

I am someone you don't know but who ensures your safety. I have a position at the Department of Streets and Sanitation. We take care of the streets and the sewers, too. I go to work at midnight, and that's a hard time to work, when most people are asleep. I work 8 hours. It took me a while to get accustomed to working at night. Now I'm used to it, although I would prefer a daytime work schedule.

Most people work during the day--that's a normal schedule for working. Their workplace closes at night, and that's what people call a 9 to 5 job, it's called business hours. They don't have to be there to take care of things during the night. Sewer workers have to be available 24 hours a day. You can't close our office, it's a system everyone counts on all the time, so someone has to be on duty. If a sewer breaks in the middle of the night, we have to fix it immediately. If we don't fix it right away, the problem will get worse.

One night I was on duty, and there was a problem in a community. I got a call from a homeowner who was very concerned. She was calling to report that the sewer was broken and it was a severe problem. I asked her how she knew it was severe, and she said there was dirty water coming back up into their street. I replied that it sounded like a serious problem and we would respond right away.

I didn't go to fix the problem because that's not my job. My job is to identify a problem and then figure out how to solve it. She informed me of the problem, and I dispatched workers to fix it. I looked at the map on the computer, and it showed that she was correct, there was a leak. We have sensors under the street that tell us when there is a leak and its exact location. Technology has made my job easier.

I sent a team to fix the problem. Some of them were on duty. Others were off duty. I called them at home and asked them to meet the team at her street. They had to close the street for several hours while they repaired it. First they dug a hole to get to the sewer and located the leak, which they plugged temporarily so that the water stopped flowing onto the street. Then they had to replace a part of the pipeline. That took a lot of effort, but they got it done.

Most nights it is not that difficult to do my job. Often it is very calm, no problems occur. When we do have a problem, we have to get it solved right away. So that's why I'm on night duty.

My wife is a police officer, and she works nights, too. She and I both know it's important to have people on duty 24 hours every day. We make sure that when you wake up in the morning, the city is safe and healthy.

Infer Predictions – Fiction

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

Choose the best answer for each question

1. What could happen if the sewer department had business hours?

- a. A problem at night would be worse.
- b. The workers would make less money.
- c. The city would have more taxes.
- d. Drivers would have to be careful.

3. What is a skill that the sewer repair team needs?

- a. How to use a drill.
- b. How to talk with homeowners.
- c. How to work together.
- d. How to clean water.

2. What is a skill that the sewer manager needs?

- a. How to measure.
- b. How to communicate.
- c. How to drive.
- d. How to repair pipes.

4. What would happen if the manager did not have a computer?

- a. He would have to guess where the problem is.
- b. He would ask his team to look for water.
- c. He would call the homeowner.
- d. He would use a paper map.

5. *Write your own answer to this question. How do you make a prediction?*

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	a	b	c	d

Question 5 is open-ended. Here is a suggested response.
You look at the information. You think what could happen.