

1.11 Causation in the Renaissance and Age of Discovery

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ Total: 12 marks

KEY WORDS causation 因果

Objective

Build the skills to write **causation** 因果 answers for this period.

You must be able to:

- distinguish a cause from a condition and from a trigger
- rank causes and justify the ranking
- handle a question asking for the most important cause
- avoid a list of causes with no argument

1 Worked examples

Study these first. Each one shows the method for a task used later.

■ Three kinds

A **condition** must be in place for the outcome to be possible. A **cause** actively produces it. A **trigger** determines the timing. Exploration required ship technology (condition), commercial demand (cause) and state rivalry (which often set the timing).

■ Ranking

A ranking needs a criterion: without which cause would the outcome not have occurred at all? Name your criterion before ranking, or the ranking is only a preference.

■ Most important

Answer the question asked: name one cause, argue for it against a named rival, and concede what the rival explains better. A list is not an answer to 'most important'.

2 Practice

2.1 State the difference between a condition and a cause. [2]

2.2 State what a ranking of causes requires. [2]

2.3 Question: "What was the most important cause of European overseas expansion?"

(a) Name your cause and your criterion. [2]

(b) Name the strongest rival cause. [1]

3 Exam-style questions

3.1 Ship design suitable for ocean voyages is best classified as [1]

- A a trigger
- B a condition
- C an outcome
- D a criterion

3.2 A list of five causes with no argument answers a "most important" question [1]

- A fully
- B not at all
- C better than one cause
- D if the list is long enough

3.3 A student argues commercial demand was the most important cause.

(a) State one concession they should make. [1]

(b) Explain how conceding strengthens the answer. [2]

Solutions

2.1 a condition must be in place for the outcome to be possible; a cause actively produces it.

2.2 a stated criterion, such as: without which cause would the outcome not have occurred at all.

2.3 (a) a named cause with a stated criterion. (b) a genuine rival, e.g. state rivalry or technological capacity.

3.1 B. it makes voyages possible without producing them.

3.2 B. the question asks for a judgment, which a list does not give.

3.3 (a) that without the ship technology no demand could have been met. (b) conceding what the rival explains shows the criterion is being applied rather than assumed, and the argument then rests on comparison rather than assertion.