# Time Takes Control

Trace how two central ideas develop and connect in an informational text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.11-12.2** "Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text."

NAME _____ DATE _____

## 1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

**YOUR JOB** Underline evidence that develops one central idea and circle evidence that develops a second central idea. Number your underlined and circled marks in the order they appear, then draw an arrow between two marks that show the ideas connecting.

### When the Clocks Changed

(1) Before standardized time, communities set clocks by the sun. When the sun reached its highest point, local noon began. This method worked for nearby errands, but it created trouble as railroads connected distant cities. By the 1880s, American railroads used dozens of local times, so a timetable could list different clock readings for the same moment. Passengers missed connections, and dispatchers had difficulty keeping trains apart. Railroad managers wanted a shared system, not because the sun had changed, but because the scale of travel had changed.

(2) On November 18, 1883, railroads adopted four time zones across the continental United States. At a scheduled moment, railroad workers reset station clocks, an event newspapers called the "Day of Two Noons." The plan made schedules easier to read and allowed dispatchers in different places to use the same reference point. Yet the change did not instantly govern every clock. Some towns kept local time for civic business, and some people objected that railroad companies had imposed a rule on public life. Standard time therefore showed both a practical solution and a struggle over who could organize daily routines.

(3) Federal law eventually turned a railroad practice into national policy. The Standard Time Act of 1918 established the time zones used in the United States and gave the Interstate Commerce Commission responsibility for them. This action did more than confirm a convenient schedule. It showed that a system created to move trains could shape work hours, commerce, and government records far beyond the tracks. The history also reveals a lasting tension: shared standards can make cooperation possible, while decisions about those standards give institutions power over ordinary life. Efficiency and authority developed together, rather than as separate consequences.

## 2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. State two central ideas of the passage.

2. How does paragraph 1 introduce the need for standardized time? Use two details from the paragraph.

3. How do paragraphs 2 and 3 develop the idea that standardized time involved institutional power, not only convenience?

4. In 45 to 60 words, write an objective summary of the passage.

## 3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Make a three-step central-idea map. Name two central ideas, give one paraphrased detail from each paragraph that develops either idea, and finish with one sentence explaining how the ideas interact.

ANSWER KEY

# Time Takes Control

HIGH SCHOOL · RI.11-12.2

## PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline evidence that develops one central idea and circle evidence that develops a second central idea. Number your underlined and circled marks in the order they appear, then draw an arrow between two marks that show the ideas connecting. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

## PART 2 · ANSWERS

| # | QUESTION | ANSWER |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | State two central ideas of the passage. | **One central idea is that standardized time made railroad travel and communication easier to coordinate. A second central idea is that systems designed for efficiency can also give institutions power over public routines.** |
| 2 | How does paragraph 1 introduce the need for standardized time? Use two details from the paragraph. | **It explains that railroads used dozens of local times and that one timetable could show different clock readings for the same moment. These differences caused missed connections and made it harder for dispatchers to keep trains apart.** |
| 3 | How do paragraphs 2 and 3 develop the idea that standardized time involved institutional power, not only convenience? | **Paragraph 2 shows that some people objected to railroads imposing a rule on public life. Paragraph 3 shows that federal law made the system national policy and placed the time zones under the Interstate Commerce Commission.** |
| 4 | In 45 to 60 words, write an objective summary of the passage. | **Before standard time, local clocks made railroad scheduling difficult. In 1883, railroads adopted four U.S. time zones, improving coordination but prompting resistance to railroad influence. The Standard Time Act of 1918 made the zones national policy, illustrating how an efficiency measure also expanded institutional authority over daily life.** |

## PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Central idea A: Shared time standards made large-scale travel and coordination easier. Paragraph 1: Different local clock readings caused missed connections. Paragraph 2: Station workers reset clocks so dispatchers could use one reference point. Central idea B: A coordination system can also give institutions influence over public routines. Paragraph 3: Federal law made railroad time zones part of national policy. The ideas interact because the need for efficient coordination helped justify a system that extended institutional authority.

Accept equivalent central ideas supported across the passage, including ideas about coordination, efficiency, public routines, and institutional authority. Objective summaries should be neutral, include the shift from local time to railroad and federal standard time, and explain both major ideas without minor details or personal opinions.