Bridge Cause Clues

Why did the town close its bridge on Tuesday?

6.P.2.2.C "Distinguish multiple causation, including immediate versus long-term cause-effect relationships; construct timelines of related events."

NAME _____ DATE _____

IMMEDIATE CAUSE

An immediate cause happens just before an event and directly sets it off.

A candle tipped over and set a curtain on fire.

LONG-TERM CAUSE

A long-term cause builds up over months or years and helps make an event possible.

After many months without cleaning, lint filled a dryer vent and made a dryer fire more likely.

1 SORT

8 items

For each clue, circle the kind of cause it shows; then pick two numbered clues and explain how you knew where each belonged.

1.	For years, road salt slowly weakened the bridge's steel.	IMMEDIATE	LONGTERM
2.	On Tuesday, rushing water knocked a bridge support loose.	IMMEDIATE	LONGTERM
3.	On Tuesday, an inspector saw a new crack and ordered the bridge closed.	IMMEDIATE	LONGTERM
4.	For several years, needed bridge repairs were delayed.	IMMEDIATE	LONGTERM
5.	Over many seasons, the river wore away soil around the bridge piers.	IMMEDIATE	LONGTERM
6.	On Tuesday, a fallen tree struck a bridge support.	IMMEDIATE	LONGTERM
7.	For decades, heavy trucks wore down the bridge deck.	IMMEDIATE	LONGTERM
8.	On Tuesday, a bridge beam shifted, making the road dip suddenly.	IMMEDIATE	LONGTERM

2 PROVE IT

Explain your thinking

Pick two items from Part 1. For each one, tell how you knew where it belonged.

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

ITEM # _____ **HOW I KNEW** _____

3 MAKE YOUR OWN

One of each

Write one new immediate cause and one new long-term cause that could help explain why the town closed its bridge.

IMMEDIATE _____

LONGTERM _____

CHALLENGE

Write two sentences that put your new causes in time order and explain how both could lead to the bridge closing.

ANSWER KEY

Bridge Cause Clues

GRADE 6 · 6.P.2.2.C

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	For years, road salt slowly weakened the bridge's steel.	**LONGTERM**	Salt weakened the steel gradually over years.
2	On Tuesday, rushing water knocked a bridge support loose.	**IMMEDIATE**	The support came loose just before the closure.
3	On Tuesday, an inspector saw a new crack and ordered the bridge closed.	**IMMEDIATE**	The inspector's order directly caused the closure.
4	For several years, needed bridge repairs were delayed.	**LONGTERM**	Delayed repairs left problems in place for years.
5	Over many seasons, the river wore away soil around the bridge piers.	**LONGTERM**	The soil wore away gradually over many seasons.
6	On Tuesday, a fallen tree struck a bridge support.	**IMMEDIATE**	The strike happened just before the closure and could make the bridge unsafe.
7	For decades, heavy trucks wore down the bridge deck.	**LONGTERM**	Truck traffic wore down the deck over decades.
8	On Tuesday, a bridge beam shifted, making the road dip suddenly.	**IMMEDIATE**	The beam shifted just before the closure and made the road unsafe.

PART 2 · PROVE IT

Accept any explanation that names the deciding feature from the rule box for the chosen item.

PART 3 · MAKE YOUR OWN (SAMPLE ANSWERS)

- **IMMEDIATE**: On Tuesday, a large branch struck a weakened support, and officials closed the bridge.
- **LONGTERM**: Long-term: For years, ice widened gaps in the bridge's supports.

Challenge: For years, ice widened gaps in the bridge's supports, leaving them weak. On Tuesday, a large branch struck a weak support, so officials closed the bridge.

The sort order is long-term, immediate, immediate, long-term, long-term, immediate, long-term, immediate. For the explanations, look for a direct trigger on Tuesday or a condition that developed over a longer period.