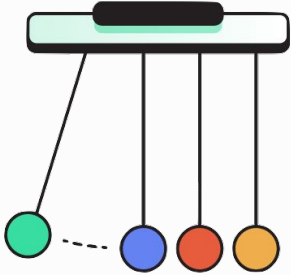


## Formative Assessment:

# 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.**

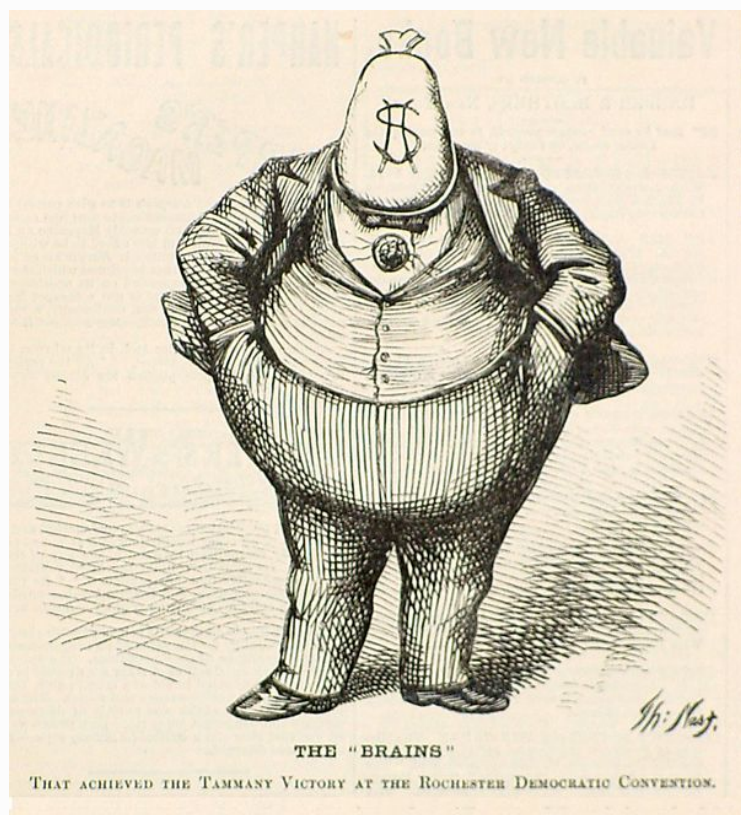
**Directions:** Read the following historical context and primary source. Then, answer the questions on causation that follow. The multiple choice questions for this formative assessment are Weighted Multiple Choice (WMC) Questions. The two best answers are 2 points, the next-best answer is 1 point, and the incorrect answer is 0 points.

# Formative Assessment: Causation

## Historical Context:

In the 19th and early 20th centuries, political machines grew in both their prominence and influence. Through systems of patronage and provisions of services and favors to immigrant and working-class communities, political machines were able to garner a loyal voter base and subsequently control elections and many government decisions. The dark side of political machines became increasingly evident through an investigation into the corruption of Tammany Hall and ensuing arrest of William Tweed, Tammany's political boss, in 1871. Through various schemes, Tweed and his associates had embezzled tens of millions of dollars from New York City and its taxpayers. Cartoonist Thomas Nast and other journalists from the New York Times criticized Tammany Hall for its corrupt practices which prompted the official investigation. As a result, public outrage grew and people developed a more critical view of all political machines.

Source: Thomas Nast, "The Brains," *Harper's Weekly*, October 12, 1871. [Library of Congress](#).



*Text from Poster*

### **THE "BRAINS"**

**THAT ACHIEVED THE TAMMANY  
VICTORY AT THE ROCHESTER  
DEMOCRATIC CONVENTION.**



## Formative Assessment: Causation

1. Using both the historical context *and* the primary source, select the **two statements** that best demonstrate the causes for changing attitudes toward political machines in the late 19th century.
  - A. Critical journalistic articles and portrayals played a crucial role in the exposure of Tammany Hall's illegal political influence and control.
  - B. The arrest of William Tweed, political boss of Tammany Hall.
  - C. The investigation into the corrupt financial practices of Tammany Hall uncovered the embezzlement of millions of dollars from taxpayers.
  - D. The provision of services and favors to immigrant and working-class communities.

2. Historians rank effects to establish which effects are more significant. Using both the historical context and primary source, explain why one of the statements you chose represents a more cause of the changing attitudes toward political machines in the late 19th century. Cite evidence.



## Teacher Key for Formative Assessment: Causation

1. Using both the historical context *and* the primary source, select the **two statements** that best demonstrate the causes for changing attitudes toward political machines in the late 19th century.
  - A. Critical journalistic articles and portrayals played a crucial role in the exposure of Tammany Hall's illegal political influence and control. **(2 points)**
  - B. The arrest of William Tweed, political boss of Tammany Hall. **(1 point)**
  - C. The investigation into the corrupt financial practices of Tammany Hall uncovered the embezzlement of millions of dollars from taxpayers. **(2 points)**
  - D. The provision of services and favors to immigrant and working-class communities. **(0 points)**

2. Historians rank effects to establish which effects are more significant. Using both the historical context and primary source, explain why one of the statements you chose represents a more cause of the changing attitudes toward political machines in the late 19th century. Cite evidence.

Based on this historical context and primary source provided, Choice A and Choice C are clear examples of what led many Americans to become more critical of political machines. (Choice B is a true statement but is more of an effect of the changing attitudes instead of a cause.) However, Choice A is more significant because the critical journalistic efforts "prompted the official investigation" which led to the further exposure of Tammany's corruption. Without the efforts of Thomas Nast (as shown in the primary source) and other New York Times journalists, the public and government officials may have been willing to continue with the status quo. The satirical and critical articles and portrayals were the catalyst for the changing attitudes. Choice D is incorrect because it is an example of how political machine created a loyal base of voters and these activities would have maintained current attitudes toward the political machines.



## 1. Weighted Multiple Choice

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

## 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.
			<b>Subtotal: _____ / 3</b>

**Total: \_\_\_\_\_ / 7**

