**Introduce the terms**

1. Introduce the terms *cause* and *consequence* if students have not suggested them. Invite students to provide other statements that illustrate cause and consequence. As a class generate a definition of each term.

2. Using the activities that follow, introduce three basic attributes of cause and consequence and, with older students, two advanced attributes.

### Basic attributes

1. Events have immediate and underlying causes.
2. Consequences can be intended or unintended, and immediate or delayed.
3. All prior events are not causes. All subsequent events are not consequences. There must be reason to believe that one event influenced the other.

### Advanced attributes

4. Events have different types of causes (e.g., social, political, economic, cultural, or psychological).
5. Consequences may be direct or indirect.

**Attribute #1:** Events have immediate and underlying causes.

1. Provide students with a copy of *Midnight accident* (Activity Sheet A). Invite students to discuss in groups and then share with the class all the causes of the incident. Introduce the distinction between *immediate causes*—the events that are most closely connected with the incident (e.g., the victim’s need for cigarettes, the victim was hit by a car)—and *underlying causes*—broader circumstances that led up to or less directly contributed to the incident (e.g., poor road maintenance, lax law enforcement). Ask students to sort the causes they identified into these two categories.

2. Point out to students that while some causes have a greater influence on an event than others, events rarely have a single cause.
Introduce attribute #2

**Attribute #2:** Consequences can be intended or unintended, and immediate or delayed.

- Ask students to describe a situation in their own lives where something unexpected happened as a result of an action. In addition, ask students to describe a situation where some consequences were immediate and others happened quite some time after the event. Provide students with a copy of *Goat, Canucks, Goat* (Activity Sheet B). Invite students to read the story and brainstorm the actual and potential consequences of the Canuck fan’s action. Ask students to sort their list of consequences into intended and unintended, and immediate and delayed.

Introduce attribute #3

**Attribute #3:** All prior events are not causes. All subsequent events are not consequences. There must be reason to believe that one event influenced the other.

- Provide students with a copy of *Sorting events* (Activity Sheet C). Explain to students that the events are associated with the Prince’s marriage to Cinderella in the familiar fairy tale. Invite students to sort the list into two categories: events before the marriage and events after the marriage. Once students have completed this initial sorting activity, instruct them to sort the two piles of cards in the following manner:
  - sort the “before” events into two categories: causes of the marriage of Cinderella and the Prince and simply preceding events; and
  - sort the “after” events into two categories: consequences of the incident and simply subsequent events.

- Discuss with students the need for evidence in the identification of a cause-consequence relationship. Invite students to think of an example of an incident in their life (e.g., doing well on an essay assignment). Invite students to create a web such as the one below, identifying which of the prior and subsequent events are causes and consequences of the incident by colouring and linking them with arrows.

![cause_and_consequence_diagram.png](attachment:cause_and_consequence_diagram.png)
Introduce attribute #4  
**Attribute #4:** Events have different types of causes (e.g., social, political, economic, cultural, or psychological).

- Review the scenario presented in *Midnight accident* (Activity Sheet A) and the suggested and implied causes of the accident. Guide students in describing the types of causes that contributed to the accident.

- Identify a school, community, regional, or global event that is of interest to students. An example might be closing an after-school youth program. Invite students to brainstorm the possible causes in each of the following categories: social, cultural, political, economic, educational, environmental, and psychological.

Introduce attribute #5  
**Attribute #5:** Consequences may be direct or indirect.

- Ask students if they have heard the term “ripple effect” and ask them to provide an example of the ripple effect. If necessary, provide the following example:

  *Susan gave apples from her tree to her neighbour, Mrs. Jones. Mrs. Jones made apple pies and gave one to her friend, Kevin. Kevin was so pleased he invited his new neighbours over for dessert. The neighbours had such a good time they decided to host a block party.*

- Point out to students that consequences can be direct—they follow from the event without additional action required—or indirect—they result only because of the consequences of the event and not simply because of the event on its own. For example, while making the pie is a direct consequence of receiving the apples from Susan, Kevin inviting guests over to his house is an indirect consequence because it depended not simply on Susan giving the apples but also on what Mrs. Jones did with them. Provide students with a copy of *Web of effects* (Activity Sheet D). Invite them to consider a current or historic school, community, regional, or global event and brainstorm the direct and indirect consequences.

Reinforce the concept  
- Introduce Student Resource, *Cause and consequence*. Review each of the elements: the key attributes of the concept, reasons for understanding the concept, similar terminology, and the self-assessment rubric. Help students create their own examples representing each attribute. Encourage students to refer to this resource when using these concepts in the future.

- Invite students to explore cause and consequence further using a relevant contemporary, historic or fictional event they are studying.
Apply the concept in everyday teaching

➤ At appropriate times over the ensuing several weeks, ask students to use this concept in regular classroom situations, including the following:
  • identifying the causes and consequences of scientific phenomena;
  • exploring the causes and consequences of historic or current events;
  • understanding the causes and consequences of personal actions in real life and in literature.

Assess student understanding

➤ Encourage students to refer to the rubric found in the Student Resource when self-assessing their understanding of these concepts.
  • Allow students opportunities to apply the concepts two or three times without evaluation.
  • Guide students in interpreting and using the rubric to assess their own responses.
  • Encourage students to use the rubric whenever they use these concepts.

To use the rubric for teacher evaluation of student work, remove the first person (student) reference from each descriptor.
Midnight accident

Just before midnight one dark and stormy night, a man called John Smith, an engine mechanic, was sitting in an isolated cabin in the woods. As he reached for a cigarette, he noticed he had only one left. Glancing at his watch, he realized that he had just enough time to hop in his car, and drive to the gas station down the road to buy cigarettes before it closed. As John pulled out of his lane and onto the highway in his car, it was hit by his neighbour, who had been drinking and was unable to stop his car soon enough on the icy road. Smith was killed instantly. Later, as the townspeople were discussing the sad event, they shook their heads one after another and said, “We always knew smoking would kill John.” It is worth noting that local officials had long been warned of the dangers of that part of the highway, especially in winter, and yet they seemed uninterested in doing anything about it. Apparently the residents of that part of the town did not have any influence with local authorities. Others claimed that the neighbour who smashed into John had been charged with drinking and driving earlier in the year. They suggested that stronger penalties for drinking and driving should be in place. Others wondered if liquor laws had been more faithfully enforced in the town whether the neighbour would have consumed as much alcohol.

Adapted from: Heaven & Hell on Earth: The Massacre of the “Black” Donnellys, part of the Great Unsolved Mysteries in Canadian History series: www.canadianmysteries.ca.
Goat, Canucks, Goat

Joel Nagtegaal is a long-suffering Vancouver Canucks fan with a big heart. In April 2009, Nagtegaal and his friends decided to grow beards during the NHL playoffs. The beards soon became goatees and the great goat challenge was born.

Nagtegaal and ten of his friends pledged to buy a goat for a village in Kenya every time the Canucks won a playoff game. Their vision was 16 goats by the time the Canucks had the Stanley Cup in hand. Well, the Canucks did not win the cup but the villagers in Kenya were the true winners.

Nagtegaal and his friends went public with their plan by creating a Facebook page. After transforming the “Go, Canucks, Go” chant to “Goat, Canucks, Goat,” the campaign hit the internet and took off. The number of Facebook members quickly grew to 425, and continued to grow. The goat-o-meter soon soared to 125. Nagtegaal and his friends created an official website that received 8,500 hits within days. Unfortunately, the Canucks managed only six playoff wins, but fans donated $17,000–enough to buy 684 goats.

The villagers in Kenya are grateful for the goats. Goats are easy to take care of and eat almost anything. They multiply quickly. The villagers use the milk to feed their children and they sell the baby goats to pay their school fees.

The villagers predict the Canucks will have better luck next time. They will pray for them to win the Stanley Cup.

## Consequences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Immediate consequences</th>
<th>Delayed consequences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Intended consequences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unintended consequences</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sources: [http://canucks.nhl.com/club/news.htm?id=453621](http://canucks.nhl.com/club/news.htm?id=453621);
Sorting events

Incident: Cinderella and the Prince marry
Sort the cards into two categories: events before the incident, events after the incident
Sort the “before” events into two categories: causes, preceding events
Sort the “after” events into two categories: consequences, subsequent events

- Cinderella is mistreated by her stepmother and stepsisters.
- Cinderella is not allowed to go to the ball.
- The fairy godmother magically makes Cinderella a gown and carriage so she can go to the ball, but she warns Cinderella that she must be home by midnight.
- Cinderella meets the Prince at the ball.
- The Prince and Cinderella dance.
- The Prince is smitten by Cinderella’s beauty and charm.
- Cinderella runs away from the ball at midnight before the magic spell runs out, but she loses her glass slipper as she runs away.
- The Prince discovers that Cinderella’s foot is the only one in his kingdom that will fit the glass slipper.
- The stepsisters were astonished to find out Cinderella was the beautiful princess.
- The Prince and Cinderella live happily ever after.
- Cinderella is freed from the cruel treatment of her stepmother and stepsisters.
- The old King dies and the Prince is crowned King.
Cause and consequence
the factors or circumstances that cause something to happen and
the consequent results or impact on future events

What are the key attributes or features of these concepts?

Events have immediate and underlying causes.

Consequences can be intended or unintended, and immediate or delayed.

All prior events are not causes. All subsequent events are not consequences. There must be reason to believe that one event influenced the other.

Events have different types of causes (e.g., social, political, economic, cultural, or psychological).

Consequences may be direct or indirect.

EXAMPLE: I did not read the letter because I was not wearing my glasses (immediate cause) so I missed the meeting. My glasses were broken and I could not afford to get them fixed because I lost my job (underlying cause).

EXAMPLE: I bought my neighbours a gift of expensive chocolates to thank them for mowing my lawn. One of the neighbours was delighted with the gift (intended, immediate consequence) and the other thought I was being too generous (unintended, immediate consequence). A week later, one of the neighbours became very sick from eating a chocolate containing nuts (unintended, delayed consequence). I did not know she was allergic to nuts.

EXAMPLE: I left the house after having an argument with my wife and had a car accident. The accident may have had any number of causes and had nothing to do with the argument. Following the accident, I was late for work and I forgot a lunch appointment. My lateness may have been a consequence of the accident, but missing the lunch appointment may have had numerous other causes (e.g., forgetting to record the appointment in my calendar).

EXAMPLE: The park was closed at 8 pm on Fridays to discourage large group gatherings of young people (social); to save money (economic); to create a quieter neighbourhood in respect of religious celebrations (cultural).

EXAMPLE: Bleeding is a direct result of cutting my finger. Getting blood on my shirt is an indirect consequence of cutting my finger.

My own example:
Why is understanding these concepts important?

- Increasing understanding: If I can identify multiple causes of events, I can understand them more fully. 
  *It is easy to say a war was caused by one country’s actions, but there are many other causes to consider.*

- Preventing something from happening again: If I know the causes of events, I can prevent a situation from recurring. 
  *I didn’t do well on the exam because I didn’t study until the night before.*

- Thinking ahead when making decisions: If I consider the short- and long-term consequences of my actions, I can make better decisions. 
  *If I accept this job, I may have more spending money, but I will also have less time and greater expenses because I need to have clothes for work and need to get to and from my job.*

How are other terms related to these concepts?

**Similar terms**

- Cause
  - factor
  - influence

- Consequence
  - effect
  - outcome
  - result
  - impact

**Confusing terms**

- Correlation
  *Events that happen just prior to or just after an incident may not have any causal relationship with the incident.*
**How well do I understand the concepts?**

**Assessing my understanding of “cause/consequence”**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Accomplished</th>
<th>Good</th>
<th>Basic</th>
<th>Needs improvement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Recognize examples of the concepts:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can easily identify examples of the concepts, including complex or difficult examples.</td>
<td>I can identify most examples of the concepts, but I sometimes have trouble with the more difficult or complex examples.</td>
<td>I can identify obvious examples of the concepts, but I am often confused by the complex or difficult examples.</td>
<td>I need help identifying even simple examples of the concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explain why the concept does or does not apply:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can easily explain when a suggestion is not an example of the concepts, even in complex or difficult situations.</td>
<td>I can explain in most cases when a suggestion is not an example of the concepts, but I have trouble explaining the more difficult or complex examples.</td>
<td>I can explain in obvious cases why a suggestion is or is not an example of these concepts, but I often have trouble explaining the complex or difficult examples.</td>
<td>I need help explaining even simple examples of the concepts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Provide my own examples of the concepts:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can think of my own examples of the concepts, even in very complex situations.</td>
<td>I can think of my own example of the concepts most of the time, but I have trouble thinking of examples in the more complex or difficult situations.</td>
<td>I can think of my own examples some of the time, but I often have trouble thinking of examples in complex or difficult situations.</td>
<td>I need help thinking of examples even in simple situations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>