

# CAUSATION—INDIAN UPRISING

## Preparation

- Download “1857 Indian Uprising”

## Purpose

Understanding the causes and consequences of a historical event can be complicated. Often, the history of an event can be told from multiple perspectives. In this activity, you’ll analyze the causes of the 1857 Indian Uprising to investigate how and why this rebellion took place when and where it did. By doing so, you’ll see how historical events and processes can be interpreted in different ways, not only by those involved in the actual events, but by the historians who analyze the events long after they’ve taken place. Historians not only bring their own perspectives to the analysis, they apply historical thinking practices differently as well.

## Process

In this activity, you’ll read an article about the 1857 Indian Uprising against the British East India Company. Indian soldiers (called *sepoys*) rose up in protest against the regulations imposed by the British company, regulations that violated their religious beliefs. Using the information in the article, you’ll then complete the Causation Tool, which is included in the Causation—Indian Uprising worksheet. Next, you’ll use the information from the tool to construct a causal map with both the causes and consequences of this event. You’ll also answer follow-up questions that ask you to evaluate this event from multiple perspectives. Finally, you’ll write a one- to two-paragraph response for a causation prompt.

Causation can be messy! There are almost always multiple causes of any historical event. To further complicate matters, any cause can be seen in a different light depending on your perspective of the event. Imagine that you and your classmates lead an uprising against the school administration to push back the time that you start school each morning. You decide to take over the school and chain yourselves to the front doors at 6 a.m. in protest. In the process of doing so, school property is damaged. The police are called, and you’re all arrested for trespassing and vandalism. The school administrators and you and your fellow classmates each tell your version of events to the police. Do you think the accounts of what happened would be the same, or would they all reflect different perspectives of the event in question? It’s likely there would be many versions of the event, its causes, and its consequences. Historical analysis of the uprising that occurred in India in 1857 is no different. As a class, have a brief discussion about whether you think it might be difficult to assess the causes of an event when there are often multiple perspectives as to why that event took place.

Then, your teacher will either hand out or have you download the Causation—Indian Uprising worksheet and the “1857 Indian Uprising” article. As you read the article, take notes or highlight the causes and consequences of this event. After everyone has finished reading, share the causes and consequences you found with another student. Then, use your causes to complete the Causation Tool.

After everyone has completed the tool, you’ll create a causal map using your causes. Make sure to leave room for the consequences of this event. The event in the middle of the causal map should be labeled as *1857 Indian Uprising*. If you need a refresher on how to create a causal map, you can review one of your previous causation activities, in particular Causation—The Black Death from Unit 2. Share your causal map with the class and discuss the similarities and differences you see as these are presented.



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Name:

Date:

Then, your teacher will ask you to answer the following questions. Be prepared to share your answers with the class.

1. What were the reasons for the uprising from an Indian perspective?
2. What were the reasons for the uprising from a British perspective?
3. How did nineteenth-century views about imperialism and “civilization” play a role in these different perspectives?

Finally, working on your own, write a one- to two-paragraph response to this prompt: *What was the most significant cause **AND** what was the most significant consequence of the 1857 Indian Uprising?* Remember to use the acronym ADE to help determine historical significance.

Your teacher will collect your worksheets and paragraphs and use them to assess how your causation skills are progressing.

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## Causation Tool

**Directions:** First, add the event you are analyzing (in the middle of the page). Be sure to include dates, location, and a brief description of the event. Then, list your causes (at the top of the page) and use the legend to help you label *type* and *role*. Finally, list the effects of the event (bottom of page), and again use the legend to help you label *type* and *role*. If your teacher asks you to create a causal map, use your answers here to help construct that causal representation.

## Causes: Long-Term

## Intermediate-Term

## Short-Term

## Event (include the name, dates, location, and a brief description)

## Effects

## Legend

## Type:

(P) Political (I) Innovation (\$) Economic (C) Cultural (E) Environmental (S) Social

## Role:

(\*) Triggering Event Necessary Relevant

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## Causal Map

