

Time Clue Detectives

Sort exact dates from order clues.

7.20.B “analyze information by applying absolute and relative chronology through sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing...”

NAME _____

DATE _____

ABSOLUTE CHRONOLOGY

Absolute chronology names a precise calendar date or year. It places an event at one specific point in time.

The first moon landing occurred on July 20, 1969.

RELATIVE CHRONOLOGY

Relative chronology tells the order of events without naming a precise calendar date. It shows how one time connects to another time.

At the beginning of the school year, students elected class officers.

1 SORT _____ 8 items

Circle ABSOLUTE or RELATIVE for each statement, then choose two items and explain which time clues led to each choice.

1. Texas declared independence on March 2, 1836.

ABSOLUTE

RELATIVE

2. Later that spring, delegates met at Washington-on-the-Brazos.

ABSOLUTE

RELATIVE

3. The Civil Rights Act became law on July 2, 1964.

ABSOLUTE

RELATIVE

4. The Berlin Wall fell on November 9, 1989.

ABSOLUTE

RELATIVE

5. Before the treaty was signed, both sides negotiated.

ABSOLUTE

RELATIVE

6. Soon after the attack, the city rebuilt its harbor.

ABSOLUTE

RELATIVE

7. The United States entered World War II on December 8, 1941.

ABSOLUTE

RELATIVE

8. In the decade following the war, many families moved to suburbs.

ABSOLUTE

RELATIVE

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 ABSOLUTE chronology example and one new RELATIVE chronology example.

ABSOLUTE _____

RELATIVE _____

CHALLENGE

Write two connected sentences about a historical event. Include an exact date in one sentence and a relative time clue in the other. Write ABSOLUTE after the exact date and RELATIVE after the relative time clue.

PART 1 • SORT

#	ITEM	CATEGORY	WHY
1	Texas declared independence on March 2, 1836.	ABSOLUTE	It gives the exact date, March 2, 1836.
2	Later that spring, delegates met at Washington-on-the-Brazos.	RELATIVE	"Later that spring" gives an order clue, not an exact date.
3	The Civil Rights Act became law on July 2, 1964.	ABSOLUTE	It gives the exact date, July 2, 1964.
4	The Berlin Wall fell on November 9, 1989.	ABSOLUTE	It gives the exact date, November 9, 1989.
5	Before the treaty was signed, both sides negotiated.	RELATIVE	"Before" shows the order of events without a date.
6	Soon after the attack, the city rebuilt its harbor.	RELATIVE	"Soon after" is a relative time clue.
7	The United States entered World War II on December 8, 1941.	ABSOLUTE	It gives the exact date, December 8, 1941.
8	In the decade following the war, many families moved to suburbs.	RELATIVE	"Following the war" places the event in relation to another event.

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)

- **ABSOLUTE:** The Erie Canal opened on October 26, 1825.
- **RELATIVE:** Before the election, candidates gave speeches across the state.

Challenge: Japan attacked Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 [ABSOLUTE]. The next day [RELATIVE], the United States declared war on Japan.

For Part 2, students should identify an exact date or year for an ABSOLUTE choice and an order phrase for a RELATIVE choice. Accept accurate student-created examples that clearly fit the assigned category.