

Analyzing Cause and Effect

What is it? A **cause** is something that brings about a particular result, which is called an **effect**. An event may have more than one cause and/or more than one effect. Analyzing cause and effect can help you understand why historical events happened.

Both causes and effects can be either **immediate** or **long-term**. An immediate cause or effect happens shortly before or after an event. Long-term causes and effects generally unfold over many months or years.

How to do it. To identify cause and effect, consider the following questions:

- What was the trigger that made an event happen? (immediate cause)
- What were the conditions that contributed to the event? (long-term cause)
- What was the direct result of an action? (immediate effect)
- What were some lasting consequences? (long-term effect)

Try it. Read this passage about the Boston Tea Party.

After the French and Indian War, British actions increasingly angered the American colonists. To pay for military costs, the British Parliament passed laws that chipped away at colonial rights. One such law, the Tea Act, set off a chain reaction that soon carried the colonies to open rebellion. To protest the Tea Act, a group of colonists dumped a shipload of tea into Boston Harbor. The outraged British clamped down with even harsher laws. Colonists called these laws the Intolerable Acts. These acts helped to build colonial resistance to the British government. This resistance led to the American Revolution.

Fill in a chart to show the causes and effects of the Boston Tea Party.

