

## Skill: Identify/Analyze/Infer Cause-Effect Relations

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Nonfiction: The Election

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In the last Presidential election, students at one school made a great difference. They got people registered to vote. To be able to vote, you need to be 18 years old. You also need to be a registered voter, but it is easy to register. You bring something that shows you live in the community. You can bring a bill, such as your phone bill, or a driver's license to prove that you live there.

Many people do not register to vote. Why don't they register? Some people think that their vote is not important.

The seventh grade class at the school learned about what is called voter apathy. Apathy means not caring. They learned that in their own community there were many people who were not registered to vote. They wanted to change that. They said they would like to vote, but since they were not old enough, they wanted to get other people to vote.

They started a campaign. They would get more people registered to vote. They made a plan to increase voter registration. They decided to begin by getting people in their families registered. Then they would get parents of other students to register.

Their teacher called the Registrar's Office. That is the part of government that gets people registered. The teacher asked if they would send a registrar to the school on the school's open house day. A registrar is a person who registers voters. That way, people could register to vote while they were at the school. The answer was yes. A registrar came.

That day, 172 people registered to vote. The students were proud, but they had more to do. So they went and talked with students in other classes. They asked the students to tell their families how important it was to register to vote.

Then they held another registration day with the help of the Registrar's Office. This time, 102 more people registered to vote. They came to the school again to register. People were getting excited about the election. The students put signs up outside the school the week before the election. Their signs said, "Vote Here. You Choose The Future When You Vote." They took notes home to remind families and neighbors to vote.

After the election, the students were very proud. They could not vote, but they had made sure that more people were registered. They had reminded everyone in the community to vote. They were sure they had made a positive difference.

*Directions: Choose the best answer for each question*

1. Why did many people not get registered to vote?

- a. They had to walk too far.
- b. They were not old enough.
- c. They did not care.
- d. They did not like politics.

2. Why did the students want to get people to register?

- a. They wanted to vote themselves.
- b. They liked politics.
- c. It was an election year.
- d. Their teacher told them to.

3. What happened because the students got the other students to tell their parents to register?

- a. the other students learned
- b. more parents registered
- c. the school had a meeting
- d. they voted

4. What happened because there were more people registered?

- a. More people voted.
- b. The school closed on election day.
- c. Parent night was successful.
- d. Children learned more.

5. *Write your own answer to this question.*

What effect do you think this project had on the students?

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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	c	a	b	a

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

5. They learned about elections.

## Skill: Identify/Analyze/Infer Cause-Effect Relations

### 7<sup>th</sup> Grade Fiction: Making a Difference

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When I was in 7<sup>th</sup> grade last year, we had a special project. We were getting people to register to vote. I learned that it was so easy to register. I did not understand why more people did not register. It is a very important part of being an American. We learned in social studies that some countries do not allow people to vote. We learned that, in U.S. history, at times people have not been allowed to vote. Now everyone who is 18 can vote.

Our class decided to do something about this; we would make a change in our community. So we made a plan to get people registered. We started with our own families. The school set up a voter registration day. It was part of the school's open house, a day we knew many people would be there. We made sure our parents were there and got registered. We asked people why they had not registered before, and most people said they did not care much about it. They did not think their vote made a difference. We made up a slogan: "Vote, It's Your Future."

My brother was 18. He was going to high school. I asked him if he was registered, and he said, "Why should I register? I don't think it is important." I told him about our slogan and how, when people elected someone, that person would decide things that could help improve the city. For example, I told him that maybe we could get a community college in the community so he would not have to travel so far to college next year. I asked him to come to the Open House. He said he would do better than that. I did not know what he meant.

My brother surprised me. He called the registrar's office. He was calling to find out where he could register, but he learned more. He found out he could be a volunteer registrar. He would have to go to a training session. Then he would be able to help others get registered. So he went downtown, and he not only registered as a voter; he took the training to be a registrar.

My brother talked with his high school social studies teacher. He said he wanted to help other students get registered. If you are 18, you can register to vote, but many 18-year-olds don't register. It could be that they don't know they can register.

The teacher set up a voter registration table in the lunchroom. My brother sat there every day for a week. When students came in, if they were 18, they could go to register at his table. At the end of the week, 108 students had registered. My brother had done all that himself. We both had made a big difference.

*Directions: Choose the best answer for each question*

6. Why did people not register before?

- a. They did not know about it.
- b. They were busy.
- c. They did not think it was important.
- d. They thought it was difficult.

7. Why did the 7<sup>th</sup> grade class want to get people registered as voters?

- a. So their candidate would win.
- b. Because they cared about citizenship.
- c. So they would get a good grade.
- d. Because they wanted to feel important.

8. What happened because of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade student project?

- a. Their candidate won.
- b. Elementary students registered.
- c. Teachers registered.
- d. Students learned a lot.

9. What did the brother accomplish?

- a. He got a good social studies grade.
- b. He influenced other students.
- c. He won the election.
- d. He became more popular.

10. *Write your own answer to this question.*

There are two kinds of effects. One is what happens right away. Another is what lasts—a long-term effect. What do you think will be a lasting effect of the 7<sup>th</sup> grade project?

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**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	6	7	8	9
Answer	c	b	d	b

Question 10 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.

10. People will be better citizens.