

Chicago Changes

CCSSR2—clarify the main/central idea of a passage.

Long ago, Chicago was a small town. Families settled here. Everyone knew everyone else. People worked hard to get what they needed. Children worked, too. There were no schools. People had to work every day. They had to get wood to make their houses. Then they had to get wood to heat them in winter.

Then more people moved to Chicago. They had families. They wanted to have a school. They built one. All the children went to school in that one place. The teacher showed them how to read and write. They learned math, too. Then, after school they would go home and help their families.

People built more homes. They built streets. They built them out of wood. They rode on the streets on horses. Some people had wagons. Horses would pull them. At night it was hard to see. The wagons would have lanterns. A lantern is a kind of light. It uses a candle or oil to make a light. Sometimes the lanterns would fall off the wagons. Then they might set the street on fire. The street was made of wood. So people carried buckets of water in their wagons.

When more people moved to Chicago they opened businesses. They opened a blacksmith shop. There a worker would fix wagon wheels made of metal. The blacksmith would make horseshoes, too. There was a carpenter shop. Workers there would build furniture for homes.

After many years, there were more people here and many changes. The streets were paved. There were streetlights. People could shop for clothes. They could buy furniture that was already made.

Chicago was in a good place for traveling. People built railroad tracks. Trains came to the city. It was on a river. And it was on a lake. It was becoming a big city. Every day more people came to live here. Businesses opened. People started a newspaper. It was a changing place.

Support the Main Idea

The main idea of this passage is that Chicago has changed a lot. Underline five examples in the passage that support that idea.

Write What You Think

Write about Chicago now. Is it still changing? Use your own examples to support your answer.