

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

## Criteria for Determining Historical Significance

Events, people, developments are determined to be significant if:

1. It had an **IMPACT**:
  - **Depth of impact** - consequences were deeply felt emotionally, the impact was profound
  - **Scope of impact** - many people were affected
  - **Duration of impact** - people were affected for a long time after the event
2. It resulted in **CHANGE**:
  - **Cause & Effect** - the event lead to other important changes or events
3. It is **REVEALING**:
  - ....tell us something about how people thought, felt or behaved at the time
  - ....tells us about the values of society at the time (what they thought was important)
4. It is **NOVEL**:
  - it is different from something that came before it... it's new and different, the first of its kind!
5. It is **CONSTRUCTED**:
  - people at the time thought it was interesting or important
  - It is part of the "**narrative**", the dominant story that most people believe to be true

*An event that meets multiple criteria should be considered more significant than an event that only meets one or two criteria.*

Historical Significance varies over time and from group to group. That is, what is considered significant for one group may not be considered significant for another group.

And, Historical Significance depends a great deal on Historical Perspective and context.

When you are explaining or justifying why you think something is significant, you MUST use the criteria in your response.

*Ex. Barack Obama's election as US President was significant because he was the first African-American to be elected to that position.*