What Closed the Bridge?

Sort causes by when they took effect.

7.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 shortly before an outcome and helps trigger it.

A landlord locked a theater's doors that morning, so it closed that day.

LONG-TERM CAUSE

A long-term cause builds up over years. It helps explain why an outcome became more likely.

Five years of falling ticket sales left a theater short of money before it closed.

1 SORT

8 items

In 1924, a town closed its bridge on May 6; circle SOON or YEARS for each cause, then choose one item from each category and explain your choices for Part 2.

1.	For decades, rust slowly weakened the bridge's iron supports.	SOON YEARS
2.	For five years, the town delayed needed bridge repairs.	SOON YEARS
3.	On May 5, a flood cracked a bridge beam.	SOON YEARS
4.	Over ten years, heavier trucks wore down the bridge deck.	SOON YEARS
5.	On May 6, workers found that a support had snapped in the flood.	SOON YEARS
6.	On May 6, an engineer warned the mayor that the bridge could fall.	SOON YEARS
7.	For many years, floods washed soil away from under the bridge.	SOON YEARS
8.	For many years, rainwater slowly rotted the bridge's wooden planks.	SOON YEARS

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 SOON cause and one new YEARS cause that could have helped close the bridge on May 6.

SOON _____

YEARS _____

CHALLENGE

Choose three causes from Part 1, put them in order from earliest to latest, and explain how they connect to the bridge closing.

ANSWER KEY

What Closed the Bridge?

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	For decades, rust slowly weakened the bridge's iron supports.	**YEARS**	The damage developed over decades.
2	For five years, the town delayed needed bridge repairs.	**YEARS**	The lack of repairs continued for years.
3	On May 5, a flood cracked a bridge beam.	**SOON**	The flood damage happened just before the closing.
4	Over ten years, heavier trucks wore down the bridge deck.	**YEARS**	The wear built up over ten years.
5	On May 6, workers found that a support had snapped in the flood.	**SOON**	Workers discovered dangerous damage on the day of the closing.
6	On May 6, an engineer warned the mayor that the bridge could fall.	**SOON**	The warning came on the day of the closing and prompted action.
7	For many years, floods washed soil away from under the bridge.	**YEARS**	The loss of soil built up over many years.
8	For many years, rainwater slowly rotted the bridge's wooden planks.	**YEARS**	The planks weakened over many 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)

- **SOON**: On May 6, a fallen tree blocked the bridge.
- **YEARS**: For ten years, loose bolts slowly weakened the bridge's joints.

Challenge: For five years, the town delayed needed repairs. On May 5, a flood cracked a beam. On May 6, an engineer warned the mayor that the bridge could fall, prompting the town to close it.

The bridge story is fictional. Accept plausible new causes that match the stated time scale, and check that the challenge response puts its chosen causes in time order.