

# Determining Relationships in a Text

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## *Connections*

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Imagine you've just been asked to read an accident report at work to find out what caused it. You begin to read the report, but you have difficulty keeping all the events straight and you don't know whether some events caused others or if they just happened one after the other.

You might have the same experience reading about a major event in history or science. Understanding how events and ideas develop is essential to building understanding in social studies. It will also help you to determine whether some events cause later events or if they just happen before them. These skills lead to stronger reading comprehension—and that's important in all the subjects.

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Understanding how events and ideas **develop** requires you to find the details about this information and determine how these things are connected. Sometimes events and ideas are connected by **cause and effect**. Sometimes events and ideas develop in other ways.

In this lesson you'll learn how to analyze how events and ideas develop in a written text and how these events and ideas are related or connected. Sometimes the ideas will be related by cause and effect. Other times they will simply happen in sequence. To do this, you'll examine several different short texts and then complete several activities designed to help you analyze what you've read.





## Finding Connections between Pieces of Information

When you're trying to find how events and ideas develop and interact, what you're really trying to do is find the relationships between pieces of information. If you come across a reading where it's hard to find this relationship, there's a simple process you can follow to help you see the relationship between the events and ideas in the text.

There's a lot of information out there that you have to make sense of on a daily basis, and it's not always easy. Sometimes you'll find yourself struggling to see connections between things that seem unrelated—like the price of oil and American foreign policy. Other times you'll be trying to figure out the cause of a major event—such as the Great Recession of 2008–2009—and what effect several smaller events had on that bigger event. These skills are important because they help you understand how events develop over time and because they help you understand the effects of decisions made by people every day.

Read this passage and use it for the following exercises.

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### Understanding Different Types of Credit

The two main types of credit are revolving credit and non-revolving credit. Non-revolving credit is often used for larger purchases like a home or a car. This kind of credit requires you to pay a set monthly payment for a certain length of time—until the loan is paid off—and interest rates are often relatively low. In contrast, revolving credit monthly payments fluctuate depending on how much credit you use each month. This kind of credit is used most often in credit and store charge cards. Interest rates are often quite high on revolving credit. Both types involve borrowing money from a bank to buy something. Similarly, both types involve the bank charging you interest on the money that you borrow.



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### Look for Titles, Headings, and Subheadings

The first thing to do is read the title of the passage and look for any subheadings. These will help you anticipate the main idea that connects to the details. Some examples of relationships to look for are a *sequence of events*, *cause and effect*, *compare and contrast*, and *part-to-whole*. Be careful, though, because this is not a complete list of relationships.

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For example, if a heading reads “The Coming of the American Revolution,” the words “coming of” imply an order of events that lead to something else. You should anticipate a sequence-of-events relationship that describes the events leading up to the American Revolution. Many times when looking for a sequence, you will also find a cause-and-effect relationship. Look for clues that might help you identify cause and effect.

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1. Look at the heading of the passage. Based on the heading, what kind of relationships would you expect to find in the text?

The heading “Understanding Different Types of Credit” implies that the passage will compare more than one type of credit. You might expect compare-and-contrast relationships in the text.

### **Find the Key Details**

Finding details is very important because you are looking at how the details are connected. You are examining the relationship between the details in the text.

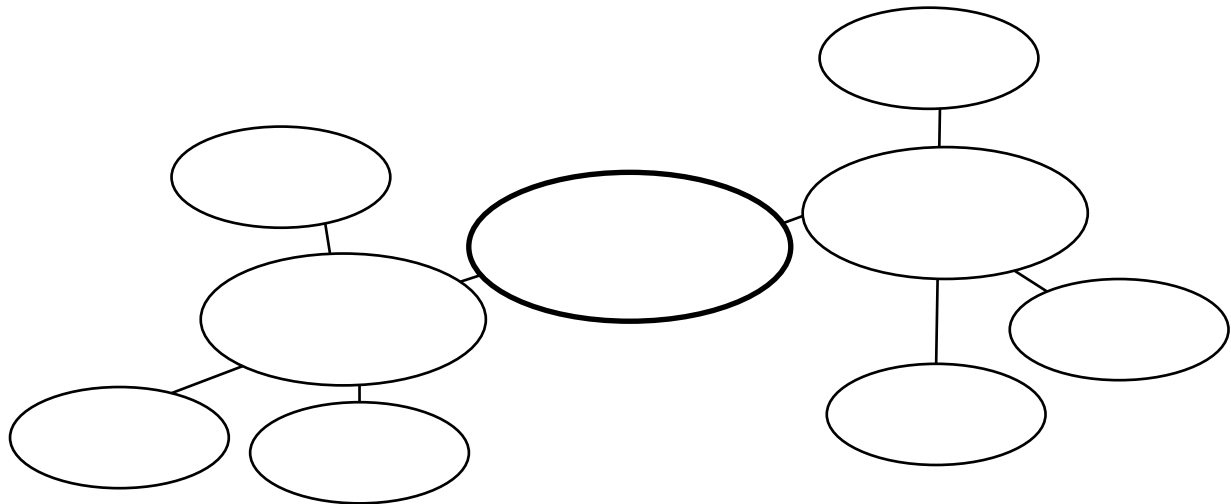
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2. What are important details in the passage?

Some important details are “non-revolving credit is used for major purchases” and “revolving credit payments change monthly”. The passage states that non-revolving credit is used for larger loans such as car loans or home mortgages. It also says that revolving credit payments fluctuate—or change—each month depending on how much credit is used.

**Organize the Information Using a Graphic Organizer**

The next step is to organize the information. Usually you will put the details from the text into a visual—or graphic—organizer. This will allow you to actually see the relationship between the information. The kind of graphic organizer you use will depend on the type of relationship in the text, so try to identify the types of relationships. Some graphic organizers that you can use are mind maps (main ideas and details or categories and subcategories), Venn diagrams (compare and contrast), and cause-and-effect chains.

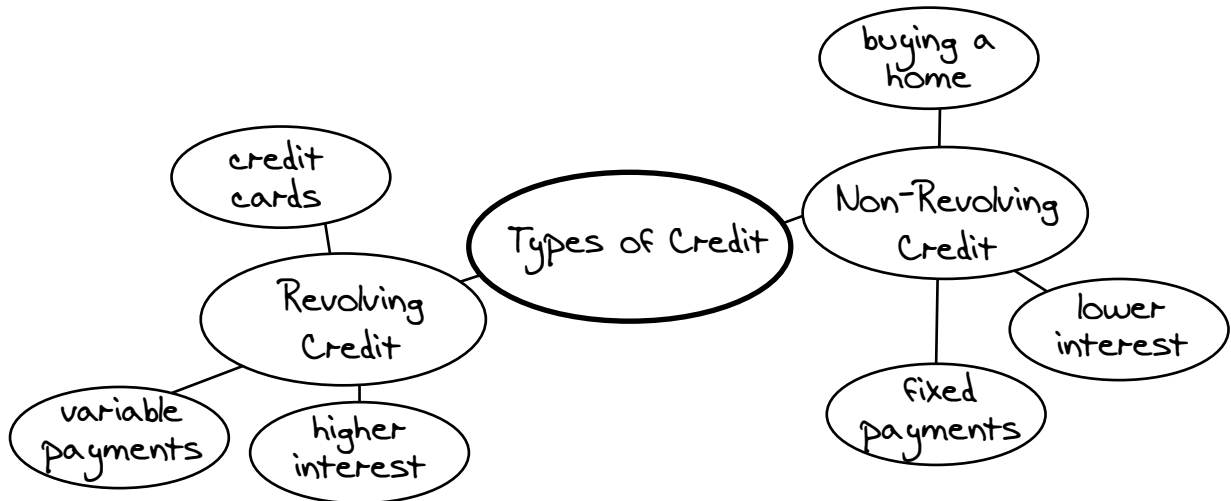
- ? 3. Write details from the passage in a mind map to organize the information.



Some of the details from the text that you might choose are:

- |                      |               |              |
|----------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Revolving credit     | credit cards  | store cards  |
| Non-revolving credit | buying a home | buying a car |

Here is an example of what your mind map might look like:



### **Special Relationship: Cause and Effect**

Sometimes you will encounter a cause and effect relationship in a text. This is especially true in social studies where many of the texts you read will be sequential in nature. In these cases, you have to figure out whether one event causes a later event or if they just happened in that order. To determine that, you need to find the relationship like you did above and then look at the sequence. If two events are closely related and they happen in order, it is likely that the first event caused the second event.

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It is difficult to pinpoint the cause of World War I. The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand in 1914 is most often cited as the “spark” that caused the war, but it is more complicated than that. Starting in about 1850 there was a huge military buildup in Europe that saw each country build newer and more destructive weapons of war. Then in 1882, two major military alliances were formed—the Triple Alliance and the Triple Entente—that divided European countries against each other. In the late 1800s the United States was expanding its territory also, with the acquisition of Hawaii and Puerto Rico. Finally, from the 1870s on, the citizens of each country had a growing sense of nationalism, the feeling that your own country is better than others. Citizens often looked at the strength of their country’s military to judge how strong their country was. A combination of these factors caused World War I.

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- ? 4. Read the passage above and then circle all the events that caused World War I.

**Possible Causes:** Assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, military buildup, military alliances, United States expansion, growing sense of nationalism

The first sentence gives you a clue that you are looking for what caused World War I, so you need to find the relationship between the events to determine if they are related to World War I. All of the events happened in Europe and they are related to the military except the United States expansion. That means that all of these events are causes of World War I except the United States expansion.

Practice  
It!

Read the following passage about the effects of global warming then answer the questions.

### The Effects of Global Warming

Many scientists believe that the release of greenhouse gases into the atmosphere from human actions - in the form of burning fossil fuels for electricity and automobiles - is contributing to a rapid rise in global temperatures. Humans started burning fossil fuels beginning in the late 1700s as coal helped fuel Industrial Revolution. In the late 1800s oil became a new source of energy and it was used to create electricity and fuel cars and trucks. The 1900s saw a spreading of electricity and automobiles around the world, which has then caused humans to burn even more fossil fuels, which has released more greenhouse gases.

This rise in greenhouse gases attributed to humans has triggered a series of events that could be very destructive. Greenhouse gases trap heat in the atmosphere which causes higher temperatures. As temperatures rise, polar ice melts more quickly. The melting ice results in more water in the ocean - which causes sea-levels to rise. A sea level rise of 3 feet would leave over 150 million people homeless worldwide and destroy major coastal cities such as Miami, New York, Shanghai and Tokyo. New York was hit with a major flood event in 2012 when Hurricane Sandy brought storm surges that flooded much of downtown Manhattan. Though the effects of global warming are clear, the solutions to the problem are not.

1. Put the following events in chronological order by numbering them from 1 to 4.
  - \_\_\_ Sea level rise
  - \_\_\_ Higher global temperatures
  - \_\_\_ Widespread use of electricity and automobiles
  - \_\_\_ The Industrial Revolution begins
  
2. What is the connection between all the causes of global warming?
  - a. They all deal with burning fossil fuels.
  - b. They all deal with the effects of sea level rise.
  - c. They all deal with the causes of the Industrial Revolution.
  - d. They all deal with the effects of automobiles.

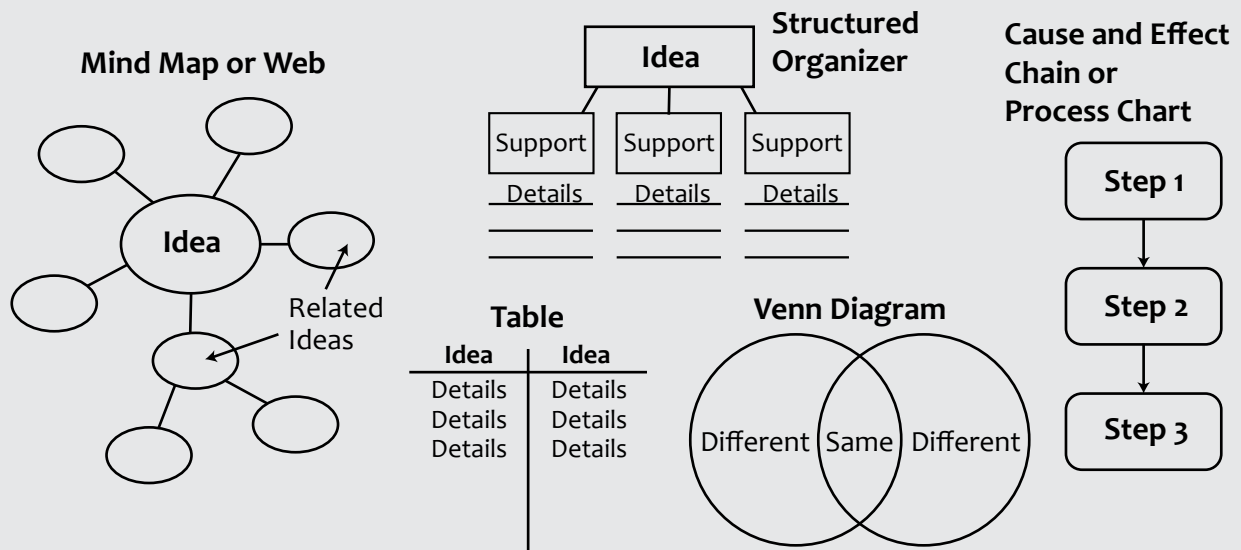
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★★ 3. Which of the following are causes of sea level rise? Select all that apply.

- Hurricane Sandy floods New York in 2012
- Widespread use of electricity across the world
- Automobiles become the main form of transportation
- Increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere

### Build Your Reading Skills

Remember to use a graphic organizer to help you organize the details. It will help you see the relationships between the pieces of information.



★★ 4. Explain the connection between human actions and rising sea levels.



5. Is flooding from Hurricane Sandy related to burning fossil fuels? Explain why or why not.



6. Based on your understanding of the passage, how did the rise in greenhouse gases develop? Use information from the passage to help you answer the question.





### *Check Your Skills*

**Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.**

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#### **Buildup to the Great Depression**

The Great Depression didn't just happen all of a sudden. Several factors came together over a number of years to cause the stock market crash 1929. Then it took several more years to reach the bottom point in 1933 with over 25% of Americans unemployed.



After World War I ended in 1919, many of the machines used to make war goods switched to making consumer goods and many businesses borrowed money from banks to mechanize their factories. This mechanization throughout the 1920's allowed for many goods to be produced very quickly. Eventually, however, so many goods were produced that there weren't enough people to buy them and prices began to fall. As prices fell, so did profits, causing businesses to fail.

Another factor that developed during the 1920s in the stock market was unchecked speculation. People were allowed to buy stocks using loans from banks. While stocks were going up, this helped people make money, but this led to a "bubble" where stock prices were overvalued. When people realized this problem, it caused major shocks to the market, like the Black Tuesday Crash on October 29, 1929. These shocks started a long decline in prices that bottomed out in 1933 when the stock market lost nearly 90% of its value. People who had borrowed money to buy stocks could not repay their loans.

All these problems led to the final factor: unregulated banking. Banks get their money from deposits into checking and savings accounts and lend that money to others while charging interest on the loans. Leading up to the Great Depression, banks could lend as much of their money as they wanted. As businesses and stock speculators defaulted on their loans, people became worried and went to banks to get their money. But the money wasn't there because it had been loaned out, causing thousands of banks to fail and wiping out millions of people's personal savings. As businesses failed, people were laid off and unable to find work. Many had their savings wiped out by banks.

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1. Which of the following are details from the passage? Select all that apply.
- The worst part of the Great Depression was 1933.
  - Mechanization led to overproduction.
  - Stock speculation was not a cause of the great depression.
  - Banks not lending enough money is one cause of the Great Depression.
2. Which of the following caused the overproduction of goods after World War I?
- a. The end of World War I
  - b. Mechanization in factories
  - c. Overspeculation in the stock market
  - d. Banks lending too much money
3. Which of the following caused stocks to become overvalued by 1929?
- a. The end of World War I
  - b. Mechanization in factories
  - c. Stock market losing 90% of its value
  - d. Banks lending money for stock purchases
4. What factors led to bank failures? Select all that apply.
- Businesses could not repay loans taken out to mechanize factories.
  - World War I spending by the government ended when the war ended.
  - Unemployment reached 25% in 1933.
  - People borrowed money to buy stocks but could not repay their loans.
5. According to the reading, many of the causes mentioned in the reading led up to what major cause of the Great Depression? (**Hint:** Try making a cause and effect chart that shows the relationships between all the causes.)
- a. Mechanization
  - b. Unregulated banking
  - c. Stock market crash
  - d. Unemployment

### *Remember the Concept*

Finding details and then organizing them visually will help you determine the relationships between the information in what you read. Understanding these relationships is key to analyzing how events develop and how some events cause later events.

### Determining Relationships in a Text

#### Finding Connections between Pieces of Information

##### Practice It!

1. The correct order is:

1. The Industrial Revolution begins
2. Widespread use of electricity and automobiles
3. Higher global temperatures
4. Sea levels rise

Pay attention to the dates in the reading to get the first two answers in order. Then you have to pay attention to the details think logically about how the first two events affect the last two. It is logical that the activities that add greenhouse gases to the atmosphere lead to higher global temperatures, and as temperatures rise, ice melts and sea levels rise.

2. a. They all deal with burning fossil fuels.

All of the causes of global warming center on burning fossil fuels. Burning fossil fuels for electricity and in automobiles adds greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. This rise in greenhouse gases then leads to higher temperatures and higher sea levels.

3. Widespread use of electricity across the world

Automobiles become the main form of transportation

Increased greenhouse gases in the atmosphere

All of these events eventually lead to sea level rise. Burning fossil fuels for electricity and in automobiles adds greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Higher temperatures lead to melting ice, which leads to higher sea levels.

4. Human activity is linked to rising sea levels because humans have been burning fossil fuels to create electricity and to power automobiles. Burning fossil fuels releases greenhouse gases into the atmosphere and increased greenhouse gases raises global temperatures. The higher temperatures cause ice to melt and sea levels to rise.

5. Hurricane Sandy is not related to burning fossil fuels. Hurricanes are a natural phenomenon that occur every year in the Atlantic Ocean. Although Sandy was a particularly strong hurricane that could be related to global warming, there is no connection in the text that links this strength to burning fossil fuels or rising temperatures.

6. The rise in greenhouse gases resulted from the Industrial Revolution's reliance on burning fossil fuels for energy. Starting in the late 1700's with burning coal to power factories and continuing through the discovery of oil as a power source in the 1800's, humans have increased their use of fossil fuels. It is clear that burning fossil fuels releases greenhouse gases faster than these gases would be released by natural processes.

#### Check Your Skills

1. The worst part of the Great Depression was 1933.

Mechanization led to overproduction.

These details are stated clearly in the passage. The second sentence describes how the Great Depression reached its lowest point in 1933. The third and fourth sentences describe how mechanization led to overproduction.

2. b. Mechanization in factories

The details in the passage state that mechanization in factories led to overproduction of goods.

3. d. Banks lending money for stock purchases

The details in the passage state that banks lending money for people to buy stocks helped fuel over-speculation and over-inflated stock prices.

4. Businesses could not repay loans taken out to mechanize factories.

People borrowed money to buy stocks but could not repay their loans.

Bank failures had two main causes that are both related to loans. Businesses couldn't repay loans and people couldn't repay loans. These two factors caused banks to not have enough money to give people who wanted to get their money out. When the banks ran out of money, they failed.

5. Unregulated banking

You have to follow the thread of how businesses got money to mechanize and how people got money to buy stocks. When you follow this thread, you find unregulated banking led to risky lending practices. When bank loans were not repaid, banks did not have the money to give back to their depositors and they had to close.