# What Set It Off?

Sort the causes behind historical events.

**8.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 | LONG-TERM CAUSE |
|---|---|
| An immediate cause happens shortly before an event and directly sets it in motion. | A long-term cause builds over months, years, or longer. It helps create the conditions for an event. |
| In 1865, a gunshot at Ford's Theatre caused President Lincoln's death the next morning. | For decades, unequal control of farmland fueled unrest before the Mexican Revolution. |

## 1 SORT

8 items

Circle the category for each cause, then choose two items and explain in writing why each fits its category.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **1.** | In 1914, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand sparked the crisis that led to World War I. | IMMEDIATE LONG |
| **2.** | For decades before World War I, European nations built competing military alliances. | IMMEDIATE LONG |
| **3.** | British taxes on the colonies fueled protests for years before the American Revolution. | IMMEDIATE LONG |
| **4.** | In 1775, British troops marched to seize weapons in Concord, leading to clashes with colonial militia that day. | IMMEDIATE LONG |
| **5.** | For decades, segregation laws separated Black and white bus riders before the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott. | IMMEDIATE LONG |
| **6.** | In 1955, Rosa Parks's arrest prompted community leaders to organize the Montgomery bus boycott. | IMMEDIATE LONG |
| **7.** | On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, prompting the United States to declare war the next day. | IMMEDIATE LONG |
| **8.** | Over many years, Japan's expansion in Asia increased tensions with the United States before Pearl Harbor. | IMMEDIATE LONG |

## 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 historical cause and its effect for each category, using events not listed in the sort.

**IMMEDIATE** _____

**LONG** _____

**CHALLENGE**

Choose one historical event not listed on this page, and write both an immediate cause and a long-term cause of it.

**ANSWER KEY**

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**GRADE 8 · 8.P.2.2**

## PART 1 · SORT

| # | ITEM | CATEGORY | WHY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | In 1914, the assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand sparked the crisis that led to World War I. | **IMMEDIATE** | The assassination triggered a crisis shortly before the war began. |
| 2 | For decades before World War I, European nations built competing military alliances. | **LONG** | The alliances developed over decades and shaped the conditions for war. |
| 3 | British taxes on the colonies fueled protests for years before the American Revolution. | **LONG** | The taxes contributed to unrest over several years. |
| 4 | In 1775, British troops marched to seize weapons in Concord, leading to clashes with colonial militia that day. | **IMMEDIATE** | The march directly preceded the clashes. |
| 5 | For decades, segregation laws separated Black and white bus riders before the 1955 Montgomery bus boycott. | **LONG** | The laws created conditions that persisted for decades before the boycott. |
| 6 | In 1955, Rosa Parks's arrest prompted community leaders to organize the Montgomery bus boycott. | **IMMEDIATE** | The arrest directly prompted organizing in the days before the boycott. |
| 7 | On December 7, 1941, Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, prompting the United States to declare war the next day. | **IMMEDIATE** | The attack directly prompted the declaration of war one day later. |
| 8 | Over many years, Japan's expansion in Asia increased tensions with the United States before Pearl Harbor. | **LONG** | The expansion increased tensions over 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)

- **IMMEDIATE**: In 1989, the opening of the Berlin Wall led crowds to cross between East and West Berlin that night.
- **LONG**: Decades of British rule in India fueled demands for independence before 1947.

**Challenge:** Event: the 1929 stock market crash. Long-term cause: Years of risky stock buying pushed prices too high. Immediate cause: A sudden rush to sell stocks drove prices down in October 1929.

For Part 2, accept explanations that identify whether the cause happened shortly before the event or built over a longer period. For Part 3, check that each example names a cause and its effect.