

## Inquiries and Activities to Unpack the Concept:

This is a roughly sequential selection that I don't believe are level dependent and which can be repeated as both exploration and revision.

### Introducing the Concept:

#### Personal Causes and Consequences: (from *The Big Six*)

- Students place "The Present" at the centre of a page
- They then list, on the left of the page, factors – actions and decisions – that led them to this time and place. (e.g. their timetable, the school bell, their choice of subject, their Dean's interview, the legal requirement they attend school, their interests and abilities)
- Discuss with students how they might categorize those causes into underlying and immediate, primary and secondary. Are there other categories that suggest themselves?
- Then ask them to predict / imagine the consequences of being in class, again looking to classify them into groups such as short-term and long-term, intended and incidental.

### Working with concept and context:

#### 1. Reshaping and Reworking the context:

"What were the causes and consequences of ...?" may be generally serviceable, but there's more to be gained in using some more varied approaches to get students debating in groups (or writing quick paragraph responses):

Some possible question stems for exploring multiple causes:	Some possible question stems for exploring multiple consequences:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What lay behind _____</li> <li>• How did _____ make a difference</li> <li>• How did _____ affect the outcome?</li> <li>• What groups / individuals took part in _____?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What differences happened after _____?</li> <li>• Whose lives were changed?</li> <li>• How were they changed?</li> <li>• For how long were they changed?</li> <li>• What was the impact on _____ area?</li> <li>• What was the impact on _____? (Group / individual)</li> </ul>

#### 2. Shuffle and Deal:

This is a sequence of tasks that, in my view, should be used in the middle / at the end of a context – or for revision. As a sequence, it covers most (and can cover all) of the Seixas / Morton Guideposts, providing powerful opportunities for peer teaching and focusing students on using information to explain and analyse: in short, helping them to work and think historically by **doing** History, not just learning it.

*This requires sheets of causes and sheets of effects plus a few distractors (best organised in little boxes – to keep them manageable I'd pick 6x2 on A4 card). This is a fair bit of initial preparation, so share resources and save time OR make it a homework / group task for students to prepare assigned events / decisions / developments for others to use. The latter option does throw up quality control issues however, but has real potential as a "double whammy" revision task. Another point to note is that these can be used and re-used for a number of the suggested tasks that follow as well as providing revision aids.*

#### In groups:

- Give them **Big Question 1**: "What caused \_\_\_\_\_?" and the "Causes" card(s).
- They are to cut up the card and select the causes they consider relevant.

**Checkpoint 1:** Report back: Groups outline their selection. Differences can be noted and discussed – exploring these even at this stage can open up discussion about perspectives and significance.

- Get them to rank causes and record their decisions.

**Checkpoint 2:** Another obvious discussion point.

- *The beginning of this task may vary according to levels.* Give – and discuss – criteria students can use to classify the causes OR discuss and decide as a class OR set each group the task of identifying and deciding their own criteria. (**Note:** At Level 3 make sure they include social, political, economic and cultural forces amongst their categories – it will even help them identify trends).
- Group the causes in categories.

**Checkpoint 3:** Discuss results as a class. What are the differences? Why? Which causes “fit” multiple categories? Why / how? And so on...By now, if not earlier, it should be clear that decisions about causation can be influenced by individual / group perspectives and decisions about what is important (and this can be influenced by the questions asked of the evidence).

- Students now re-examine their choices and categories. They make any changes they need to and note their reasons for doing so.
- Now they try to “eliminate” causes by discussing which are primary / initiating / main causes and which are secondary. This should prove the most contentious part of this task. It should also dispel any illusions of single cause explanations and set them up for more thorough, thoughtful written responses to causal questions.

**Checkpoint 4:** A final plenary discussing the outcomes of the final sets of tasks.

Then – repeat the task with the consequence sheet(s). The tasks up to Checkpoint 3 can be easily repeated. I will be changing the tasks leading up to Checkpoint 4 to focus on significance:

- Which consequences were (for example):
  - most profound
  - most durable
  - affected the greatest number
  - affected the widest range of individuals / groups
- Which consequence(s) are still present / relevant?

If you are getting twitchy about “progress” at this point, remember two things:

1. Examiners Reports at all levels over decades and different qualifications lament the numbers of students who only **partially answer questions**. Here is the opportunity to ensure that your less able / less experienced students have the content, ideas and insights to press on
2. **You have time.** We control content and should, therefore place a greater premium on allowing students to explore, discuss and develop understanding in depth.

**Product / outcomes:**

1. **At the conclusion:** This is the logical place for a cause-and-effect essay targeting the external standard.
2. **During the sequence:** How far you want to take it is only limited by your imagination, your willingness to forego the illusion of “needing” to cover whole / multiple contexts we still cling to and the enthusiasm of your students.
  - They should maintain a record of decisions and discussions as they go.
  - Discussions can be recorded as podcasts to go up on class sites as learning and revision aids.

- The tasks between Checkpoints 2 and 3 can be used to produce posters of categorised causes supported by images, quotes from primary or secondary sources etc. These can be used for wall displays (here, if you must, is the prettifying distraction). Alternatively, they can be made into flash cards to be stored and kept (get out the laminator) for revision.
- Include IT – then all stages can be shared as collaborative documents / mind maps (use Google docs or download some free “mind-mapping” software – there are lots of these, but XMind, MindMeister (which has an app), iMindMap and CanvasDrop all have free options and look useful.

The “sequence” is just a suggestion. Try separate elements in a lesson or two if you still feel the need to flirt rather than commit.

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