

Making Progress

I have lived in Lawndale now for thirty years. In that time, I have witnessed several changes, some for the better and others for the worse. My neighborhood is a wonderful one. I have friends here and my family resides here, too. My mother's home is just two blocks away and my cousins live down the street from me.

Progress begins with hope. That's something I learned a long time ago. You can look at things and complain, or you can ask, "What can we do to make things better?"

My son came home from school in August with a plan to make things better. It was a plan his class had thought up. They decided to transform a vacant lot into a community garden. I told him that it would be much more work than he realized.

He had a dream. He wanted to have many flowers in Lawndale. He knew there were some vacant lots, but he also noticed the new buildings. He said, we are making progress, and we should help. If we turn the vacant lot across from the school into a garden, it will signify how much we care. In turn, more people will plant flowers and trees, so the community will become a really beautiful place.

I admired my son's idea. He has always been a thoughtful child. I said we would help.

His class started by clearing out the trash from the lot. They needed several garbage bags to do so, because they didn't simply clear the lot. They picked up trash from the street, too. People came by and saw the difference they had already made. I noticed after that people were not littering nearly as often. It seems they understood the idea that keeping things clean is not as difficult as clearing up all the trash if you litter frequently.

Afterwards, they planted many bulbs in the ground. I believe they planted approximately 500 bulbs. I helped, and I think I planted roughly 30 bulbs myself. This spring we'll see them flower, and I think that everyone in the community will be inspired.

A long time ago, someone said, "It takes a village to raise a child." I think it takes a child to inspire a community. I am extremely proud of my son.

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.

These are questions you can ask and answer about any story. Write your answers on another page.

1. Sequence: Which event happened first? Which happened last?
2. Character Traits: Name one character. What is one trait you infer that character has? Explain why you think that.
3. Motive: What is something that person does? Why do you think that person does that?
4. Summarize: Summarize the story in four sentences. Tell about the characters and what they do.
5. Main Idea: What do you think is the main idea of the story?