

1 When my teacher asked me to write a letter to the mayor asking for a change, I thought long and hard about what I wanted to say. I considered the changes I would like to see in our community. The first thing that came to mind was that I wanted a playground. We used to have a playground, but the community got too crowded, so they built homes where the playground used to be. I would also like to have a library. We had a library once, but it burned down. People said it required too much money to rebuild it. What would the best change be?

2 My teacher said I need to choose just one thing I want, and write about that one thing. So after I thought about everything, I decided on one particular change I wished to see. I chose trees, because I want more trees in our neighborhood. If we have more trees, the city will be much cooler in summer. Trees will also make the city much more beautiful, too. During wintertime, we can hang lights on the trees, which will make the city much brighter. This was a change everyone would enjoy.

3 I wrote my idea to the mayor, and I also told my family about it. My mother told the block club the idea, and they all liked it. The members of the block club called a city office and requested trees to plant on our block. Although it took several weeks to get an answer, eventually the answer came. Our neighborhood received ten trees!

4 One Saturday, the people in the block club planted our new trees. To plant them, we needed large holes, and it was difficult work. City workers used big machines to dig them. Then, we had to water the trees. People took very great care of the trees.

5 The trees started out quite small, but over time they started to grow. Birds even came to nest in them, and now in the morning I can hear birds singing. I knew the trees would be pretty, but I didn't realize there would be more birds. What a difference I had made. The trees really changed our community.

6 I'm glad I wrote the letter, and I'm especially glad I told my mother my idea. I hope the mayor puts trees all over the city. We already have got them on my block, and they make the block a better place. One thing I learned is that a change starts with you.

Summarize Fiction

Questions developed by Center for Urban Education for use by Chicago Public Schools 2010.

Choose the best answer for each question.

1. What do you include in a summary of a story?

- a. what you liked about it
- b. all the things that happen
- c. all the characters
- d. the important events

3. What is a good summary of paragraph 5?

- a. The trees grew.
- b. Birds nested in the trees.
- c. It is hard work to plant trees.
- d. The trees improved the neighborhood.

2. What is the best summary of the first paragraph?

- a. The library burned.
- b. They wanted a new library.
- c. They wanted a library and a playground.
- d. They were writing to ask the mayor to make a change.

4. What is a good summary of the last paragraph?

- a. One person can make a difference.
- b. Having trees is a good idea.
- c. The mayor helped the neighbors.
- d. The block club helped a lot.

5. *Write your own answer to this question. Write a short summary of the passage.*

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	d	d	d	a

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

Answers should include that the student's idea led to a big change because the mother and neighbors got involved and that the neighborhood now has more trees.