

2009 was a very important year in Chicago. Barack Obama became President. This newly elected leader brought a bold plan to the Presidency. He proposed major changes. He is Chicago's great leader for this century. Barack Obama started his career in Chicago as a community organizer. Community organizers work with people to make progress as a group. Barack Obama has brought a new vision to government, emphasizing the importance of each person working together to bring about change. He is asking communities to work together to change the nation. Now some people are calling him the "national organizer".

2009 was important to Chicago for another reason, too. It was the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of a change that led to great Chicago progress. That was the Burnham Plan, which is named for an architect, Daniel Burnham. Usually architects plan buildings, and he did that, but he planned cities. It is because of his work as a city planner that we remember him—he made a great difference to everyone who lives in Chicago. Daniel Burnham worked with other leaders. They planned to improve Chicago's transportation, parks, health, water, and housing. Burnham's plan would help solve Chicago problems, problems that were very serious.

Burnham saw big problems. When he saw crowded streets, he didn't just think of making the road wider. He thought "out of the box"—he thought of ways to solve the problems that would change the city. For example, he said Chicago should have two levels of its main streets downtown so that trucks could travel on the lower level. He thought of solutions that changed the systems of the city. He was a visionary, he was a really clever person who thinks about things differently, who sees what is and looks ahead what could be. He looked at the city and saw problems and possibilities.

Burnham made drawings to show his ideas to people. He needed to get their support. He talked with other leaders about the problems and plans. He made speeches. He was persuasive. He was persistent. That really dedicated man never gave up on his plans. A friend of his named Charles Wacker helped. He put together a wonderful book called the Wacker Manual. It told about the Burnham plan. Every 8<sup>th</sup> grade student read that book. It was their social studies textbook.

Plans don't make progress. People do. Leaders and citizens make the changes. In 1909, city leaders adopted Burnham's big plan. Then they had to get money to pay for the changes he wanted. It took years, and some of the plans didn't work out, but many of Burnham's ideas are part of Chicago today. Of course, that is disappointing that some of his ideas did not take place. They would have really helped the city.

One person did not make that progress. Leaders worked to support it. Citizens voted to fund it. It takes a lot of work to make big changes. It takes leadership, and it takes collaboration. It takes determination to make a difference, and that's hard to do in a big city. But if Burnham did it, we can, too, so let's work together to make Chicago even greater.

## Contrast and Evaluate Fact and Opinion – Nonfiction

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 words tells you this statement is an opinion? “This newly elected leader brought a bold plan to the Presidency.”

- a. newly
- b. leader
- c. bold
- d. Presidency

2. Which of these words tells you this is an opinion?

- a. visionary
- b. clever
- c. differently
- d. ahead

3. Which of these is a statement of fact?

- a. That really dedicated man never gave up.
- b. He put together a wonderful book.
- c. Of course, that is disappointing.
- d. One person did not make that progress.

4. Which of these phrases is an opinion?

- a. great leader for this century
- b. worked to support
- c. plan buildings
- d. community organizer

5. *Write your own answer to this question. Choose a statement from the passage that is an opinion. Write it here.*

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*How do you know it is an opinion?*

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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	b	d	a

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.  
Students should identify a statement of opinion and explain that it is not a fact.