

Better Living in Chicago

CCSSR1—Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

CCSSR2—clarify the main/central idea of a passage; analyze a passage to identify relationships; support important ideas with examples.

How can one person make city progress?

Chicago's Reformer

Reform means to make things better. Jane Addams saw things in Chicago to reform. She saw poor people living in crowded neighborhoods. The houses were small. They did not have enough rooms for all of the people who lived in them. The streets were dirty. People did not have places to get clean water. They did not have places to wash. Jane Addams wanted to help poor people have a better life. She believed that helping poor people would make everyone's life better. She would make Chicago better.

In 1889 Jane Addams set up a place to help people. She called it Hull-House. Hull-House was a settlement house. It helped immigrants to Chicago. Immigrants are people who move to a new country. The immigrants needed to find homes. They needed to learn English. They needed to learn about the city. Jane Addams wanted to give them the skills they needed to live well on their own.

In 1893, four years after Jane Addams opened Hull-House, there was a depression. That means a lot of people lost their jobs. The people who lost their jobs needed even more help. Each week thousands of people came to Hull-House. They all got help.

Jane Addams had more than one idea about how to help the people of Chicago. One thing she did was to live in the same community where the poor people lived. This helped her to understand their problems. She listened to them. She helped them work together to change things in their neighborhood. She was one of Chicago's first community organizers.

Another thing Jane Addams did was talk to Chicago's leaders. Jane Addams was a powerful woman. She knew the Mayor. She talked to him and the other leaders about the problems of the poor people. Sometimes the leaders listened. Sometimes they did not. But she kept trying. She made changes. She made the schools better. She helped to set up playgrounds. She made people's jobs safer. She fought for people to get better pay. She even became the Garbage Inspector in her ward. Then she could help clean up the neighborhood.

Jane Addams worked with many other people to help families. She helped neighborhoods. She became famous around the world for her hard work. She won a Nobel Peace Prize. That is a very important honor. Jane Addams left Chicago an important legacy. Hull-House is still in Chicago today. It still helps people make progress. She showed how one person can make progress for a whole city.

Write What You Think

How did Jane Addams solve problems?

What is a problem people in Chicago have today?

How should people solve it?