

CAUSATION—REVOLUTIONS

Preparation

- Download “The Enlightenment”
- Download “Economic and Material Causes of Revolt”

Purpose

In this activity, you will continue to grapple with cause and consequence and how causal reasoning can be used to help you understand change over time. Causal reasoning can help you develop evidence-based explanations or arguments in response to a causal question that considers human actions, events, and larger structures or processes. You will think about both the causes and consequences of revolutions, which will push you from thinking about causation as linear, toward an understanding of the complex relationship between cause and consequence. In addition, by working through the causes and consequences of a historical revolution, you will begin to understand how many of these same causes and consequences still influence revolutions today.

Practices

Claim testing

Causation requires a great deal of sound reasoning, which is another way of saying claim testing. In order to identify and categorize causes and consequences, you’ll have to use logic, evidence, and (usually) authority to decide if these were long term or short term and if the causes or effects were historically significant.

Process

In this activity, you’ll first identify the factors that may have caused the political revolutions that took place in this era. If you need to refresh your memory on these revolutions, review the articles “The Enlightenment” and “Economic and Material Causes of Revolt.” Then, you’ll think about the consequences that resulted from these revolutions and construct a causal map that helps you put all of this into perspective. Historians use causal maps to help them organize historical events or processes. Creating a causal map allows you to see the connections between events over time. In addition, these maps will help you understand that causation is rarely linear.

First, your teacher will either hand out or have you download the Causation—Revolutions worksheet, which includes the Causation Tool. Working together with your class, follow these directions:

1. In the Event box, write the name of the event you’re studying, along with the dates, location, and a brief description.
2. Using what you’ve learned thus far in the course about political revolutions, think of all the possible causes that led to these revolutions.
3. As you think about the causes listed, decide which should be categorized as long term, intermediate term, or short term. Make sure you’re able to justify your categorizations.
4. Write each cause in the appropriate box of the worksheet (long term, intermediate term, and short term).



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We'll get to the other parts of the tool later in the course. For now, categorizing by time will be a sufficient way to understand these causes.

Now, your teacher will divide the class into small groups. With your group members, look at the causal map for revolutions. Think about the following questions as you review the map:

- Are all of the causes that were written on the board included in this causal map?
- Would you have organized this causal map differently? If so, how?

Now, work with your group to try to think of all the possible consequences (effects) of revolutions and add them to your tool. Then, add those effects to your causal map. Fill in the causes circles on the map and add at least three more circles for effects. Next, label your causal maps. For each circle that's a cause, write the letter "C" next to it. For consequences/effects, write the letter "E" next to those circles.

Once you're done, be ready to discuss what you labeled as causes or consequences and which of those are the most historically significant. You can determine historical significance in several ways. Use the acronym ADE to help you determine if historical events or processes, in this case the causes and consequences of revolutions, were significant.

- **Amount**—How many people's lives were affected by the cause/effect?
- **Depth**—Were people living in the time period being studied deeply affected by the cause/effect?
- **Endurance**—Were the changes people experienced as a result of this cause/effect long-lasting and/or recurring?

Your teacher will collect your worksheet and use it to assess how your causation skills are progressing.

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Name: Date:

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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Name: Date:

Sample Causal Map: Causes of Revolutions

This sample causal map covers many of the causes of political revolutions but not necessarily all of them. In addition, the causes could be linked in different ways.

