

CONTEXTUALIZATION—OPIUM WARS

Preparation

- Download “Opium Wars and Economic Imperialism”

Purpose

In this activity, you will continue to work on your contextualization skills by analyzing the conditions that led to the Opium Wars. By doing this, you will be better able to respond to the Unit Problem about how modern empires contested the authority of other empires and regions of the world. In prior contextualization activities, you have examined contextualization on a fairly large, often global scale. In this activity, you will zoom in a bit to examine the local contexts and conditions that allowed for the Opium Wars.

Practices

Causation, CCOT

You will be analyzing the causes and consequences of the Opium Wars in China to better understand the historical context and processes that led to these wars and how the wars’ consequences shaped both China and Western powers long after they ended. With this analysis, you will see the resulting changes and continuities as well.

Process

In this activity, you will use the event cards to complete the Contextualization Tool, which is included in the Contextualization—Opium Wars worksheet. Then, you’ll use the information from your completed tools and evidence from the article “Opium Wars and Economic Imperialism” to write a multi-paragraph response that answers the following question:

*What were the broader **temporal (time)**, **spatial (location)**, and **cultural** contexts that made it possible for the Opium Wars to occur?*

Now, your teacher will either hand out or have you download the Contextualization—Opium Wars worksheet and have you work in pairs to complete the Contextualization Tool. Remember to follow all the worksheet’s directions. Start by writing the dates and location for the Opium Wars and then divide the event cards into broad and narrow context.

Once everyone has divided their cards, join up with another pair to form a group of four and follow these directions:

1. The first pair places two event cards on the funnel.
2. Students must give a short reason for their placement of each card.
3. The next pair can move any of the event cards they think were placed incorrectly by the prior pair, but if they do that, they have to provide justification for why they moved from broad to narrow context or vice versa.
4. Then, this pair places two event cards that have not yet been placed on the funnel.
5. Pairs will follow the same process, alternating turns until all event cards have been placed on the funnel.



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Next, return to your original pair-partner to answer the remaining questions on the tool.

Finally, use your descriptions of broad and narrow context on the tool and information from the “Opium Wars and Economic Imperialism” article to individually write a multi-paragraph response to the question posed at the beginning of this activity:

*What were the broader **temporal (time)**, **spatial (location)**, and **cultural** contexts that made it possible for the Opium Wars to occur?*

At this point in the course, you should be familiar with writing contextualization paragraphs. Remember that your paragraphs should include a thesis statement that answers the question posed above. Your teacher will collect your worksheets and paragraphs at the end of the activity to assess your understanding of the topic as well as your understanding of this historical thinking practice.

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Name: Date:

Contextualization Tool

Directions: Respond to each of the prompts below.

1. Write the date(s) and location(s) of the historical event being studied.

2. Take the event cards and divide them up into broad and narrow context.
3. Place them on the funnel in their appropriate location. Be prepared to explain your placement.
4. Write three to four sentences that describes the broad context.

5. Write three to four sentences that describes the narrow content.

- **Broad:** Does the context represent broader themes, trends, events, eras, or regions related to the historical development at hand? Does it represent a long-term (underlying) cause or contributing factor?
- **Narrow:** Does the context represent themes, trends, events, eras, or regions that are more closely tied in time/place to the historical development at hand? Does it help us see the short-term (immediate) causes or contributing factors?

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Name:

Date:

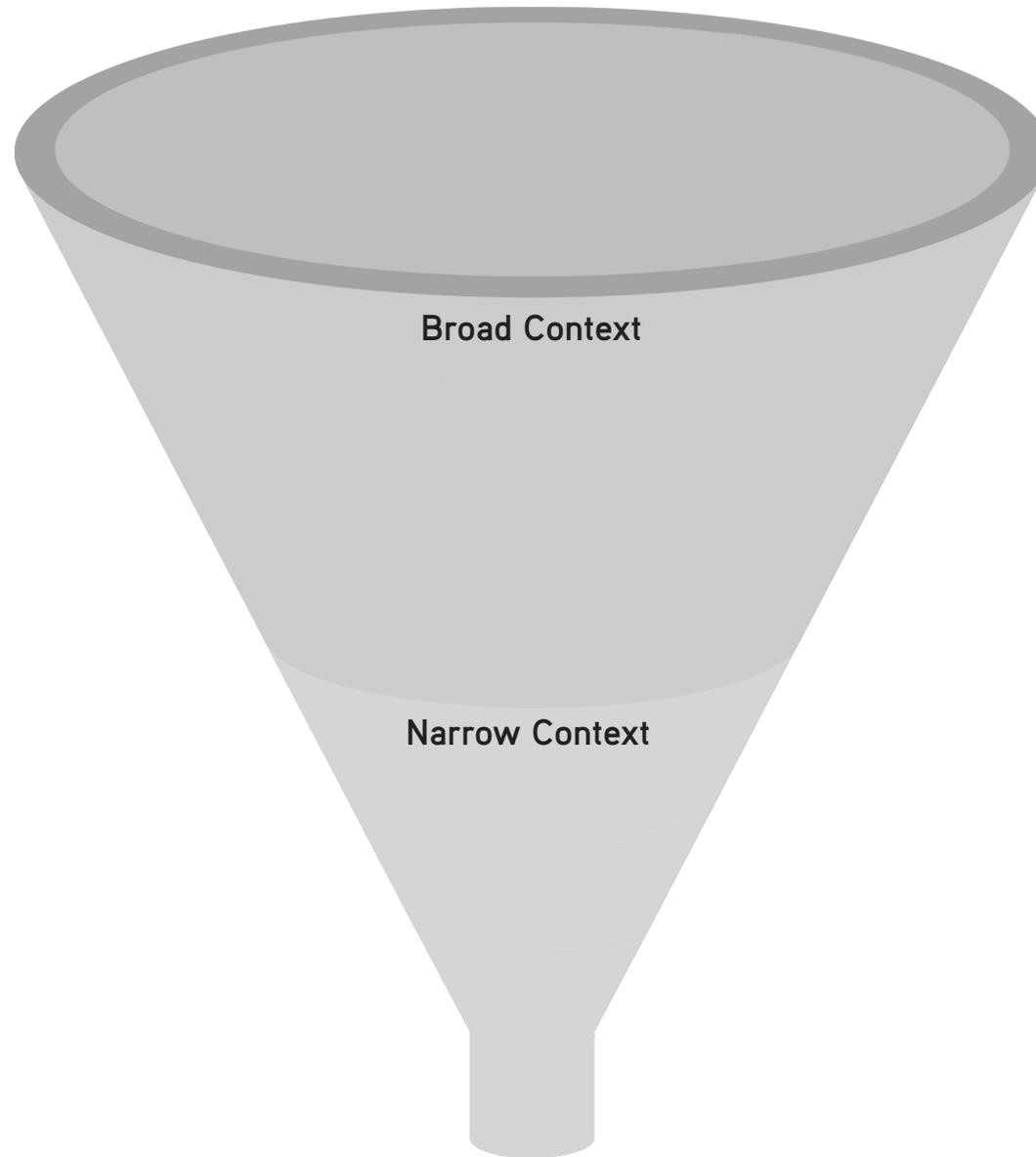
6. Write one to two sentences analyzing how the broad and narrow context help you better understand the historical event.

7. Use information from the Contextualization Tool and the article “Opium Wars and Economic Imperialism” to write a multi-paragraph response that answers the following prompt: *What were the broader **temporal**, **spatial**, and **cultural** contexts that made it possible for the Opium Wars to occur?*

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Name:

Date:



Historical Event/Development _____