Before and After

Weighing evidence from the 1918 influenza outbreak

AWH.P.3.1 "Comprehend, evaluate, and synthesize textual sources to acquire and refine knowledge in the social studies. Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, evaluating features such as author, date..."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Read the passage, then underline one detail each from Sources A, B, and C that could support a historical claim. Circle a limit of each source so you can judge what the evidence does not prove.

A Parade and an Outbreak

1. On September 28, 1918, thousands of people lined Philadelphia streets for a Liberty Loan parade, held to support the American war effort. Influenza had already reached the city. To investigate whether the parade worsened the outbreak, historians compare sources made at different times. Source A is a September 1918 newspaper notice announcing the parade's route and inviting spectators. Written before the event, it shows that the gathering was publicly promoted. It does not show how many spectators became ill, or even whether a reader followed the invitation. A notice can reveal organizers' plans without measuring a disease's effects.

2. Source B is a Philadelphia health department report published after the 1918 outbreak. It records a sharp rise in influenza cases and deaths in the weeks following the parade. Its authors had access to citywide reports, unlike a single spectator. Yet reporting was incomplete: some sick residents never visited a doctor, and not every infection was identified as influenza. The report supports the claim that the city suffered a severe outbreak soon after the gathering. It cannot, by itself, prove that the parade caused every later infection. People also met in homes, workplaces, and crowded streetcars.

3. Source C is a later historical account that uses city records and newspaper coverage to explain the crisis. It argues that holding a large parade while influenza circulated increased opportunities for the virus to spread. Because its author writes with evidence gathered after the event, this secondary source can connect accounts that participants could not yet compare. But the account's conclusion depends on the records it selects and how it interprets them. Together, the sources support an argument about increased risk, not an exact count of parade-related infections. A careful reader separates what each source records from what it infers.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. What claim does Source A support, and why can it not show whether the parade spread influenza?

2. How does the origin of Source B make it useful for studying the outbreak, and what limits its evidence?

3. What can Source C do that Sources A and B cannot do alone? Use one detail from the passage.

4. Which details about Source C's author and publication are missing? Explain how one missing detail would help you evaluate its conclusion.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write an 80 to 110 word museum label evaluating the headline "Parade Caused Philadelphia's Influenza Outbreak." Cite specific details from two different sources, explain one limit of the evidence, and name a missing record that could help test the headline.

ANSWER KEY

Before and After

HIGH SCHOOL · AWH.P.3.1

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Read the passage, then underline one detail each from Sources A, B, and C that could support a historical claim. Circle a limit of each source so you can judge what the evidence does not prove. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	What claim does Source A support, and why can it not show whether the parade spread influenza?	**The notice supports the claim that the parade was publicly promoted. It cannot show who attended or became ill because it was written before the event.**
2	How does the origin of Source B make it useful for studying the outbreak, and what limits its evidence?	**The city health department had access to citywide reports, which show a sharp rise in cases and deaths. Some illnesses went unreported or were not identified as influenza.**
3	What can Source C do that Sources A and B cannot do alone? Use one detail from the passage.	**As a later account, Source C can compare city records with newspaper coverage to argue that the parade increased opportunities for the virus to spread.**
4	Which details about Source C's author and publication are missing? Explain how one missing detail would help you evaluate its conclusion.	**The passage does not name the author, give a publication date, or identify where the account was published. Knowing the author's expertise, for example, would help a reader evaluate the interpretation.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

The headline "Parade Caused Philadelphia's Influenza Outbreak" claims more than these sources can prove. Source A, a September 1918 newspaper notice, shows that spectators were invited to gather, not that anyone caught influenza there. Source B, the city's later health report, records a sharp rise in cases and deaths after the parade. The report does not identify where each patient was infected, and influenza had already reached the city. Hospital records noting whether patients attended the parade could help test whether attendance contributed to the rise.

Accept claims that distinguish evidence of increased risk from proof of individual infections. Students may propose another relevant missing record if they explain how it would help test the headline.