

# CAUSE AND EFFECT

Students learn about a historical event through studying its causes and effects. After researching the subject, writing a couple of paragraphs, and creating a T-chart, students report their findings to the class.

## TEACHER NOTES FOR DISCUSSION

This lesson is broken into two parts. The Cause and Effect Review is a practice exercise. It deals with the basic concepts of cause and effect. Depending on the level of your class and their familiarity with the concepts of cause and effect, you may opt to move straight to the activity.

## CAUSE AND EFFECT REVIEW

Prior to this lesson, create cause and effect cards. Pass one card out to each student. Use the following examples to get you started:

CAUSE	EFFECT
I HAD TO WALK HOME	BECAUSE I LOST MY KEYS.
AS A RESULT OF THE RAINSTORM	MY GAME WAS CANCELED.
I HAVE A LATE ASSIGNMENT, THEREFORE	MY HOMEWORK GRADE WILL BE LOWER.

First, students must decide if their card is a cause or an effect. Point out key word phrases such as “as a result of,” “because,” or “therefore” to help identify a cause/effect relationship.

Next, give each student two or three minutes to find a plausible “cause” for their “effect” or vice-versa. Have students present their cause and effect relationship to the class.

Follow up with a discussion regarding the accuracy of their choices and how some causes may have several different effects or one effect may have had several different causes.

For the actual activity, students research an event and summarize their findings, identifying cause/effect relationships of the event by placing their analysis on a T-chart poster.

### For Example:

July 21, 1861: First Battle of Bull Run

Northerners think the war will be finished after the first battle. On July 16, 1861, a Union army, led by General Irvin McDowell, begins to move toward Confederate troops under General Beauregard that are grouped about Manassas Junction, 25 miles southwest of Washington, D.C. The two armies do not meet until July 21. The battle, known as First Bull Run or First Manassas, starts well for the North. However, with the arrival of Confederate reinforcements and the heroic stand of General Thomas A. Jackson, who earns the nickname Stonewall, the

## Objective

By the end of this activity, students should be able to identify the causes and effects of a historically important event and create a T-chart to represent the event.

## Time Considerations

Instructor preparation:  
90 minutes

Student activity:  
two classes

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battle ends in an overwhelming victory for the South. Most of the Union troops straggle back to Washington in near panic. The defeat shocks the North. Northerners realize that the war could be a devastating struggle that might last for years. Governors offer more troops. The Union War Department pushes to organize long-term volunteers.

CAUSE	EFFECT
UNION ARMY MEETS CONFEDERATE TROOPS AT MANASSAS JUNCTION.	THE BATTLE STARTS WELL FOR THE NORTH.
ARRIVAL OF CONFEDERATE REINFORCEMENTS AND THE HEROIC STAND OF GEN. THOMAS A. JACKSON (STONEWALL)	BATTLE ENDS IN OVERWHELMING VICTORY FOR THE SOUTH.
THE DEFEAT SHOCKED THE NORTH.	NORTHERNERS REALIZE THAT THE WAR COULD BE A DEVASTATING STRUGGLE THAT MIGHT LAST FOR YEARS.
GOVERNOR OFFERS MORE TROOPS	THE UNION WAR DEPARTMENT PUSHES TO ORGANIZE LONG-TERM VOLUNTEERS.

## RELATED STANDARDS AND BENCHMARKS

### History

#### Standard 2. Understands the Historical Perspective

- analyzes the influence specific ideas and beliefs had on a period of history
- analyzes the effect that specific “chance events” had on history
- analyzes the effects specific decisions had on history

### Language Arts

#### Standard 4. Gathers and uses information for research purposes

- uses a variety of resource materials to gather information for research topics
- organizes information and ideas from multiple sources in systematic ways

### Life Work

#### Standard 1. Makes effective use of basic tools

Standard 2. Uses various information sources, including those of a technical nature, to accomplish specific tasks

### Thinking and Reasoning

#### Standard 2. Understands and applies basic principles of logic and reasoning

Standard 3. Effectively uses mental processes that are based on identifying similarities and differences (compares, contrasts, classifies)

#### Standard 6. Applies decision-making techniques

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## UNDERSTAND YOUR MISSION

In this activity, you will use research and a T-chart to apply cause and effect to a major historical event related to the Mississippi River.

## BACKGROUND

Pretend for a moment you are driving along with your family and all of a sudden, you notice this huge tree blocking the road. Why is the tree in the road? Did it just fall over? was it cut down? did lightening hit it? or, did a beaver go too far? What if the tree is charred and smoking at the break? As a reasonable person you would probably figure that the fallen tree was the effect of lightening which caused the tree to fall across the road. A cause is something that happens and an effect is what happens as a result of the cause.

## Go Beyond

Do the same activity with a current event taken out of the newspaper.

## CHART A COURSE FOR EXPLORATION

1. Research a historical event related to the Mississippi River. Write 2-3 good, in-depth paragraphs about the event. The information you include should clearly detail the highpoints of your event. You may choose a topic with which you are familiar or you may choose other related topics such as the cause and effect relationships between:
  - Dred Scott’s Supreme Court case and the Civil War
  - Dred Scott and the beginnings of the Civil Rights movement
  - Amendment XIV and women’s suffrage
  - the Nine-Foot Channel Project and river commerce
  - the Industrial Revolution and river commerce
  - Westward expansion and the Indian population
  - levees/dams and the shrinking delta
2. Pick out the cause and effect relationships (at least five statements) and place them neatly on a T-chart labeled “Cause” and “Effect.” (Remember, sometimes one cause may have several different effects and some effects may have a few different causes attributed to them.)

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3. Create a presentation that explains the event and its significance. In your presentation, you should also express a basic lesson learned from the event. Your chart should complement your presentation.



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	EXPERT	PROFICIENT	NOVICE
PARAGRAPHS	<input type="checkbox"/> developed and clear <input type="checkbox"/> at least 2 are included	<input type="checkbox"/> contains 2 <input type="checkbox"/> lack cohesion	<input type="checkbox"/> only 1 paragraph is included <input type="checkbox"/> disorganized
GRAMMAR, USAGE, MECHANICS (G.U.M.)	<input type="checkbox"/> 0-2 errors	<input type="checkbox"/> 2-5 errors	<input type="checkbox"/> more than 5 errors
CAUSE STATEMENTS	<input type="checkbox"/> contains 5 meaningful causes	<input type="checkbox"/> contains 3-4 correct causes	<input type="checkbox"/> 1-2 causes
EFFECT STATEMENTS	<input type="checkbox"/> contains 5 meaningful effects	<input type="checkbox"/> contains 3-4 correct effects	<input type="checkbox"/> contains 1-2 correct effects
OVERALL ACCURACY	<input type="checkbox"/> historical facts are meaningful and accurate	<input type="checkbox"/> facts are accurate	<input type="checkbox"/> facts need to be rechecked
PRESENTATION AND VISUAL	<input type="checkbox"/> worked together well	<input type="checkbox"/> good organization <input type="checkbox"/> attractive T-chart	<input type="checkbox"/> difficult to connect T-chart to presentation

## REFERENCES

Kendall, John S. and Robert J. Marzano. *Content Knowledge: The McREL Standards Database*. <<http://www.mcrel.org/standards-benchmarks/>>. March 16, 2000.