What Sparked Change?

Sort causes by when they took shape.

6.P.2.2 "Develop skills which demonstrate an understanding of historical events and the people who shaped our history. Gather and draw conclusions from sources of evidence, identifying plausible author, occasion, audience, purpose..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

LONG-TERM CAUSE

A long-term cause develops over months or years. It helps create the conditions for an event.

Months of dry weather left a forest ready to burn.

IMMEDIATE CAUSE

An immediate cause happens shortly before an event. It helps set the event in motion.

A lightning bolt struck a tree just before a wildfire began.

1 SORT

8 items

Read each note about the start of the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott, then circle BUILDUP or TRIGGER.

1.	1. For decades, Montgomery required Black bus riders to sit behind white riders.	BUILDUP TRIGGER
2.	2. On December 1, police arrested Rosa Parks after she refused to give up her bus seat.	BUILDUP TRIGGER
3.	3. Overnight on December 1, the Women's Political Council printed flyers calling for a boycott.	BUILDUP TRIGGER
4.	4. For years, the Women's Political Council had organized women in Montgomery.	BUILDUP TRIGGER
5.	5. In 1954, the Women's Political Council warned the mayor that bus riders might boycott.	BUILDUP TRIGGER
6.	6. On December 2, Black community leaders planned a one-day boycott for December 5.	BUILDUP TRIGGER
7.	7. On December 2, organizers handed out flyers asking riders to stay off buses on Monday.	BUILDUP TRIGGER
8.	8. On December 4, Black ministers urged their congregations to join the boycott the next day.	BUILDUP TRIGGER

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

Part 2 PROVE IT: Pick two numbered notes, one from each category, and write one sentence explaining how you knew where each belonged. Part 3 MAKE YOUR OWN: Write one new cause of the boycott for each category.

BUILDUP _____

TRIGGER _____

CHALLENGE

In two sentences, explain how one long-term cause and one immediate cause worked together to help start the boycott.

ANSWER KEY

What Sparked Change?

GRADE 6 · 6.P.2.2

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	1. For decades, Montgomery required Black bus riders to sit behind white riders.	**BUILDUP**	The seating rule had existed for decades before the boycott.
2	2. On December 1, police arrested Rosa Parks after she refused to give up her bus seat.	**TRIGGER**	Her arrest happened four days before the boycott began.
3	3. Overnight on December 1, the Women's Political Council printed flyers calling for a boycott.	**TRIGGER**	The flyers were printed just before the boycott.
4	4. For years, the Women's Political Council had organized women in Montgomery.	**BUILDUP**	The council had built its network over years.
5	5. In 1954, the Women's Political Council warned the mayor that bus riders might boycott.	**BUILDUP**	The warning came more than a year before the boycott.
6	6. On December 2, Black community leaders planned a one-day boycott for December 5.	**TRIGGER**	The leaders made this plan three days before the boycott.
7	7. On December 2, organizers handed out flyers asking riders to stay off buses on Monday.	**TRIGGER**	Organizers spread the request just days before the boycott.
8	8. On December 4, Black ministers urged their congregations to join the boycott the next day.	**TRIGGER**	The ministers spoke one day before the boycott.

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)

- **BUILDUP**: For years, Black bus riders faced rude treatment from some drivers.
- **TRIGGER**: After Rosa Parks's arrest, E. D. Nixon called community leaders to discuss a boycott.

Challenge: Montgomery's bus segregation gave Black riders a long-standing reason to demand change. Rosa Parks's arrest gave organizers a reason to call for a boycott right away.

For Part 2, a student might explain that item 1 is a BUILDUP because the rule lasted for decades, while item 2 is a TRIGGER because the arrest happened just before the boycott. Accept other accurate examples that distinguish a lasting condition from a recent action.