Summer That Wasn't

Trace how one eruption led to different outcomes.

IS.1.36 "Analyze multiple, unexpected and complex causes and effects of events in the past."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline causes, circle effects, and write matching numbers beside connected causes and effects to trace at least two chains from the eruption.

The Year Without a Summer

1 In April 1815, Mount Tambora erupted on an Indonesian island. The blast killed thousands nearby and sent sulfur gases high into the atmosphere. Tiny particles formed from those gases reflected some sunlight, cooling parts of the planet. In 1816, cold spells and unusual rain reached places far from the volcano. New England farmers watched June frost damage young crops, while heavy rain hurt harvests in parts of Europe. The eruption did not make every day cold or every field fail. Its distant effects depended on local weather and what people had planted, a complicated chain that few people then understood.

2 In Europe, poor harvests meant less grain for sale, so food prices rose. Many families were already struggling after years of war had disrupted work and trade. A sudden price rise therefore hit some households harder than others. In parts of New England, farmers who lost crops faced a different choice. Some families moved west, hoping to find land and a more reliable harvest. But the volcano did not send them west by itself: damaged crops, limited savings, and the chance of land elsewhere all shaped their decisions. A climate shock became an economic crisis and, for some, a reason to move.

3 One effect reached a writing table rather than a field. During the rainy summer of 1816, Mary Shelley and friends spent time indoors near Lake Geneva in Switzerland. They challenged one another to write ghost stories, and Shelley began the work that became *Frankenstein*. The weather helped create time indoors, but the challenge, the group's conversations, and Shelley's imagination also mattered. Her novel was not caused by a volcano alone. The same distant eruption contributed to ruined harvests, higher food prices, migration, and an unexpected literary beginning. Tracing those different outcomes means asking what other conditions turned a weather change into a particular human choice.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Trace the chain from Tambora's eruption to a poor harvest far from the volcano. Why did the harvest effects vary by place?

2. Why did rising grain prices hit some European families especially hard? Explain how two conditions combined.

3. Why would it be incomplete to say that the eruption alone caused some New England families to move west?

4. How did rainy weather contribute to the beginning of *Frankenstein*, and what other conditions mattered?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine a European town in 1816 had stored a large supply of grain before the bad harvest. In five or six sentences, explain how this change might alter two effects described in the passage and why it would not prevent another effect elsewhere. Use at least two causes from the passage, and present your prediction as a possibility, not a certainty.

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PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline causes, circle effects, and write matching numbers beside connected causes and effects to trace at least two chains from the eruption. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Trace the chain from Tambora's eruption to a poor harvest far from the volcano. Why did the harvest effects vary by place?	**Sulfur gases from the eruption formed particles that reflected sunlight and cooled parts of the planet. Local conditions, such as June frost in New England and heavy rain in parts of Europe, affected crops differently.**
2	Why did rising grain prices hit some European families especially hard? Explain how two conditions combined.	**Poor harvests reduced the grain for sale and raised prices. Years of war had already disrupted work and trade, leaving many families less able to afford food.**
3	Why would it be incomplete to say that the eruption alone caused some New England families to move west?	**Damaged crops mattered, but limited savings and the chance to find land elsewhere also shaped families' decisions.**
4	How did rainy weather contribute to the beginning of *Frankenstein*, and what other conditions mattered?	**Rain helped keep Shelley and her friends indoors. Their ghost-story challenge, conversations, and Shelley's imagination also contributed to the novel's beginning.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

If a European town had stored extra grain, its supply might have softened the rise in local food prices. Families whose work had been disrupted by war could have found meals easier to afford. The store might run out if the bad harvest lasted too long, so hardship would still be possible. Across the ocean, June frost could still damage New England crops. Some farmers might still move west because lost crops and the chance to find land would shape their choices. A town's grain store could change one chain of effects without ending the eruption's other consequences.

Accept other plausible chains grounded in the passage. For Your Turn, look for two altered effects, one unaffected effect elsewhere, at least two passage-based causes, and language that treats the counterfactual as uncertain.