

The city of Chicago has many parts. There are neighborhoods. Each one is different. In each neighborhood, citizens want to have a good place to live. Good neighbors help each other. They keep their block clean. They call the police if there is a problem.

The neighborhoods are part of wards. The city is divided into wards. There are 50 wards. Each ward has an alderman. That is someone voters choose. The alderman meets with people from the ward. The alderman's job is to help them.

A person may tell the alderman about a problem. For example, the person may talk about litter. If the streets are dirty, people can try to keep them clean. But it is easier to do this if people throw their trash away themselves.

Sometimes there is a problem with gangs. People complain to the alderman about it. They are afraid of the gangs. They want to stop the trouble. The alderman can work with the police to help. Sometimes the gang members just need help. They are afraid, too. They are afraid of the other gangs.

Aldermen try to improve things in their community. They may get a new library. They may get a new park. To get those, they have to ask the city government. They call the transportation department if there is a problem with buses. They call the street department if there is a problem with streets.

The aldermen meet together twice each month. The Mayor is in charge of the meeting. They talk about problems. They make plans. They vote on changes. Some of those changes will be laws. Then everyone in every ward will have to follow them.

Citizens choose the alderman. They elect this person. They choose the mayor, too. Some people do not vote. They think it is not important. But it is important. It is how to get things done.

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

1. What do good neighbors do?

- a. talk about each other
- b. keep their neighborhood clean
- c. move to other places
- d. go to the store

2. What does the alderman do for the neighborhood?

- a. change laws
- b. help to solve problems
- c. clean the streets
- d. go to the schools

3. Why is it important for citizens to vote?

- a. to choose their leaders
- b. to show they are citizens
- c. to go to their schools
- d. to get elected

4. How do people feel about gangs?

- a. happy
- b. worried
- c. angry
- d. sorry

5. *Write your own answer to this question.*
How do citizens choose the mayor?

TEACHER NOTES: Develop Students' Skills: Exercise Thinking

These questions have not been validated, so decisions about student's achievement should not be made based on their responses. They are intended to exercise skills. Recommended activities include: students work in pairs to choose the best response; give students the questions without the responses so they generate their own answers; students make up additional questions; students make up questions like these for another passage.

Answers: *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	1	2	3	4
Answer	b	b	a	b

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

5. They elect the mayor.

At the meeting, one neighbor was shouting. "I've had enough," he said. "This neighborhood has too many potholes." Other people clapped. They agreed with the neighbor.

"We can't fill in all the potholes until we know where they are," said the Alderman. "Please tell me when you see one. Then I promise I will get it fixed. I need you to help me to help your community."

"What about the snow plowing," a woman asked. "No one came to plow our street. We had to do it ourselves."

"There was so much snow, that we could not get to the side streets quickly," the Alderman answered. "But they are going to try to do a better job next time."

"Let's talk about progress," the local librarian said. "Are we going to get the new library building?"

"I think we need a new park, first," said a parent.

"A library is more important than a park," she answered.

"No, it's not. You're wrong. You're thinking about yourself."

"Wait, now," said the Alderman. "This ward belongs to everyone. And both will help. We need the park. We need the library. And we need more. I'm trying to get it all. But we're starting with the library. We don't have space for the books in the old one. We need a computer area, too."

"I'm angry," the parent said. "I wanted the park first. I'm going to vote for someone else to be alderman next time."

"Let's all work together," a teacher said. "This is about what we all need and want. We have a great community. Let's work together."

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

6. How do the people at the meeting feel about the Alderman?

- a. They want the Alderman to help them.
- b. They do not like the Alderman.
- c. They are grateful to the Alderman.
- d. They are angry with the Alderman.

7. What does the Alderman want the people to do?

- a. vote
- b. cooperate
- c. call
- d. change

8. How does the librarian feel about the neighbor who wants the new park?

- a. angry
- b. sorry
- c. silly
- d. happy

9. How does the teacher feel about the neighborhood?

- a. angry
- b. sad
- c. proud
- d. cooperate

10. *Write your own answer to this question.*
Why would a parent want to have a new park?

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Answers: *You can remove this answer key and then give it to students and ask them to figure out the basis for the correct response.*

Item	6	7	8	9
Answer	a	b	a	c

Question 10 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

10. The parent cares about children having a place to play.