downstream from some woods. We didn't find any. We saw some animal tracks on the snow. They were small feet, close together

February 28th It rained today. Most of the snow has melted. We went to visit the Johnsons. It took two hours to get there because the trail was so muddy. We almost turned back. Mr. Johnson asked us if we had seen any onions along the way. He told us that Chicago is named after onions. He said that the Potawatomi called it Checagou, which means wild onions. He said that's because when winter ends the wild onions start to grow and you can eat them. He said it's a sign spring is here. We looked for wild onion plants along the way back, but we didn't see any.

March 15th Mr. Johnson stopped to see us on his way from Chicago. He had a steel plow. He showed it to us. He told us he had gone all the way to Chicago to get it. He says it's going to make it easier to cut through the grass so he can plant. He said if we help him with his planting, he will let us use the plow on our farm.

April 20th We've borrowed Mr. Johnson's plow. We have cleared the prairie plants from our land. Now we can grow corn on all this land. Father says we'll sell the corn and be able to buy more animals. This will be a busy summer.

Prairie Farmers QUESTIONS

Read the questions. Re-read the text. Then think through the answers.

Choose the **best** answer for each item. After you answer the questions, check with another student to learn and why they chose their answers.

<p>1. Why did the family decide to farm in this place?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. There are many bison.b. There is grass for their cows.c. They don't have to cut down trees.d. There is lots of rain.	<p>2. What did the mother predict would happen in autumn?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. lightning would burn the homeb. there would be firesc. the harvest would be bigd. they would move
<p>3. Why might the Potawatomi called this area Checago?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. because they liked onionsb. because it had a long winterc. because spring plants were welcomed. because it snowed a lot	<p>4. Which of the following is the most important part of the story?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. they get coal from the neighborb. the snow meltsc. they build a fenced. they get a steel plow
<p>5. Which of the following is most likely on the farm?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. the farm will get biggerb. there will be more and more firesc. there will be more bisond. there will be more snow	<p>6. Why did the family look for onions?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Mr. Johnson told them tob. they wanted to know it was springc. the Potawatomi liked themd. they had planted them
<p>7. What is the main idea of the diary?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. farming is importantb. farming is func. farming is difficultd. farming is progress	<p>8. What might Mr. Johnson have said about his neighbors?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. they learned a lot from meb. I learned a lot from themc. they have a lot of problemsd. they will leave soon

Picture Connections

Choose one of the diary entries.

Draw a picture that shows what the diary reports.

Give your picture to another student.

Ask that student to figure out which part of the diary your picture shows.