One Year, Two Paths

Compare the timing and local conditions of two 1989 protest movements

MWH.P.2.2.C "Evaluate how multiple, complex events are shaped by unique circumstances of time and place; construct and interpret parallel timelines."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline dated events in Beijing, circle dated events in East Germany, and number the events in each place in chronological order. Use your marks to track two timelines without assuming the events in one place caused those in the other.

Beijing and East Germany in 1989

1. In Beijing, China, a political death became a public turning point. On April 15, 1989, former Communist Party leader Hu Yaobang died. Students gathered in Tiananmen Square to mourn him, then many called for less corruption and greater political freedom. The square's location near government buildings made their demands highly visible. As the gatherings continued, leaders disagreed about how to respond. On May 20, the government declared martial law in parts of Beijing, giving the military authority to restore order. Yet large crowds remained in the city, and the conflict between protesters and the government intensified.

2. In East Germany, public anger grew under a different set of conditions. Citizens had long faced restrictions on travel and political opposition. After local elections on May 7, 1989, many people accused officials of falsifying the results, deepening distrust. In Leipzig, church prayer meetings offered a place to gather despite state controls. On September 4, protesters marched after one such meeting. On October 9, about 70,000 people demonstrated in Leipzig. Many feared that security forces would attack, but officials did not order a violent crackdown there that night. The march showed that a large crowd could challenge the government without being stopped by force.

3. The two movements unfolded in the same year, but not at the same pace. Beijing's demonstrations met a deadly military crackdown on June 3 and 4, when troops killed protesters and other civilians in the city. In East Germany, weekly Leipzig marches continued after October 9, adding to pressure on the government. On November 9, after an unclear announcement about new travel rules, border guards allowed people to pass through crossings in the Berlin Wall. Crowds soon moved through the crossings in both directions. A parallel timeline can place these events side by side without suggesting that one place's events caused the other's.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. Which East German event occurred after Hu Yaobang's death but before Beijing's declaration of martial law? How did it affect public anger there?

2. How did the places where people gathered help demonstrations develop in Beijing and Leipzig?

3. Compare the government's action in Beijing on May 20 with officials' response to the October 9 march in Leipzig. How did each response affect what happened next?

4. Which came first, the deadly crackdown in Beijing or the opening of the Berlin Wall crossings? Explain how the events that followed the October 9 march differed from those in Beijing.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Build parallel timelines in the table. Choose three dated events for each place, put each place's events in order, then write one sentence below the table interpreting a difference in how quickly the events unfolded.

STAGE	BEIJING: DATE AND EVENT	EAST GERMANY: DATE AND EVENT

ANSWER KEY

One Year, Two Paths

HIGH SCHOOL · MWH.P.2.2.C

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline dated events in Beijing, circle dated events in East Germany, and number the events in each place in chronological order. Use your marks to track two timelines without assuming the events in one place caused those in the other. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	Which East German event occurred after Hu Yaobang's death but before Beijing's declaration of martial law? How did it affect public anger there?	**The May 7 local elections occurred between April 15 and May 20. Accusations that officials falsified the results deepened distrust in East Germany.**
2	How did the places where people gathered help demonstrations develop in Beijing and Leipzig?	**Tiananmen Square's location near government buildings made Beijing protesters' demands visible. Church prayer meetings gave people in Leipzig a place to gather despite state controls.**
3	Compare the government's action in Beijing on May 20 with officials' response to the October 9 march in Leipzig. How did each response affect what happened next?	**Beijing's government declared martial law, and the conflict intensified before the June crackdown. Leipzig officials did not order a violent crackdown on October 9, and weekly marches continued.**
4	Which came first, the deadly crackdown in Beijing or the opening of the Berlin Wall crossings? Explain how the events that followed the October 9 march differed from those in Beijing.	**The June 3 and 4 crackdown in Beijing came before the November 9 opening of the crossings. In East Germany, Leipzig marches continued after October 9 and added to pressure on the government, rather than meeting a violent crackdown that night.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

1 | April 15: Hu Yaobang died | May 7: Local elections drew fraud accusations
2 | May 20: Government declared martial law | September 4: Protesters marched in Leipzig
3 | June 3 and 4: Troops killed civilians | October 9: About 70,000 marched in Leipzig
Beijing's three events occurred within about seven weeks, while the three East German events stretched from May into October.

Accept other accurate sets of three dated events if dates run forward within each place. Rows show stages in two separate sequences, not events that happened at the same time.