

Name: _____

Lesson 33

Period: _____

The Bright Side of Urban Sprawl

Directions. Read the *Handy Dandy Guide* and the mystery. Read the clues. Be careful.

While all the clues are correct, only some are *useful* in solving the mystery. Decide which clues are most relevant to solving the mystery. Use the clues and one or more of the ideas from the *Handy Dandy Guide* to figure out a solution to the mystery. Write your solution.

Handy Dandy Guide

1. People *choose*.
2. People's choices involve *costs*.
3. People respond to *incentives* in predictable ways.
4. People create *economic systems* that influence individual choices and incentives.
5. People gain when they *trade* voluntarily.
6. People's choices have consequences that lie in the *future*.

The Mystery

Americans continue to be mobile people, relocating themselves to outlying areas beyond the established suburbs. Yet it is fashionable in some circles to hate urban sprawl. The very term—"urban sprawl"—sounds bad. To many Americans it conjures up images of endless strip malls and congested roadways, crowding out a dwindling supply of open spaces. Some politicians have argued for an end to unregulated urban sprawl, proposing instead that growth should conform to plans for "smart growth."

If urban sprawl is such a bad thing, why do so many Americans choose to be a part of it?

The Clues

1. Some urban sprawl involves people "leap frogging" over open areas to developments outside the established suburbs. People are attracted to "leap frog" developments because they increase the supply of affordable housing.
2. Over 95 percent of the land in the United States is not developed.
3. Many people enjoy living in less congested areas. Three quarters of retired farmland is retained as open space, in the form of forests, parks, pastures, and rural wildlife preserves.
4. Many urban sprawlers face longer commutes to jobs on over-crowded roads.
5. Urban sprawl often proceeds faster than local services—such as water, sewers, schools, and roads—can be developed.
6. Some strip mall or "big box" commercial developments are considered ugly by government planners and residents.
7. Most people live and work in the same community—rural, urban, or suburban.
8. Low density housing developments (big homes built on large lots) use land but do little environmental damage. In fact, the open space and environmental quality are part of the attraction for newcomers.

Record your solution and explain it briefly here:
