Student Instructions: Causation

When we are asked to identify the historical causation of an event, we are, essentially, being asked to identify the events that led up to the historical event under investigation as well as the results of the historical event under investigation. There can be both long-term and short-term causes and effects. Long-term events are those events that are further away from the historical event under investigation, and short-term events are those events that are more immediate to the historical event under investigation.

The purpose of these Causation graphic organizers is to investigate the causes and effects of different events in American history. On the surface it may appear easy to identify different causes and effects, however, upon closer examination, it might be surprising to see certain events having stronger causal connections than others. It is also important to practice identifying long-term versus short-term causes and effects and evaluating the most and least important causes and effects of historical events.

The first graphic organizer in this category has been completed in order to serve as a model. Notice that there is a variety of ways in which the causes and effects can be investigated. For instance, in this sample worksheet, the student chose Ideology, Politics, and Economics as the three categories of investigation, but there could have been an infinite number of categories chosen. There is no right or wrong answer here, but there are some answers that might be easier to work with than others.
Causation: War of 1812

**CAUSE**

- **Ideology**
  - War Hawks
  - Continued belief that the U.S. was not independent from England

- **Politics**
  - American Indian presence on the western front

- **Economics**
  - Impressment of American sailors
  - Embargo Act
  - Disruption of trade/commerce

**EFFECT**

- **Ideology**
  - Defeated the British a second time
  - Strong sense of nationalism

- **Politics**
  - Death of the Federalists
  - Removal of British presence in North America
  - Rise of Andrew Jackson

- **Economics**
  - Rise of the Market Revolution
  - Increase of American industry and commerce
  - Economic independence

---

**Most Important and Why?**

*Cause: Economics—lack of trade prohibited the country from growing like it needed to*

*Effect: Ideology—growth of nationalism led to many other developments and led to the Era of Good Feelings*

---

**Least Important and Why?**

*Cause: Politics—American Indians were not a real threat*

*Effect: Politics—Federalists were strong, but other opposition parties took their place*
Student Instructions: Comparison

When we are asked to compare things, we are being asked to identify similarities and differences among the things under consideration. Similarities are the characteristics that they have in common, that is, the characteristics that are shared between the two things. Differences are the characteristics that are unique to any particular thing; in some cases, these characteristics can be contradictory to other characteristics.

The purpose of these Comparison graphic organizers is to analyze how similar and different certain historical topics are within their historical contexts. On the surface, it may appear that different topics have no similarities or differences; but upon further inspection, we often see that, indeed, many historical topics are more complex than we realized. But recognizing the similarities and differences is only the beginning of these graphic organizers' purpose. They ask us to dig deeper into our observations and to move from observation to evaluation. We should evaluate why there are similarities and differences between the two historical topics under observation.

The first graphic organizer in this category has been completed in order to serve as a model. In this sample, the two topics under investigation are the Federalists and the Democratic-Republicans. The sample demonstrates the different ways in which the two political parties might be compared. It is not important that you identify every detail of the topics' similarities and differences; instead, it is recommended that you come up with a few of the major ones, identify those on the Venn diagram, and be as specific and clear as possible.
Comparison: Federalists and Democratic-Republicans (1792–1824)

Political Federalists
- Washington, Hamilton, Adams primary of the federal government
- Political support to England
- Supported the Neutrality Proclamation

Political Democratic-Republicans
- Jefferson, Madison, Monroe primary of the state government
- Political support to France
- Opposed the Neutrality Proclamation

Economic Federalists
- Industry and manufacturing
- Hamilton Financial program
- Supported a National Bank

Economic Democratic-Republicans
- Agriculture and farming
- Supported the Louisiana Purchase
- Opposed a National Bank

Reasons for Similarities:
Both groups took part in the Revolution at various levels and believed strongly in the American cause.
Both groups believed in the weakness of the A.C. and that it needed revising.

Reasons for Differences:
Both groups had different groups of political support.
Different visions of Federalism
The balance between state and federal government
Student Instructions: Defining the Period

When we are asked to define a historical period, we are asked to determine specific start and stop dates of events for the period under investigation. Many historical periods do not have clearly defined beginnings and endings; therefore, the task of defining the period is an important one and leads to much debate within historical scholarship.

The purpose of these Defining the Period graphic organizers is to investigate when important periods in American history begin and end. Each worksheet has a broad historical period about which you are asked to determine when that period begins and ends. In other words, is there some specific historical event or date that you believe defines the beginning and ending of the period? In addition to determining the beginning and end dates, you will also be asked to provide specific details that help define and contradict the historical period.

The first graphic organizer in this category has been completed in order to serve as a model. This sample worksheet focuses on the beginning and ending of Colonial America. There is probably less disagreement about when this historical period began; however, there might be some debate about when this historical period ended. After you have chosen your start and stop dates, you will first create a list of specific details that define this time period and then create a separate list of specific details that contradict them. So for example in Colonial America, defining characteristics might include things like the colonists’ dependency on England. However, there are contradictory characteristics, such as the emergence of a unique American identity.
# Defining the Period: Colonial Era

**Start Date / Event:** 1607

**Why?**

*Founding of Jamestown, first permanent English settlement in North America*

---

**End Date / Event:** 1763

**Why?**

*End of the French and Indian War*

---

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEFINING CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>CONTRADICTORY CHARACTERISTICS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Colonists identify themselves as English.</td>
<td>• End of war changes the relationship.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Colonists have the same rights and privileges as English.</td>
<td>• End of war neglect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• They see themselves as being distinct from Europe though.</td>
<td>• Beginning of taxes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Politically and financially the colonists are dependent on England.</td>
<td>• Prior to the war there is an emergence of a unique American identity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Instructions: Contextualization and Synthesis

When we are asked to consider contextualization and synthesis, we are being asked to first consider the historical setting of a particular event (i.e., the who, what, when, where, and why) and then to apply to that setting or context all the other historical thinking skills by drawing upon different subject areas as well as relevant (and even contradictory) evidence from primary and secondary sources.

The purpose of the Contextualization and Synthesis graphic organizers is to explore the different ways in which historians work with context. The first is what we call Local Context: the specific details that you can identify, which are closely connected to the event under investigation. The second is what we call Broad Context: the big picture. It is recommended that we think of the broad context in terms of connecting the topic under investigation to a major theme. The third is what we call Other Context: the connection of the topic under investigation to another period—“similar in kind, but at a different time.” It also asks us to reflect on the circumstances surrounding the topic under investigation, then to think about another period (or geographic area) that has similar characteristics by looking forward or backward.

The first graphic organizer in this category has been completed in order to serve as a model. The specific event in this sample is the Declaration of Independence. The local context of this event could be that it was written primarily by Thomas Jefferson, it was signed in 1776, or it was approved by the Second Continental Congress. The broad context of “politics and power” was selected, so the specific details that follow help to explain how the event fits within this broad context or big picture. For the other context, a few specific details are provided to connect the two events, such as the Declaration of Independence to the French Revolution.
Contextualization and Synthesis: Declaration of Independence

Circle one of the following themes:
- American-National Identity
- Work-Exchange-Technology
- America in the World
- Migration-Settlement
- Politics-Power
- Geography-Environment
- Culture-Society

Explain the BROADER historical context (connect it to the theme chosen above):
- Natural Rights, Locke
- Social Contract Theory, Right to Self Government, Right to Revolution
- End of French and Indian War leads to conflicts with British officials about taxation, Representation in Parliament denied

Other Historical Context:
- Backward Looking

Local Historical Context: (details)
- Jefferson, Adams, Franklin
- 1776
- Second Continental Congress
- Philadelphia
- "No taxation without representation"
- Political representation

Other Historical Context:
- Forward Looking
- South Carolina Declaration of Secession—Southern Independence
- Local Historical Context: (details)
- South Carolina
- 1860
- Southern Secession Conventions
Student Instructions: Turning Points

When we are asked to determine a turning point, we are being asked to determine how a single event brought about significant change in history. This is different from determining an event that brought about change over time, which normally requires us to consider multiple events and gives us a defined time period (e.g., How did the growing sectionalism lead to changes within American society from 1820 to 1860?). Determining a turning point focuses on a single event (e.g., How did the Kansas-Nebraska Act lead to the American Civil War?)

The purpose of these Turning Points graphic organizers is to explain the historical context of each of the three events and then determine which one of the events constitutes a turning point in American history. These graphic organizers prompt us to discuss what history was like before and after this particular event, helping us to confirm whether this event is, in fact, a turning point.

The first graphic organizer in this category has been completed in order to serve as a model. The three events under investigation are the Compromise of 1820, the Compromise of 1850, and the Election of 1860. The general topic of this particular set of events is the American Civil War. The sample first asks us to determine specific details of each of these three events, establish the historical context of each of them, detailing the who, what, when, where, and why of each event. Then, it asks us to select one of the events as the most important. In order to be able to articulate an argument for why you selected the event, it also will be important for you to articulate why you did not choose the other two. In other words, what is it about the event you selected that separates it from the other two? Why are the other two not your preferred choices, or less persuasive than the one you selected? Last, the sample asks us to provide some specific details as to what history was like both before and after the event.
Turning Points: Compromise of 1820 | Compromise of 1850 | Election of Lincoln

Give specific historical details (e.g., who, what, when, where, why) about these three events.

Compromise of 1820:
Also known as the Missouri Compromise
Admitted Missouri as slave state and Maine as a free state
Established the 36°30' as the boundary

Compromise of 1850:
Result of the Mexican War
Admitted California as a free state; Utah and New Mexico decided by popular sovereignty
Tighter fugitive slave law

Election of Lincoln:
Abraham Lincoln elected as first Republican president.

Select one of the three events you believe to be a turning point in American history, then describe what it was like before and after that event.
America before the Election of Lincoln: Compromise was possible.
Both North and South were willing to give up some ground.
Political parties had been around for awhile—similar visions.

America after the Election of Lincoln: New vs. old guard
Compromise was no longer possible.
South Carolina votes to secede before election is official.
Civil War divides the nation.
Student Instructions: Continuity and Change over Time

When we are asked to identify continuity and change over time, we are being asked to identify a series of events over a distinct time period in history. Normally these events are centered on a specific theme with defined start and end dates within a period of American history.

The purpose of these Continuity and Change over Time graphic organizers is to investigate a series of events, place them in chronological order, then determine whether there was either more continuity or change during that historical period. When we are asked about continuity and change over time, there is almost always a significant change within the period under investigation. As with all of the graphic organizers in this book, there are no right or wrong answers. They will hopefully provide you with opportunities to articulate arguments for class discussions.

The first graphic organizer in this category has been completed in order to serve as a model. Notice that there are a variety of ways in which continuity and change over time can be investigated. For instance, in this sample, there is a timeline with clearly defined start and stop dates. Sometimes these dates will be specific, such as 1783 to 1856. 1783 was the end to the American Revolution with the signing of the peace treaty, and 1856 was the Kansas-Nebraska Act. Other timelines might have arbitrary start and stop dates; they may contain, for example, 1800 to 1850, which may represent specific events or may just represent a 50 year period. Try to provide 10 specific events for that time period. Once you have established a solid set of specific events, then identify three of the most important events for helping determine change or continuity. Identify these events, and then from that set, pick one as the critical event that led to a significant change within the historical period under investigation. From there you will need to identify what life was like before and after the event.
Continuity and Change over Time: Rise of Sectionalism in America from 1820–1861

List three key dates / events from the timeline. Circle the most important one.

1820—Missouri Compromise  1850—Compromise of  1854—Kansas-Nebraska Act

Characteristics of the Country before: 1854

- Both sides were willing to compromise
- Territorial claims
- Idea that popular sovereignty would determine slave issue
- Civil war was not inevitable

Characteristics of the Country after: 1854

- No longer willing to compromise
- Kansas-Nebraska Act nullified the Missouri Compromise
- Increasing violence was now deferring the issue over slavery
- Civil war is inevitable
Student Instructions: Argumentation

When we are asked to construct a historical argument, we are being asked to accumulate evidence and then to determine how it will be applied within the argument. The goal of historical argumentation is to convince an audience of the validity of our arguments.

The purpose of these Argumentation graphic organizers is to practice the necessary steps in constructing a valid argument. First, we must accumulate evidence that will support our arguments. Second, we must decide what evidence is compelling enough to side one way or the other on the topic at hand. Third, we must pick a side, and then begin the process of pre-writing. If we do not want to pick a side, we have the option of modifying the prompt—that is, agreeing and disagreeing simultaneously. Fourth, we need to establish our thesis statement. The thesis statement is a critical part of the argument. It’s a road map for our audience: Where are you going and what routes are you going to take to get there?

The first graphic organizer in this category has been completed in order to serve as a model. Notice that, like all graphic organizers in this category, it has a specific prompt at the top of its page. It then asks us to determine specific data or details that would support or refute that prompt. Support means that we agree with the prompt and that we can support that prompt with specific details in a compelling way that would convince others that it is the correct assertion. Refute means that we disagree with the prompt and that we can refute that prompt with specific details in a compelling way that would convince others that is an incorrect assertion. Modify means that the prompt allows us to “sit on the fence,” as it were. We can agree with the prompt in some ways, but then disagree with it in other ways—simultaneously agreeing and disagreeing. In the sample, we are asked to agree or disagree with the idea of Jefferson as being a strict interpreter of the Constitution. The first thing we should do is figure out how we want to organize the essay. This means coming up with two categories around which we want to organize our evidence. These categories can be based on social, political, or economic concepts or themes. (In the sample, they are “Pre-President” and “Post-President.) There is no right or wrong way to do this, but some categories will fit better than others. Next, we will need to construct a thesis statement. Once we have completed both of these activities, we have essentially written our essays.

Support, modify, or refute this statement with specific historical evidence.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUPPORT (PRE-PRESIDENT)</th>
<th>REFUTE (POST-PRESIDENT)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Political</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Promotes a strict interpretation</td>
<td>• Supports the purchase of the Louisiana Purchase</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opposes the bank; a political grandstanding (not defined)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opposes Washington’s Neutrality Proclamation (Congress has this authority, according to the Constitution)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Economic</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opposes the creation of a national bank on economic grounds</td>
<td>• Keeps all of Hamilton’s economic plans in effect, except whiskey tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Opposes Hamilton’s financial plan</td>
<td>• Implements the economic embargo</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thesis Statement:

Jefferson, as Secretary of State under Washington, opposes many plans under the assumption that they are opposed to the U.S. Constitution, clearly identifying himself as a strict interpreter of the Constitution and thus a major opponent to Hamilton. However, as president, he changes direction and supports a number of economic plans of expansion and strong regulation of the economy. He also maintains the direction of the country under Washington. Therefore, he does maintain his philosophy as secretary of state, but somewhat reverses positions as president.
Student Instructions: Chronological Reasoning

When we are asked to use chronological reasoning, we place a variety of events in historical order. Although it might not seem important to know historical dates, the reality is that dates help us to conceptualize important trends. Understanding when and why things occurred is critical to understanding history. It would be impossible to practice many, if not all, of the historical thinking skills without the proper chronology of content.

The purpose of the Chronological Reasoning graphic organizers is not only to practice placing a number of historical events in the correct order but also to understand how and why things occurred based on that order. For example, you may be asked to apply this historical skill to the Early National or Antebellum periods. This practice will help reinforce your knowledge of the given historical period and will encourage you to think about how these events relate to each other.

At the top of each of these graphic organizers, you will be provided with 15 events. The specific events are jumbled up in no particular order. Notice on the sample provided that the date of each event is written next to it. It is strongly recommended that you write in the dates when completing these graphic organizers, because doing so will help you place them in chronological order. You then will select 10 events to put in chronological order on the left side. The lines next to these events are where you will demonstrate your ability to connect the different events, describing them and determining their causes and effects.
**Chronological Reasoning: Rise of Nationalism**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jay's Treaty</td>
<td>1794</td>
<td>Somerset Case</td>
<td>1772</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Articles of Confederation</td>
<td>ratified 1781</td>
<td>Louisiana Purchase</td>
<td>1803</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>War of 1812</td>
<td>1812</td>
<td>Inauguration of Adams</td>
<td>1797</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Ordinance</td>
<td>1787</td>
<td>Hartford Convention</td>
<td>1814</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>XYZ Affair</td>
<td>1798</td>
<td>Bill of Rights ratified</td>
<td>1791</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutrality Proclamation</td>
<td>1793</td>
<td>Embargo Act</td>
<td>1807</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shays's Rebellion</td>
<td>1786</td>
<td>Inauguration of Washington</td>
<td>1789</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prohibition of slave trade</td>
<td>1808</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1st EVENT: **Articles of Confederation**

The first constitution of America had weaknesses, and the main criticism of the government was that it could not deal with internal rebellions like Shays's Rebellion. The Articles of Confederation did have some positives though—passage of both the Land Ordinance and the Northwest Ordinance dealt with the northwest territory. Eventually the Articles of Confederation gave way to a stronger federal government, and the country saw the ratification of the U.S. Constitution and the inauguration of the first president—George Washington. The debate over the ratification centered around the adoption of the Bill of Rights.

2nd EVENT: **Shays's Rebellion**

Two major issues in Washington's administration concerned issues with the French and the British. The treaty with France, over opposition by the Jeffersonian Republicans, was nullified by the Neutrality Proclamation. Hamilton stressed the importance of continued trade with Britain, and the country entered into a treaty with the countries' leading partner, Jay's Treaty. Washington set the two-term limit, and his vice-president, John Adams, became the second president. Because of the treaty with Britain, the French wanted their own treaty so Adams sent delegates, who were rebuffed, which resulted in the XYZ Affair. The continued impressments of American sailors by the British led to the War of 1812.
Student Instructions: Interpretation

When we are asked to make historical interpretations, we are being asked to interpret excerpts from secondary sources. The difference between primary and secondary sources is the nature of when the excerpts were written. Primary sources are written by the historical figures under investigation (e.g., the Declaration of Independence is a primary source because it was written in 1776 by Thomas Jefferson). Secondary sources are written by historians about the historical figures under investigation (e.g., Carl Becker wrote The Declaration of Independence: A Study in the History of Political Ideas in 1942). Sometimes secondary sources can become primary sources, if the nature of the writing becomes so important that it lasts well into the future. Historical interpretation can involve either primary or secondary sources, but for the purposes of these activities, we will strictly stick to secondary sources.

The purpose of these Interpretation graphic organizers is to practice reading a variety of small secondary excerpts from important historical scholarship, which is a challenging task. Historians are often products of their environments, thus the language can serve as a deterrent to the reader. If the language employs terms that are no longer part of the vernacular, then the meaning can be lost. Another reason this can be a challenging task is because historians often agree on something, but disagree with regard to the importance of the event under investigation. For example, two historians may agree that the New Deal was bad for the country, but they may disagree as to why it was bad. One may argue that it was bad because it economically created a permanent group of citizens that rely on the government. Another may argue that it was bad because it fundamentally changed the political role of the government. Since this is one of the primary purposes of historiography—that is, the interpretation of historical events—it is important that we effectively engage secondary sources and interpret their different arguments.

The first graphic organizer in this category has been completed in order to serve as a model. Like every graphic organizer in this category, it has two secondary-source excerpts. Each excerpt pertains to a particular historical event, such as the “Causes of the American Revolution.” They ask us to complete three tasks. First, determine the differences between the two authors. This should not be a restatement of the two excerpts. Instead, we must articulate each author’s argument in our own words. Second, provide specific evidence, which is not specifically mentioned in the excerpt, supporting the first author. This will demonstrate a solid understanding of the excerpt. Third, provide specific evidence, which is not specifically mentioned in the excerpt, supporting the second author. This will demonstrate a solid understanding of the other excerpt.
**Interpretation: Causes of the American Revolution**

**A:** Not human stupidity, not dreams of new splendor for the empire, not a growing dissimilarity of psychological attitudes, but economic breakdown in the Mercantile System: the inability of both English mercantile capitalism and colonial mercantile and planter capitalism to operate within a contracting sphere in which clashes of interest were becoming sharper and sharper: this was the basic reason for the onset of crisis and the outbreak of revolutionary struggle. The mother country had bound the colonies to itself in an economic vassalage: opportunities for colonial enterprise were possible only in commercial agriculture and in trade. But when the expanding commercial activities of northern merchant capitalists came into conflict with the great capitalist interest of [the] British...then repression, coercion, even the violence of economic extinction had to follow. —Louis M. Hacker, *The Triumph of American Capitalism*, 1940

**B:** The Declaration of Independence was taken seriously by many Americans, or at least they found its basic philosophy useful in battling for change in the new states...by 1776 there were people in America demanding the establishment of democratic state governments, by which they meant legislatures controlled by a majority of voters, and with none of the checks upon their actions such as had existed in the colonies...The history of the writing of the first state constitutions is to a large extent the history of the conflict between these two ideals of government...The significant thing is...the alteration of the balance of power within the structure, and in the political situation resulting from the break away from the supervising power of a central government—that of Great Britain. —Merrill Jensen, “Democracy and the American Revolution,” 1957

Explain the differences between Interpretation A and Interpretation B:

**Hacker** says that the developing economic situation, particularly the new economic opportunities that arose as a result of America’s situation caused frustration on part of the British, leading to the revolution. **Jensen** says that it was more about politics and the growing desire for political participation within the colonies that began the road toward revolution.

---

Specific Historical Evidence to Support A (not mentioned in passage):

*Passage of the Sugar Act was designed to limit and restrict trade of the American colonies. British merchants were angered over the economic opportunities of the Americas, they sought to limit trade, therefore limiting economic opportunities and freedom, to only with the British.*

---

Specific Historical Evidence to Support B (not mentioned in passage):

*The emergence of the Regulator Movement in North Carolina and South Carolina demonstrated the frustration of the Americans at getting land and representation in government. In South Carolina, it was about access to local government, but in North Carolina it was about access to land.*

---

IN1