What Set It Off?

Sort causes by when and how they shaped an event.

6.P.2 "Use interdisciplinary tools to acquire, apply, and evaluate content understanding of the four strands of social studies. Demonstrate an understanding of the principles of government, the benefits of democratic systems..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

IMMEDIATE CAUSE	LONG-TERM CAUSE
A trigger happens shortly before an event and directly helps set it in motion.	A buildup develops over a long time and makes an event more likely.
Lightning struck a dry field and started a fire that afternoon.	Years of drought left prairie grass dry enough to burn.

1 SORT

8 items

Harbor Town started a ferry route on June 1, 2025; circle TRIGGER or BUILDUP for each cause, then pick two items and explain how you knew.

1.	The town's population grew for ten years.	TRIGGER	BUILDUP
2.	More workers traveled across the river each year for six years.	TRIGGER	BUILDUP
3.	The town council approved ferry funding two weeks before the route opened.	TRIGGER	BUILDUP
4.	Traffic on the only bridge worsened for five years.	TRIGGER	BUILDUP
5.	A ferry company signed an agreement to run the route on May 29.	TRIGGER	BUILDUP
6.	The ferry boat passed its final safety inspection on May 31.	TRIGGER	BUILDUP
7.	Residents spent three years asking for another river crossing.	TRIGGER	BUILDUP
8.	New riverside shops drew more visitors over four years.	TRIGGER	BUILDUP

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 cause of the ferry route for each category: one TRIGGER and one BUILDUP.

TRIGGER _____

BUILDUP _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one BUILDUP item and one TRIGGER item, then explain how they worked together to help start the ferry route.

ANSWER KEY # What Set It Off?

GRADE 6 · 6.P.2

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	The town's population grew for ten years.	**BUILDUP**	Population growth developed over years and increased the need for travel.
2	More workers traveled across the river each year for six years.	**BUILDUP**	Cross-river travel increased over several years.
3	The town council approved ferry funding two weeks before the route opened.	**TRIGGER**	The recent funding decision directly allowed the route to move forward.
4	Traffic on the only bridge worsened for five years.	**BUILDUP**	Years of worsening traffic increased the need for another crossing.
5	A ferry company signed an agreement to run the route on May 29.	**TRIGGER**	The agreement was a final step just before service began.
6	The ferry boat passed its final safety inspection on May 31.	**TRIGGER**	The inspection cleared the boat for service just before opening.
7	Residents spent three years asking for another river crossing.	**BUILDUP**	Residents' requests built support over several years.
8	New riverside shops drew more visitors over four years.	**BUILDUP**	Visitor demand grew over several years.

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)

- **TRIGGER**: The ferry crew finished its required training on May 30.
- **BUILDUP**: Nearby neighborhoods added hundreds of homes over eight years.

Challenge: Item 4 shows that years of bridge traffic increased the need for another crossing. Item 3 shows that the funding vote helped the town act on that need.

Items 1, 2, 4, 7, and 8 are BUILDUP; items 3, 5, and 6 are TRIGGER. For Part 2, accept explanations that connect each chosen cause to its timing and role.