Why War Spread

Trace causes and consequences across the Thirty Years' War

9-12.WC.38 "Analyze the causes and consequences of the Thirty Years' War."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two causes of the war or its expansion. Circle a consequence linked to each cause, and give each cause and its consequence the same number.

From Prague to Peace

1 In 1618, Protestant nobles in Bohemia threw two Catholic officials from a castle window in Prague. The officials survived, but the incident signaled a revolt against Ferdinand II, their Catholic Habsburg ruler. The rebels feared that his policies would restrict Protestant worship and weaken their political rights. Ferdinand fought to restore his authority. What began as a struggle within the Holy Roman Empire soon drew in rulers who saw a chance to defend their faith or gain power.

2 After Ferdinand's forces crushed the Bohemian revolt, the conflict did not end. Protestant rulers feared growing Habsburg power. Denmark and later Sweden entered the war, seeking to protect their interests in northern Germany as well as Protestant allies. Catholic France later supported forces fighting the Catholic Habsburgs because French leaders feared being surrounded by Habsburg lands. As more states joined, armies crossed German territories repeatedly. Soldiers seized food and supplies, destroying farms and spreading hunger and disease.

3 The Peace of Westphalia ended the war in 1648. It confirmed that rulers in the Holy Roman Empire could choose among Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism for their territories, while granting some protections to religious minorities. It also recognized the independence of the Dutch Republic and Switzerland. Years of fighting had devastated many German regions, though losses varied widely. The settlements weakened the Habsburg emperor's ability to control the empire and showed that European wars could be driven by both religion and struggles for power.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Ferdinand II's policies contribute to the revolt in Bohemia?

2. Why did Protestant rulers and Catholic France both join the struggle against Habsburg power?

3. How did the actions of armies cause suffering in German territories?

4. How did the peace settlement change religious authority within the Holy Roman Empire?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Suppose Ferdinand II had protected Protestant worship and nobles' rights in Bohemia. In one paragraph, explain how that might have changed the war's outbreak and why fighting might still have spread. Use two other details from the passage.

Why War Spread

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two causes of the war or its expansion. Circle a consequence linked to each cause, and give each cause and its consequence the same number. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Ferdinand II's policies contribute to the revolt in Bohemia?	**Protestant nobles feared his policies would restrict their worship and weaken their political rights, so they revolted.**
2	Why did Protestant rulers and Catholic France both join the struggle against Habsburg power?	**Protestant rulers feared growing Habsburg power and wanted to protect their interests and allies. France feared being surrounded by Habsburg lands.**
3	How did the actions of armies cause suffering in German territories?	**Armies repeatedly crossed the territories, seizing supplies and destroying farms. Hunger and disease spread.**
4	How did the peace settlement change religious authority within the Holy Roman Empire?	**It confirmed that rulers could choose among Catholicism, Lutheranism, and Calvinism for their territories, limiting the emperor's control.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

If Ferdinand II had protected Protestant worship and nobles' rights, Bohemian nobles might not have revolted in 1618. That could have delayed the fighting that followed. Yet a wider war might still have begun later. Protestant rulers feared Habsburg power, and Catholic France feared being surrounded by Habsburg lands. Those competing interests could have drawn states into conflict even without the revolt in Prague.

Accept other plausible counterfactuals that explain both a changed outbreak and a possible path to wider conflict. The response should use at least two accurate details from the passage.