

The Potawatomi came to this area several hundred years ago and established a home here for many decades. In summer, the families all relocated to one large village; while in winter, they set up separate smaller camps. Imagine their homes as you read about their routines in the different seasons. The following paragraphs describe a typical year for a Potawatomi family in this area a couple hundred years ago.

Summer

We use long poles to build the structure of our new house in the communal village. The roof is a shelter over the cooking area as well so it is even bigger than the floor space. My mother and I plow the ground together with a shoulder bone from a deer. It is very difficult work; though, because of our work, we will have lots of food in the fall. It is always a fun time for everyone because we see our friends and the entire extended family and there are so many things to see and do in the summer, which makes it my sister's favorite season. My mother likes it too because being with our big family means there are people to help with the work. There is a lot of work to do, but everyone helps and there is company.

Autumn

We have lots of food. We grow big squashes and pumpkins and corn too. Every day, I am able to harvest even more beans. We dry the big gourds to save for the winter, when we will have less food. My father found salt from a salt spring and we are using it to dry the meat. I search for nuts and berries from the forest. Sometimes, I eat them when I find them, but I try to bring most of them home. Soon we will move to our winter site.

Winter

We saw deer and raccoons and, therefore, knew this would be a good place for hunting. We set up a wigwam. We stuck one end of tree branches in the ground and then tied them together in the middle. We cook inside and had to remember to leave a gap for the smoke from the fire to get out. We pasted bark on the outside of the wigwam to maintain the heat. Today, it is cold and it just snowed. My father says that he will be able to see the tracks of elk in the snow so he can more easily hunt them. He will soon go to hunt. My mother says that afterwards we will have lots of food, but also lots of work. If we don't have enough food in this place, we may move our camp to another place, with more animals. We will look for a place with more animal tracks.

Spring

We can find my favorite food now. We make a hole in a tree and then the sweet juice comes out of the tree. My father made a fishing net from deer sinew and will go out to fish soon. He tied shells to the bottom of the net and when they fill with water, it sinks to the bottom of the stream. This summer, my brother will get to fish, too. He has a line and hook, which he uses to fish in the lake. Since we get fish in the winter only when we go out and cut through the ice, fishing is mostly a spring and summer job. My father likes the spring best. He says it is a time of hope. He hears the birds sing and sees the plants start to grow again. I like spring too because soon we will see the flowers.

Compare and Contrast Historical Fiction

Questions developed by Center for Urban Education for use by Chicago Public Schools 2008-2009.

Choose the best answer for each question.

1. Which of these is most like the Potawatomi life in winter?

- a. A picnic
- b. A hard job
- c. A trip
- d. A mystery

3. Which of these titles is a good way to tell about their lives?

- a. Changing with the Seasons
- b. Making Friends
- c. The Happy Family
- d. The Winter Challenge

2. In which of these ways was their life different from how most people live in Chicago today?

- a. They had many jobs to do.
- b. They did not have enough money.
- c. They hunted and farmed.
- d. The family helped each other.

4. How is Chicago today like the Potawatomi village?

- a. People help each other.
- b. It is very crowded.
- c. People travel all the time.
- d. Children go to school.

5. *Write your own answer to this question. How is the Potawatomi summer like summer in Chicago today?*

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	a

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

Answers will vary but should be based on the passage and may include that the Potawatomi got all their own food while Chicagoans buy most of their food.