What Sparked Change?

Sort the causes behind the 1912 Lawrence textile strike.

7.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 _____

IMMEDIATE CAUSE

A trigger is a recent event that sets another event in motion. It may be one of several causes.

A lightning bolt struck dry brush, starting a wildfire.

LONG-TERM CAUSE

An ongoing cause is a condition that builds pressure over time, often well before an event occurs.

Several seasons of drought left the brush easy to burn.

1 SORT

8 items

For Part 1, circle TRIGGER or ONGOING for each cause of the 1912 Lawrence textile strike, then for Part 2, pick one item from each category and explain the time clue that helped you decide.

1.	For years, many mill workers earned low wages.	TRIGGER ONGOING
2.	A new law limiting women and children's mill work to 54 hours a week took effect in January 1912.	TRIGGER ONGOING
3.	Mill owners lowered workers' weekly pay after work hours were cut.	TRIGGER ONGOING
4.	For years, mill work exposed workers to dangerous machines.	TRIGGER ONGOING
5.	Many workers had lived in crowded housing for years.	TRIGGER ONGOING
6.	On January 11, 1912, workers saw their first smaller paychecks.	TRIGGER ONGOING
7.	For years, workers had little say over rules inside the mills.	TRIGGER ONGOING
8.	For years, mills required long shifts from workers.	TRIGGER ONGOING

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

Name a historical or modern event, then write one new trigger and one new ongoing cause for it.

TRIGGER _____

ONGOING _____

CHALLENGE

Choose one event and explain in two sentences how a trigger and an ongoing cause worked together.

ANSWER KEY

What Sparked Change?

GRADE 7 · 7.P.2.2

PART 1 · SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	For years, many mill workers earned low wages.	**ONGOING**	Low wages were a long-standing condition.
2	A new law limiting women and children's mill work to 54 hours a week took effect in January 1912.	**TRIGGER**	The law took effect shortly before the strike and led to a change in pay.
3	Mill owners lowered workers' weekly pay after work hours were cut.	**TRIGGER**	The pay cut immediately preceded the walkout.
4	For years, mill work exposed workers to dangerous machines.	**ONGOING**	Dangerous working conditions lasted well before the strike.
5	Many workers had lived in crowded housing for years.	**ONGOING**	Crowded housing was a long-term hardship.
6	On January 11, 1912, workers saw their first smaller paychecks.	**TRIGGER**	Receiving smaller paychecks immediately preceded the walkout.
7	For years, workers had little say over rules inside the mills.	**ONGOING**	Workers' lack of control was a lasting condition.
8	For years, mills required long shifts from workers.	**ONGOING**	Long shifts were a condition that existed before the strike.

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**: Event: A neighborhood flood. Trigger: Heavy rain sent water over the creek's banks.
- **ONGOING**: Event: A neighborhood flood. Ongoing cause: Years of paving left less ground to soak up rain.

Challenge: Years of paving left little ground to absorb rain in the neighborhood. After a heavy storm, runoff filled the creek and flooded nearby homes.

For Part 2, an acceptable explanation is: Item 2 is a trigger because the law took effect shortly before the strike; item 4 is ongoing because the danger had lasted for years. The shorter workweek did not itself require lower weekly pay, but mill owners lowered pay after the change.