

Exercise walk-through

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

eXercise

You must be able to

- separate doctrinal, political, technological and social causes
- argue for a most important cause against a named rival
- use a counterfactual test to rank causes
- concede what a rival cause explains better

Method — Four kinds

Doctrinal: the content of the claims. **Political:** rulers' interests. **Technological:** printing. **Social:** existing grievance and literacy. A strong answer names at least three.

Method — The counterfactual test

Ask: without this cause, would the outcome have occurred? Without printing, reform arguments circulate slowly; without princely support, they are suppressed. Both tests point to necessity, which is why ranking needs a criterion beyond necessity alone.

Method — Concede

If you argue printing was decisive, concede that printing alone would have spread arguments that no ruler protected. Naming what your cause cannot do is what makes the ranking an argument.

Practice 2.1 ■ 2 marks

Name four kinds of cause relevant to the Reformation.

Solution 2.1

Method: Four kinds

Worked steps

doctrinal, political, technological, social **B2**.

Practice 2.2 ■ 2 marks

State the counterfactual test and one limit of it.

Solution 2.2

Method: The counterfactual test

Worked steps

ask whether the outcome would have occurred without the cause **B1**; the limit is that several causes may each be necessary, so necessity alone does not rank them **B1**.

Practice 2.3 ■ 1 mark

You argue that political support was the most important cause.

- (a) State the rival you must answer.
- (b) State what you would concede to it.

Solution 2.3

Method: Concede

Worked steps

(a) printing, or the doctrinal content itself **B1**. (b) a real concession, e.g. that without printed vernacular argument there would have been nothing for rulers to protect **B2**.

Exam-style 3.1 ■ 1 mark

A counterfactual test asks whether the outcome would have occurred

- A** sooner
- B** without the cause
- C** elsewhere
- D** later

Solution 3.1

Method: The counterfactual test

A sooner

B without the cause



C elsewhere

D later

Worked steps

B. removal of the cause is the test.

Exam-style 3.2 ■ 1 mark

Naming what your preferred cause cannot explain

- A** weakens the answer
- B** turns the ranking into an argument
- C** is irrelevant
- D** is a narrative

Solution 3.2

Method: Concede

- A weakens the answer
- B turns the ranking into an argument**
- C is irrelevant
- D is a narrative



Worked steps

- B. it shows a criterion is being applied.

Exam-style 3.3 ■ 1 mark

Two causes both pass the counterfactual test.

- (a) State what this shows.
- (b) Explain what criterion could then rank them.

Solution 3.3

Method: The counterfactual test

Worked steps

(a) that both were necessary **B1**. (b) a further criterion such as which cause was scarcer, or which explains the timing and geography **B1**, since necessity alone cannot discriminate **B1**.