

Illinois is called the prairie state. Long ago, most of the land was prairie. A prairie is a kind of grassland. The grass in a prairie is very high. It can get to be six feet tall.

Pioneers are people who do something for the first time. Although Native Americans lived in Illinois for a long time, the people who came to build houses here were called pioneers. They were the first people to come to set up towns. The Native Americans had moved from place to place.

The pioneers were called settlers. That is because they came to stay. Settle means stay. It was hard to get to Illinois. The pioneers had to bring most of what they needed to live with them. They traveled in wagons. Horses or oxen pulled the wagons. They traveled for many days.

The pioneers came from another place. They came to Illinois to find a good place to live. Many were farmers. They knew the land here was good. They brought tools to farm. They brought axes and other tools, too.

The first thing the pioneers did was clear their land. They cut down the prairie grass. Then they dug in the soil. They would plant corn. They would plant wheat. They grew vegetables, too. And they raised chickens and pigs.

It was hard work. The children worked, too. They planted. They helped in the home. They did not go to school at first. There was no school.

Pioneers were glad to be in Illinois. They had good land. They could get water from creeks and rivers. They could go fishing. They could hunt, too. They could grow crops.

As soon as more pioneers came, they would make town. They would choose leaders. They would name their town. They would set up a government. The government would set up laws. The town would build a school. But parents said that the school should be closed in summer.

Most of the Native Americans who had lived in Illinois left. The pioneers had come to stay. The Native Americans moved to the west.

*Directions: Choose the best answer for each question*

1. Why did pioneers come to Illinois?

- a. to take the Native Americans' land
- b. to set up homes and farms
- c. to work hard
- d. to raise chickens and pigs

2. Why did pioneers stay in Illinois?

- a. They were tired of traveling.
- b. They lived in towns.
- c. They had what they needed.
- d. They liked the prairie.

3. Why did pioneers set up governments?

- a. Their community had grown.
- b. They wanted to vote.
- c. There were too many people.
- d. They wanted to have a name.

4. Why were the schools closed in summer?

- a. Parents wanted to be with their children.
- b. The children wanted to play.
- c. The family needed children to help farm.
- d. The summer was hot.

5. *Write your own answer to this question.*  
Why do you think the Native Americans left?

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**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	c	a	c

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

5. Because they wanted to leave Illinois because the pioneers had taken the land. Because they thought more and more people would move here.

This is a story based on an old folktale.

This is a story about long ago. There was a little fly. It wanted to be special. The fly was sad. It did not feel special. It looked at the bee and thought it was great. "Look at how big it is. Hear it buzz." It looked at the butterfly and said, "See how pretty. Look at the colors. Look at the big wings. I am just like all the other flies."

The fly stayed awake one night. It was worried. It was sad. All the other flies were sleeping. A moth was awake. So was a mouse. They did not notice the fly. It was too small. It was hard to see in the dark.

The fly saw the stars. They were shining. "I want to shine like that. That would be special."

The moon heard the fly. The moon said, "Little fly. You can help me. If you do, I will help you. I will make you shine."

"How can I help?"

The moon said, "You can be my friend. I am lonely at night. I come out when it is dark. Most animals are asleep. If you stay awake every night I will help you shine. Then you can be my friend."

"Yes, yes," the fly said. So the moon helped it. The moon told the fly the secret. The moon told the fly how to shine.

The next night, the fly stayed awake. It used the secret. It was shining. On, off, it made its body light. It looked like magic.

"Look," said the mouse. "Look at that fly. How special." The mouse said, "I'd like to shine, too." His mother said, "NO! That would be dangerous. You know we need to be able to hide."

The fly was very glad. The fly told the moon, "I will always be your friend. When you come out at night, I will be here. I will shine my light to welcome you." Then the fly went to sleep. "Finally. Now I have what I need."

*Directions: Choose the best answer for each question*

6. Why did the fly ask the moon for help?

- a. The fly was sad.
- b. The moon was shiny.
- c. The fly was lonely.
- d. The fly had a dream.

7. Why did the moon help the fly?

- a. The moon liked the fly.
- b. The moon wanted a friend.
- c. The moon wanted the fly to change.
- d. The moon was sad.

8. Why did the fly go to sleep?

- a. The moon was going away.
- b. The fly was not worried any more.
- c. The fly was sad.
- d. The other flies were sleeping.

9. Why would a fly want to be special?

- a. There are many flies.
- b. It wanted to shine.
- c. It had no friends.
- d. It was lonely.

10. Write your own answer to this question.

*A motive is a reason for doing something. What did the mouse's mother tell the mouse not to shine?*

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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	b	a

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

10. To protect the mouse. Because if the mouse was shiny other animals could catch it.