Researching Causes and Effects

Subject Areas: Social Studies, Science and English/Language Arts

Grade Level: 6 – 12

Lesson Objective:
Students will use a diagram to help them research and write about the causes and effects of an event or situation.

Common Core State Standards¹:
College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Reading:
Standard 7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards for Writing:
Standard 1. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
Standard 6. Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

Overview:
Analyzing the causes and effects of an event or situation can be challenging and sometimes controversial. Students need to think critically and organize what is often a large amount of information from multiple perspectives. However, doing so with a visual diagram can make the process much more manageable. In this lesson, students use the Thinking – Cause and Effect template in this folder to help them research the causes and short- and long-term effects of an event or situation: Inspiration Maps Starter Screen>Templates>Thinking – Cause and Effect. Completed diagrams can then be used to help develop oral presentations and/or written papers about the event.
Preparation:
- Access to library resources and/or the Internet would also be helpful for student research.

Lesson:
1. Tell students that they will choose an event or situation and research its causes and effects. For example, if you are studying the Civil Rights Movement, ask them to choose a significant event that occurred during the movement. They will use Inspiration to help organize their notes and thinking.

2. Open the Thinking - Cause and Effect template shown on the previous page and talk students through it so they understand the assignment. They will use the template to help them organize and better understand the information. Completed diagrams can serve as visual aids for presentations to the class at the end of the project.

3. Open the Cause and Effect example file in this folder and talk the students through it, as well, so they know what is expected.
4. Explain that students can add visual **Images**, as well as text, to their diagrams. Adding **Images** will help them and their readers to better understand and remember the content. Students can use **Images** from their **Camera Roll**, upload **Images** from the Internet, and/or take photos (if iPad has a camera) and insert directly into diagram.

5. Encourage students to add **Hyperlinks** to their sources of information, including any multimedia files available on the Internet.

6. Inform students they can use **Notes** to add additional information as they complete the project. They can go to **Outline View** to continue writing about and organizing the information.

7. Organize students into groups of 2-3 to complete the project. Tell students they will choose an event to research within a certain range of possibilities, such as an event or situation related to civil rights. You might also provide students with a specific list of possible events or situations to research.

8. Students may print and/or share documents. Tap to print, mail or send work to a different App, Dropbox or iTunes.

9. Lead a class discussion about the causes and effects of the events the students presented. Were there any “common threads” among the events? What events resulted in the longest-lasting changes, and why?

**Adaptations / Extensions:**

- Incorporate primary source documents by providing students with first-hand accounts of the events.

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