

Skill: Identify/Analyze/Infer Cause-Effect Relations

Painting the School

4th Grade Nonfiction

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One day the principal of a school sent a note home. The note told parents that she needed their help. She asked them to help make the school look better.

It was an old building. It was made of bricks and concrete. Inside, the classrooms were bright. There were posters on the walls. There were children's drawings on the walls. On the outside the school was plain.

The principal had a plan. She wanted to paint a mural. A mural is a very big painting on a wall. She asked parents to help make the mural. She asked parents to come to paint on Saturdays. The principal bought the paint and the art teacher drew the design. It would be a picture about children.

The first Saturday, 10 parents came. Teachers and students came, too. They all painted all day. The art teacher told them what colors to use. By the end of that day the mural was started, but it would take more time. The volunteers went home with paint on them, but they were smiling. They were proud that they were making the school look special.

The next Saturday, more people came to paint. They had seen the beginning of the mural, and they liked it. They wanted to help, too. So more of the mural got done that day. The art teacher said it would take just one more Saturday and we would be done.

The next Saturday it rained. There was so much rain people could not paint. When they tried, the paint washed off their brushes and onto the sidewalk. That Monday the school had to clean the sidewalk.

The sun was shining the next Saturday. Even more volunteers came to paint. They finished the mural and got paint on themselves, but they were happy. They were proud they had helped the school look special. At a near-by school, parents and students started to paint a mural, too. Soon there were murals in many communities.

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

1. What made the classrooms look good?

- a. The posters.
- b. The children.
- c. The windows.
- d. The school.

2. What caused the sidewalk to get paint on it?

- a. People were careless.
- b. The paint came off the walls.
- c. The heavy rain caused it.
- d. The mural was too big.

3. What caused more people to volunteer on the second Saturday?

- a. They had to.
- b. They saw the mural.
- c. The principal asked them.
- d. They had children at the school.

4. Why might a nearby school start a mural?

- a. They need it.
- b. They saw it.
- c. They had paint.
- d. They like art.

5. *Write your own answer to this question.*

How would the neighborhood be different because of the mural?

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	a	c	b	b

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

5. People will feel proud.

I was part of our school mural. I helped to paint it, and I am in it. When you see the mural, you will see my picture. The mural shows children playing. I am one of the children in the picture.

The mural shows the future, too. It shows what we want to be. Our teachers asked us to choose careers. They asked us what job we want in the future. I chose teacher. I want to be a teacher when I graduate from college.

After we painted the mural, a newspaper reporter came. She said that she had heard about the mural from a friend. She told her editor. An editor is someone who decides what is in the newspaper. The editor said it was interesting, so he sent the reporter to learn about it.

The reporter talked with us for an hour, and then the reporter left. The next day, a photographer came. He said that the newspaper was going to put a story about the mural in the paper. They needed a photo to show what it looked like.

The newspaper put the story in the paper. Everyone was excited. People came from other neighborhoods to see our mural. One day a bus came. It brought children from another school. Their teacher said she read about us in the newspaper, and she wanted to help their school make a mural. Then their school would look special, too.

Our principal went to visit that school and told them how we made the mural. She was proud of what we had done. Then she came back to our school and met with parents. She told them, "I think we need another mural. Our building has more walls."

Directions: Choose the best answer for each question

6. Why did the newspaper write about the mural?

- a. They knew the principal.
- b. It looked good.
- c. The editor decided.
- d. They took photos.

7. Why did people come to look at the mural?

- a. They read about it in the newspaper.
- b. They liked the school.
- c. They lived in the neighborhood.
- d. They liked art.

8. Why did another school want a mural?

- a. To have pictures outside.
- b. To look better.
- c. To involve parents.
- d. To learn about murals.

9. What happened because of the mural?

- a. The picture showed children.
- b. The school looked better.
- c. The children painted the mural.
- d. The principal met with parents.

10. *Write your own answer to this question.*

An effect is what happens because of something.
What effect do you think the mural had on the students?

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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	c	a	b	b

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

10. The children were proud. The children thought about the future.