

A school in Chicago was not near a park, so there was no place for children to play in the community. To get to a park, you had to take a bus. The school was a very big school with two buildings. There was a lot of land outside the school. It took up a whole block. About ten years ago, there used to be a park.

What happened to the park? When they first built the school, it was just one building. But then more people moved into the community, so they needed a bigger school. They paved the ground where the park had been, and they built another building. We still had a playground, but it was not a good place to play. The swings were broken and it was very small.

The principal met with the alderman. The alderman works in the city government. Citizens elect the alderman, and each part of the city has an alderman. The principal asked the alderman to help. She said that they had an old playground. She showed pictures of the playground. She explained that the equipment was old and broken. She said, “Our children deserve a much better place to play.”

The alderman had a big idea. “Let’s turn your school into a park,” she said. “You have lots of land outside the school. Right now it is concrete. We can put in grass and trees. We can rebuild the playground.”

To make that change, the alderman had to get money because it would be expensive to make the park. The alderman talked with the Chicago Park District. That is the organization that runs all the parks. They wanted to add a park near the school. They wanted to make sure every community had a park they could walk to, and they liked the idea of putting it right outside the school.

It took two years to make this big change. First, designers made plans. Then, the Park District made a budget. They made a schedule. First they would have to break up the concrete. Then they would need good soil, grass, and trees.

They needed money to pay for the work and equipment. The alderman helped them get money. He persuaded the City Council to pay for the new park. The City Council is in charge of the city’s laws. It oversees the budget, too. The alderman helped them understand that this park would be well used every day.

It took two years, but the park was built. Everyone loved the park. Now on Saturdays and Sundays children come to play in the park.

There was a big celebration when they opened it. Parents came, and so did the alderman. He invited principals of other schools in the community. The other principals said they wanted to have parks, too. He said, “I know what to do.”

Identify/Analyze/Infer Cause-Effect Relations – Nonfiction

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

Choose the best answer for each question

1. Why was the area around the school covered with concrete?

- a. They built another building.
- b. They parked cars on it.
- c. They used it for a playground.
- d. They liked concrete.

3. Why did City Council decide to pay for the park?

- a. They had the money.
- b. They wanted more parks.
- c. They believed the alderman.
- d. They liked the school.

2. Why did the Park District help the school?

- a. They needed to.
- b. They had a goal to build more parks.
- c. They liked the alderman.
- d. They needed the money.

4. What is one effect of the new park?

- a. The community is a better place to live.
- b. There is a new parking lot.
- c. Children can play in the old playground.
- d. People have more time to play.

5. *Write your own answer to this question. What do you predict will be an effect of creating this new park?*

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	b	c	a

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.
There will be more school-based parks.