# 2.8 Causation in the Age of Reformation and the Wars of Religion

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ **Total: 24 marks**

**KEY WORDS** causation • long-term cause • trigger • thesis • line of reasoning • Defenestration of Prague

## Objective

Build the skills to write a **causation** argument about Unit 2: weighing the religious, political, economic and social causes of the Reformation and the wars of religion.

**You must be able to:**

- sort causes into religious, political, economic and social
- weigh causes against each other and reach a judgement
- write a thesis with a clear line of reasoning

## 1 Key knowledge and worked examples

### Causes of the Reformation's success

| kind | example |
|---|---|
| religious | anger at indulgences and corrupt clergy; desire for a personal faith based on the Bible |
| political | German princes wanting independence from the emperor; Henry VIII wanting an annulment and control of the Church |
| economic | rulers wanting Church lands and wealth; resentment of money sent to Rome |
| technological | printing spread Luther's ideas faster than the Church could stop them |
| social | towns and humanist-educated people open to new ideas; peasants hoping for social change |



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### 

Ask: **which cause explains the timing?** (why 1517, not 1415, when Jan Hus was burned). Printing and princely protection help explain why Luther survived when Hus did not. Ask: **which cause made others possible?** Without princes' protection, printed ideas might still have been crushed.

### A thesis

"Although religious anger at the Church gave the Reformation its message, the support of German princes was the main reason it survived, because it protected Luther and his followers from the emperor."

**Answer shapes:** a thesis; evidence for at least two causes; a reason one mattered more.

## 2 Practice

**2.1** Identify one religious and one political cause of the Reformation's success. [2]



**2.2** Explain why Luther survived in 1521 when Jan Hus had been burned in 1415. [3]




**2.3** Explain how economic motives helped some rulers adopt Protestantism. [3]



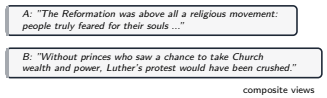
## 3 Exam-style questions

**3.1** Read the two views.

> **A:** "The Reformation was above all a religious movement: people truly feared for their souls and wanted a purer faith."
>
> **B:** "Without princes who saw a chance to take Church wealth and power, Luther's protest would have been crushed like Hus's."

Summaries of the views of two historians (composite)

(a) Identify the main cause given in view B. [1]




(b) Identify one piece of evidence that supports view A. [1]

(c) Explain one way the two views can be combined. [1]



**3.2** The diagram shows causes of the Thirty Years' War.

(a) Identify the event that started the war in 1618. [1]

(b) Explain how the Peace of Augsburg (1555) was a long-term cause of the war. [2]

(c) Explain how Habsburg power was a cause of the war. [2]

(d) Explain why foreign powers joined the war. [2]

(e) Explain how two of the causes in the diagram are connected. [3]




(f) Evaluate the most important cause of the Thirty Years' War. [3]



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## Solutions

Marking: **M1** a correct method, **A1** the correct answer, **B1** an independent mark.

Each answer shows the steps, then the **result**.

**2.1**

religious: anger at indulgences or corrupt clergy, or a wish for a Bible-based faith; political: princes wanting independence from the emperor, or Henry VIII's wish for an annulment

**2.2**

Luther was protected by Frederick the Wise of Saxony, who hid him at Wartburg Castle; printing had spread his ideas so widely that killing him would not stop them; and Charles V needed the princes' support against France and the Ottomans, so he could not act firmly

**2.3**

the Catholic Church owned much land and collected taxes and fees; Protestant rulers could take Church lands and stop payments to Rome; for example, Henry VIII closed the monasteries and sold their lands, which increased royal income and won the support of the gentry who bought them

**3.1**

(a) the political and economic interests of princes

(b) for example: the huge demand for Luther's religious writings, or ordinary people who died for their faith, such as Protestant martyrs under Mary I

(c) religious belief gave people a reason to follow Luther, while princes gave the protection that let the movement survive

**3.2**

(a) the Defenestration of Prague (the Bohemian revolt)

(b) it gave no rights to Calvinists, who had grown strong by 1618; and it left disputes over Church lands unsettled, so tensions built up for decades

(c) the Catholic Habsburgs ruled Austria, Bohemia, Spain and the imperial title; Protestant princes feared they would force Catholicism and stronger central rule on the Empire

(d) Denmark and Sweden wanted to protect Protestants and gain land on the Baltic; and France wanted to weaken the Habsburgs who surrounded it

(e) for example, religion and princes' rights: Protestant princes defended their faith; and also their independence from a Catholic emperor; so religious and political aims supported each other, as in the Bohemian revolt

(f) a thesis that names one cause as most important; evidence for that cause, for example: the war began as a religious revolt in Bohemia; a comparison: for example, religion started the war, but Habsburg power and foreign rivalry, shown by Catholic France fighting Catholic Spain, explain why it lasted thirty years



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