

# Social Studies Skills - Cause and Consequence

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

In **social studies**, **cause and consequence** is a key concept used to understand **why things happen** and **what results from them** — whether in history, politics, economics, geography, or culture.

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## Definition

- **Cause** = The reason **why** something happens.
  - **Consequence** = The result or **what happens next** because of it.
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## In Simple Terms:

**Cause** = The "why"

**Consequence** = The "so what?"

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## Example (History):

**Event:** World War I begins in 1914.

- **Cause:** The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand, plus tension between European powers, alliances, nationalism, and militarism.
  - **Consequences:** Millions died, empires collapsed, new countries formed, and eventually WWII broke out partly because of how WWI ended.
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## Example (Economics):

**Event:** A government raises the minimum wage.

- **Cause:** To reduce poverty and help low-income workers.
  - **Consequences:** Workers may earn more, but some businesses may hire fewer people or raise prices.
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## Example (Geography):

**Event:** A major drought (no water) occurs.

- **Cause:** Climate change and lack of rainfall.
  - **Consequences:** Crop failure, food shortages, and possible migration of people.
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## Why It Matters:

Understanding **cause and consequence** helps students:

- Think critically about events
- See connections between actions and outcomes
- Avoid oversimplified thinking ("this happened because of just one reason")

## The Black Death: A Deadly Disease That Changed the World

A long time ago, in the 1300s, something terrifying swept across Europe, Asia, and parts of Africa. It was a disease called the **Black Death**. It was one of the deadliest events in human history. Millions of people died, and the world was never the same afterward. Let's explore what the Black Death was, what caused it, and what happened because of it.

### What Was the Black Death?

The Black Death was a terrible disease that killed around 25 million people in Europe between 1347 and 1351. That was about one-third of the population at the time!

People who caught it often got sick very quickly. They had high fevers, painful lumps called *buboes* (that's why it's also called the *bubonic plague*), and many died within a few days. People didn't know what caused the illness or how to treat it. This made it even scarier.

There were several things that helped the Black Death spread. One cause was fleas that lived on rats. These fleas carried the plague bacteria. When rats got into people's homes or ships, the fleas would jump off and bite humans. That's how the disease started spreading. Another issue was poor sanitation. In the 1300s, people didn't have garbage trucks, sewers, or clean water. Streets were dirty, people threw waste into the streets, and rats were everywhere. This made it easy for diseases to spread. Trade was also an issue. Ships and traders moved from country to country, bringing goods—but also rats and fleas—with them. The Black Death is believed to have started in Asia and then traveled along trade routes like the Silk Road to Europe. So, the disease didn't just appear out of nowhere. It spread because of fleas, rats, dirty living conditions, and increased travel.

### How Did People React?

People were shocked and scared. They didn't understand what was happening. Many believed it was a punishment from God, while others blamed certain groups of people unfairly. Doctors didn't know how to help. They wore strange bird-like masks filled with herbs, hoping to keep the "bad air" away. Some people tried to flee the cities, while others locked themselves inside. But no one could really escape.

### What happened as a result of the Black Death?

The Black Death had many big consequences—some terrible, but a few that led to change. One consequence was that millions of people died. In some towns, almost everyone was gone. Families were broken, villages were abandoned, and cities were nearly empty. Another result was that there were fewer workers. With so many people gone, there weren't enough farmers to grow food or builders to fix houses. This caused prices to rise and made life harder for everyone. Because of the worker shortage, peasants (poor workers) gained more power. Lords needed them and had to offer better pay and living conditions to keep them. This helped weaken the feudal system, where kings and nobles had all the power. A surprising consequence was better hygiene and health changes. After the plague, people started thinking more about cleanliness. Over time, cities began to build better water systems and cleaner streets. **It** also caused changes in religion and beliefs. Many people lost faith in the Church because it couldn't stop the plague. Others became more spiritual in different ways. Art and literature also changed, often showing more emotion and fear of death.



### Why Is It Important to Learn About the Black Death?

The Black Death was a tragic and scary time in history. But it also shows how big events can change the world.

It teaches us that:

- Diseases have causes, and it's important to understand how they spread.
- Big events have consequences—sometimes even ones we don't expect.
- People can learn and grow after hard times.

Today, we have better science, medicine, and technology to fight diseases, but we still need to learn from the past. The Black Death reminds us how powerful nature can be—and how important it is to care for each other when times get hard.

### Task:

Use one colour of highlighter, and highlight all of the **CAUSES**. Use a different colour of highlighter and highlight all of the **CONSEQUENCES**.