Crisis to Change

Trace how an event, an idea, and people shaped London's sewer system.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.7.3 "Analyze the interactions between individuals, events, and ideas in a text (e.g., how ideas influence individuals or events, or how individuals influence ideas or events)."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline events or ideas that cause a change, and circle the people or groups involved. Draw an arrow from each cause to its effect so you can trace the chain of influence.

London Builds Below Ground

1 In the summer of 1858, London's hot weather made the River Thames smell so terrible that newspapers called it the Great Stink. Waste from crowded neighborhoods flowed into the river, which also supplied much of the city's drinking water. Members of Parliament worked beside the Thames and could barely stand the odor. The event forced lawmakers to pay attention to an idea that engineer Joseph Bazalgette had been discussing: London needed a connected sewer system that would carry waste away from homes and the river.

2 Bazalgette's plan used large pipes to collect sewage and smaller pipes to connect streets and homes to the larger network. The system would move waste eastward, away from central London, before releasing it into the Thames farther downstream. Parliament approved the project soon after the Great Stink, and construction began in 1859. Bazalgette's ideas shaped the project, but the lawmakers' decision gave him the money and authority to build it. Thousands of workers then turned the plan into miles of underground tunnels beneath London.

3 The new sewers did not immediately solve every health problem, but they changed how London handled waste. During later cholera outbreaks, scientists and public officials had stronger evidence that contaminated water spread the disease. This growing understanding supported cleaner water systems and public health rules. Bazalgette continued improving parts of the network as London grew. His work shows a chain of influence: a crisis pushed leaders to act, an engineer's idea guided their response, and workers made that idea change the city's daily life.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did the Great Stink influence Parliament's actions and the idea it considered?

2. How did Parliament's decision affect Joseph Bazalgette's ability to carry out his plan?

3. How did the workers influence what happened to Bazalgette's idea?

4. How did the growing understanding about contaminated water influence public health actions?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write exactly three sentences that explain how one event, one person or group, and one idea interacted in the passage. Use at least two details from the passage and explain how each influence led to the next one.

Crisis to Change

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline events or ideas that cause a change, and circle the people or groups involved. Draw an arrow from each cause to its effect so you can trace the chain of influence. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did the Great Stink influence Parliament's actions and the idea it considered?	**The unbearable smell pushed Parliament to pay attention to Bazalgette's idea for a connected sewer system.**
2	How did Parliament's decision affect Joseph Bazalgette's ability to carry out his plan?	**Parliament approved the project and gave Bazalgette the money and authority to build the sewer system.**
3	How did the workers influence what happened to Bazalgette's idea?	**Thousands of workers built underground tunnels, turning his plan into a real sewer network.**
4	How did the growing understanding about contaminated water influence public health actions?	**It supported cleaner water systems and public health rules.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The Great Stink pushed Parliament to consider Bazalgette's sewer idea because the river's smell disrupted their work. Parliament then gave Bazalgette money and authority, allowing his idea to become a construction project. Workers built the tunnels, so the idea changed how London moved waste.

Accept responses that accurately trace a connected chain among an event, an individual or group, and an idea. Students should use at least two passage details and explain influence, not merely list facts.