

Sequencing

When you read history, you need to understand the sequence, or order, of the events about which you are reading. Knowing what happened first or what caused something to happen will keep you focused and lead you to a better understanding of what you are reading.

TIPS FOR SEQUENCING

Here are some ways you can figure out the sequence of events in a history text:

- **Look for dates.** Put the dates in order as you read. They will not always be presented in order in the text. Write down the event that took place next to the date.
- **Look for numbers or phrases indicating how long a period of time lasted.** Sometimes you will see a date and then a reference to a period of time, such as *for the following 300 years*, or *for the next decade*. Use these references to fill in the sequence of events you are recording.
- **Look for words linking events by time order.** These are words such as *first*, *next*, and *last*.
- **Look for words or phrases linking events by cause.** Sometimes you will see words or phrases such as *caused*, *led to*, *because of*, *as a result of*, *consequently*, and so on. These words tell you that events are linked by cause—one event happened *because* another event led to it.

Sometimes, even with all these tips, it can still be difficult to figure out the sequence of events. When this happens, pick out one event and read about what happened immediately before or after it. Do whatever you need to pick out the thread of the sequence—you can even start with an event that you know happened last, and work backward from there.

PRACTICING SEQUENCING

Read the following excerpt from your chapter. Then use what you learned about sequencing to answer the questions.

Asoka died in 233 BC, and the empire began to fall apart soon afterward. His sons fought for power, and invaders threatened the empire. In 184 BC the last Mauryan king was killed by one of his generals. India divided into smaller states once again.

1. What are the dates, words, and phrases in this excerpt that would help you build a sequence of events?

2. Did Asoka's sons fight for power before or after the end of the Mauryan empire?

3. If you were making a time line based on this excerpt, which event would you put first? Which event would you put last?

EVALUATING

Evaluating your Skills Did the tips for sequencing help you answer the questions? Use the rubric below to evaluate your understanding of sequencing.

Rubric

- Were you able to pick out dates, words, and phrases to help you understand the sequence of events?
- Were you able to determine the end of the Mauryan Empire using a date and relate the struggle for power by Asoka's sons to that date?
- On a separate piece of paper draw a time line of the events presented in this excerpt.