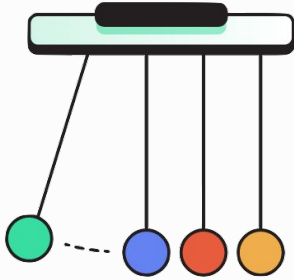


Formative Assessment:

Causation



Thinking historically means considering why certain things happened and what effects occurred because of an event, development, or process. It also means recognizing that there are multiple causes of and multiple effects from any event, development, or process.

Directions: Read the following historical context and primary source. Then, answer the questions on causation that follow. This question is Weighted Multiple Choice (WMC). The two best answers are 2 points, the next-best answer is 1 point, and the incorrect answer is 0 points.

Historical Context:

When the American colonies broke away from Great Britain to form the United States of America, its founders did not want a monarchy like Great Britain.

They believed that the British king had too much power. Inspired by Enlightenment ideas of government, the founders believed that separating power between the legislative, judicial, and executive branches would protect liberty. Furthermore, by not giving any one person too much power, the government could also protect itself from falling into the hands of a tyrant.

Simply put, the goals of one branch of government would balance out the goals of the other branches, ensuring that the government could not become tyrannical.

Source: James Madison, Federalist No. 51: "The Structure of the Government Must Furnish the Proper Checks and Balances Between the Different Departments." 1788.

[Library of Congress](#).

In order to lay a due foundation for that separate and distinct exercise of the different powers of government, which to a certain extent is admitted on all hands to be essential to the preservation of liberty, it is evident that each department should have a will of its own...

But the great security against a gradual concentration of the several powers in the same department, consists in giving to those who administer each department the necessary constitutional means and personal motives to resist encroachments of the others... Ambition must be made to counteract ambition... It may be a reflection on human nature, that such devices should be necessary to control the abuses of government. But what is government itself, but the greatest of all reflections on human nature? If men were angels, no government would be necessary. If angels were to govern men, neither external nor internal controls on government would be necessary. In framing a government which is to be administered by men over men, the great difficulty lies in this: you must first enable the government to control the governed; and in the next place oblige it to control itself.



Formative Assessment: Causation

1. Using both the historical context *and* the primary source, select the **two statements** that best demonstrate why America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers.
 - A. America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers in order to protect liberty.
 - B. America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers in order to avoid a monarchy like in Great Britain.
 - C. America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers because it was the best form of government to work with human selfishness and ambition.
 - D. America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers with the hope of creating the most powerful ruler in world history.

2. Historians rank causes to establish which causes are more significant. Using both the historical context and primary source, explain why one of the statements you chose represents a more significant reason why America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers. Cite evidence.



Teacher Key for Formative Assessment: Causation

- Using both the historical context *and* the primary source, select the **two statements** that best demonstrate why America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers.
 - America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers in order to protect liberty. **(2 points)**
 - America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers in order to avoid a monarchy like in Great Britain. **(1 points)**
 - America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers because it was the best form of government to work with human selfishness and ambition. **(2 points)**
 - America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers with the hope of creating the most powerful ruler in world history. **(0 points)**

2. Historians rank causes to establish which causes are more significant. Using both the historical context and primary source, explain why one of the statements you chose represents a more significant reason why America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers. Cite evidence.

Based on the historical context and primary source, Choice A and Choice C are clear reasons why America's founders created a government built on the separation of powers. (Choice B is a true statement, but evidence for it can only be found in the historical context). However, based on the historical context and primary source, Choice A is the more significant reason for creating the government with separation of powers. The historical context notes that separating power into three branches "would protect liberty" and the primary source states that this separation is "essential to the preservation of liberty." Still, since there is evidence for Choice C in both the historical context and the primary source, students can receive full credit if they justify that choice with both texts.



1. Weighted Multiple Choice

Choice 1	2 points (Choice A or C)	1 point (Choice B)	0 points (Choice D)
Choice 2	2 points (Choice A or C)	1 point (Choice B)	0 points (Choice D)
			Subtotal: _____ / 4

2. Short Answer: More Significant Effect

3 points	2 points	1 point	0 points
Student identifies one choice as a more significant effect and cites clear evidence from both the historical context and primary source to justify their choice.	Student identifies one choice as more significant and cites clear evidence from one source to justify their answer. Both sources may be cited, but only one provides clear justification.	Student identifies one choice as more significant and may or may not cite evidence to justify their answer. If evidence is cited, it does not provide clear justification for their choice.	Students does not identify one choice as more significant. Student either misunderstood question or did not attempt to answer it.
			Subtotal: _____ / 3

Total: _____ / 7

