

Illinois is called the prairie state. Long ago, most of the land was prairie. A prairie is a kind of grassland. The grass in a prairie is very high. It can get to be six feet tall.

Pioneers are people who do something for the first time. Although Native Americans lived in Illinois for a long time, the people who came to build houses here were called pioneers. They were the first people to come to set up towns. The Native Americans had moved from place to place.

The pioneers were called settlers. That is because they came to stay. Settle means stay. It was hard to get to Illinois. The pioneers had to bring most of what they needed to live with them. They traveled in wagons. Horses or oxen pulled the wagons. They traveled for many days.

The pioneers came from another place. They came to Illinois to find a good place to live. Many were farmers. They knew the land here was good. They brought tools to farm. They brought axes and other tools, too.

The first thing the pioneers did was clear their land. They cut down the prairie grass. Then they dug in the soil. They would plant corn. They would plant wheat. They grew vegetables, too. And they raised chickens and pigs.

It was hard work. The children worked, too. They planted. They helped in the home. They did not go to school at first. There was no school.

Pioneers were glad to be in Illinois. They had good land. They could get water from creeks and rivers. They could go fishing. They could hunt, too. They could grow crops.

As soon as more pioneers came, they would make town. They would choose leaders. They would name their town. They would set up a government. The government would set up laws. The town would build a school. But parents said that the school should be closed in summer.

Most of the Native Americans who had lived in Illinois left. The pioneers had come to stay. The Native Americans moved to the west.

Identify, analyze, and infer motive - 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 did pioneers come to Illinois?

- a. to take the Native Americans' land
- b. to set up homes and farms
- c. to work hard
- d. to raise chickens and pigs

2. Why did pioneers stay in Illinois?

- a. They were tired of traveling.
- b. They lived in towns.
- c. They had what they needed.
- d. They liked the prairie.

3. Why did pioneers set up governments?

- a. Their community had grown.
- b. They wanted to vote.
- c. There were too many people.
- d. They wanted to have a name.

4. Why were the schools closed in summer?

- a. Parents wanted to be with their children.
- b. The children wanted to play.
- c. The family needed children to help farm.
- d. The summer was hot.

5. *Write your own answer to this question. Why do you think the Native Americans left?*

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	b	c	a	c

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

They wanted to leave Illinois because the pioneers had taken the land. Because they thought more and more people would move here.