

# What is Continuity and Change over Time?

**Quick Definition:** Thinking historically means identifying and exploring the reasons behind both what has changed and what has stayed the same within a given time period or around a specific historical event.

## Continuities in \_\_\_\_\_

Whether within one era or across historical eras, historians detect patterns, or **continuities**.

What stayed the same?

Sometimes, history looks so different to us in the present, that it's important to look for continuities.



## Changes in \_\_\_\_\_

People change. Countries change. Cultures change. Historians tries to uncover how these things change over time.

What changed?

Before we draw comparisons to the past, we have to seek out the way things have changed over time.

### Practice!

When we understand how things both changed and stayed the same over time, we are better able to explain the uniqueness and interconnectedness within the human experience.

<p>Apply the thinking skill of Continuity and Change over Time to yourself. How are you the same as you were 10 years ago? How are you different?</p>	<p>Would maps from 1776, 1863, and 1975 tell the same story about America? Explain using the concept of Continuity and Change over Time.</p>

**Quick Definition:** Thinking historically means considering why certain things happened and what effects occurred because of an event, development, or process. It also means recognizing that there are multiple causes of and multiple effects from any event, development, or process.

How did we get here?

Historians often identify a primary cause of a historical event. This is never the only cause, but the evidence suggests it is the most significant.

**Secondary Causes**



To better understand an event it is always helpful to identify smaller causes behind it.



When we identify and evaluate multiple causes, we uncover the *complexity* of the past.

**Historical Event**

**Practice!**

<p>Think of a school assembly as historical event. List a primary cause of the assembly followed by two secondary causes.</p>	<p>Why is knowing the cause of something helpful for better understanding it?</p>
<p>Primary Cause: Secondary Cause 1: Secondary Cause 2:</p>	



# What is Comparison?

**Quick Definition:** Thinking historically means identifying both the similarities and the differences between the people, places, events, and ideas studied in history.

Historical Moment 1

Historical Moment 2

Similarities

Even when difficult, historians look for multiple similarities when comparing historical moments.

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Different in regards to...

When identifying differences between historical moments, it is helpful to name the specific factor that makes them different. For instance:

Abolition Movement from 1830s-1865.

The Abolition and Civil Rights Movements are **different in regards to:** their time period.

Civil Rights Movement from 1950s-1960s.

## Practice!

When our comparisons include both similarities and differences, we avoid being too absolute in our assessment of the past. We leave room for complexity and nuance.

When things look very different from each other, why is it still important to find similarities?

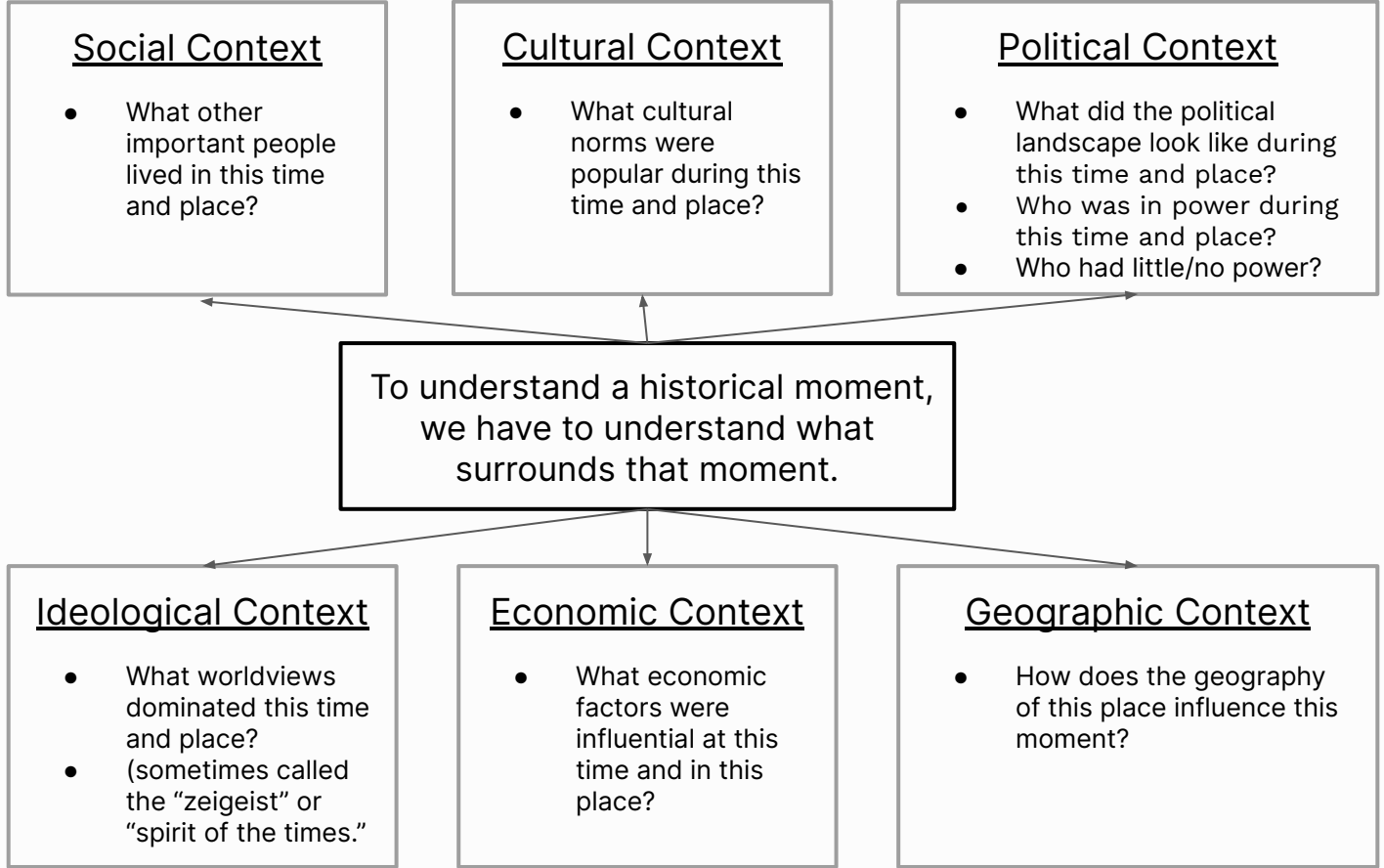
How can comparing historical moments help us better understand them?

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# What is Contextualization?

**Quick Definition:** Thinking historically means interpreting historical events, developments, or processes in light of the surrounding historical context.



When we explore how a historical moment fits within its broader historical context, we avoid over simplified narratives and can see the complex and nuanced nature of history.

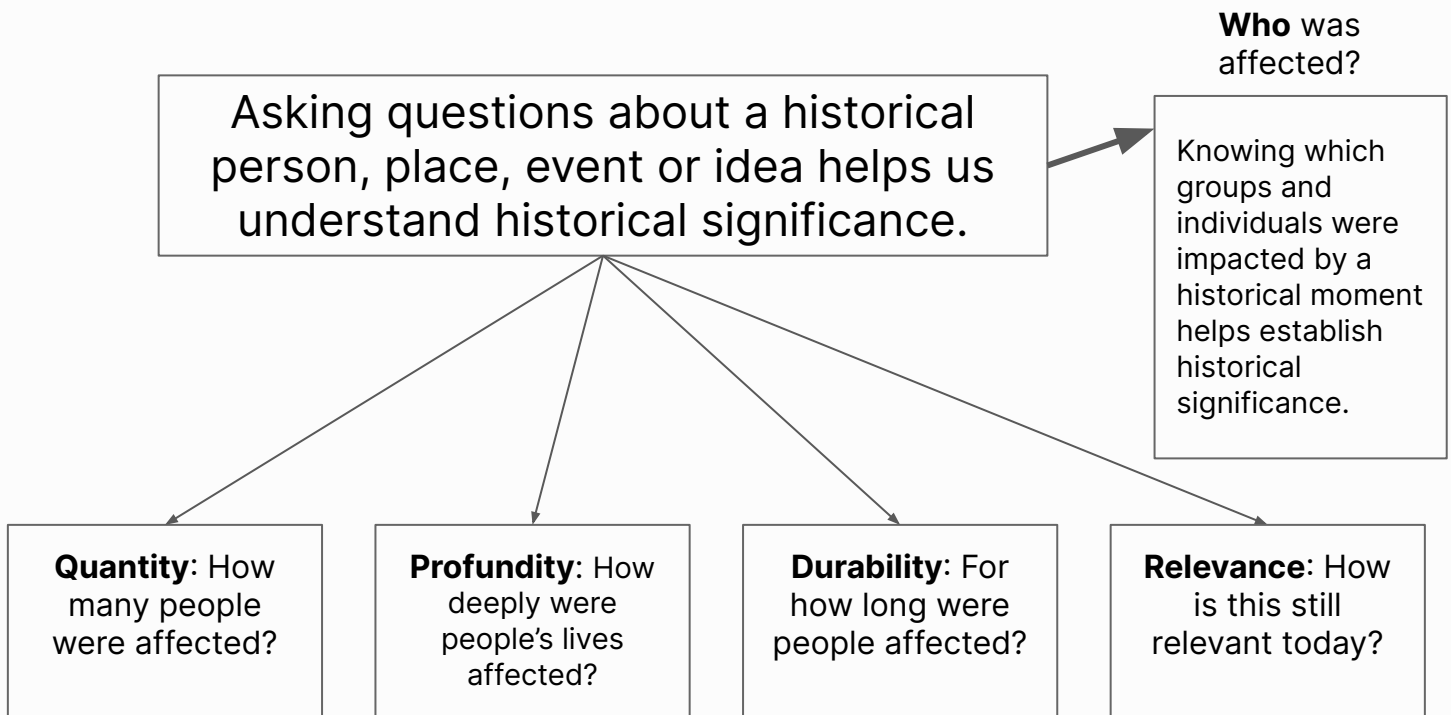
**Practice!**

<p>Think of an example when people misunderstood something because they did not know context. Write it below.</p>	<p>If presented with a 1799 Speech by President John Adams, what are three questions you could explore to find out its context?</p>
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1.</li> <li>2.</li> <li>3.</li> </ol>



# What is Historical Significance?

**Quick Definition:** Thinking historically means identifying and exploring the reasons why historical people, places, events, or ideas are worth remembering; that is, their historical significance.



When we understand a historical moment's significance, it takes on meaning, and thus, gives us additional purpose in our study of the past.

## Practice!

<p>Write an event in your life or the world around you: _____ Using the above questions, what makes that event historically significant?</p>	<p>Does something have to be significant for everyone for it to be historically significant? Explain.</p>

# What is Historical Empathy?

**Quick Definition:** Thinking historically means seeking to understand the past on its own terms by considering the context and perspectives of the era. It also means being aware of our own point of view to avoid presentism in our evaluation of the past.

**Presentism** is imposing present day standards on the past.

Historians are humble and aware of their own personal assumptions and contexts as they study the past.  
Levesque, 2008.

**Thinking Historically means listening to the past.**

Historians ask: "Why did a person or group, given their circumstances, act a certain way?"  
Yeager and Foster, 2001.

Historians look for multiple sources of evidence, such as by considering counter narratives or alternate perspectives, to better understand the past.

Historians *can* make moral judgements of the past, but must do so thoughtfully and be honest about their own moral position.

When we practice historical empathy, we acknowledge how our present lens may impact the way we study and evaluate the past.

## Practice!

Imagine you met someone from another country and learned that they have a different value about a particular issue. What is one question you could ask them to better understand why?

If you were studying the impact of the American Revolution, what are three potential sources that could best describe this historical moment?

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

