

Long ago, the United States was a land of pioneers. They were families who traveled west. They came in covered wagons. The wagons carried all their belongings. They packed what they needed to make the trip. They packed what they needed to make a home. When they went to their new land, they would need tools.

The trip was hard. Their wagons had big wheels. Sometimes the wheels would fall off. Then they would have to stop to fix them. There were no shops to buy a new wheel.

Families would travel together. It was called a wagon train. They would follow one wagon. The leader would drive that wagon. He would decide when to stop to rest. He would decide whether they should camp somewhere and hunt for food.

The families would travel for miles. Many times they had to walk next to their wagon. It was too full for them to fit inside. They were taking all their food and clothes.

Sometimes a family would have a problem. Someone would be sick. Or they would run out of food. Other families would help them. They knew that they had to work together to get to their new homes.

When they got to the West, they would stay there. They would build a community. They would stay friends. They would help each other. They might choose the leader as their mayor.

Sometimes they would work together to build a barn. Often they would help each other harvest crops. They had learned to work together on that hard trip to the west.

**Identify, analyze, and infer relationships – Nonfiction**

Questions developed by Center for Urban Education for use by Chicago Public Schools 2008-2009.

*Choose the best answer for each question.*

1. What is the leader’s job?
- a. to fix wheels
  - b. to make decisions
  - c. to stop the trip
  - d. to drive the last wagon

3. Why did the families build a barn together?
- a. They had to.
  - b. They needed the money.
  - c. They were friends.
  - d. They wanted to start a farm.

2. How do families feel about each other?
- a. They like other families.
  - b. They do not like some families.
  - c. They do not know them well.
  - d. They want to leave.

4. Why would they choose the leader to be mayor?
- a. They trusted him.
  - b. They knew him.
  - c. They had to.
  - d. They were friends.

5. *Write your own answer to this question. Why would the wagon train travelers want to build a community together?*

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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	a	c	a

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.  
They had become friends. They liked each other. They trusted each other.