

**CRISIS, CIVIL WAR, AND RECONSTRUCTION****Reading Strategy****Recognize Sequence**

A sequence is when one event follows another. Being able to recognize sequence can help you trace significant actions leading up to a major event and will help you identify cause-and-effect relationships between historical events.

Events do not always appear in a text in chronological order. As a result, using clue words can help you identify the sequence of events. Dates indicate when events took place, and signal words such as *before*, *then*, *following*, and *later* often indicate when events took place in relation to one another. Asking questions about the cause-and-effect relationships between events can also help you recognize sequence. Timelines and flowcharts are helpful when organizing information about a sequence of events.

Read the following paragraph about the beginning of the Mexican-American War:

A month before James K. Polk took office as President, Congress had narrowly voted to annex Texas. Polk endorsed the Texan claim to the land south and west of the Nueces River as far as the Rio Grande. Mexico refused to recognize the annexation. Polk sent troops to occupy the contested borderland between the two rivers, and in May 1846, a Mexican patrol clashed with U.S. soldiers, killing eleven. Polk asked Congress to declare war. On May 13, Congress voted overwhelmingly to declare war on Mexico.

On the basis of the information in the paragraph above, you could record this sequence of events:

1. Texas annexed
2. Polk endorsed Texan claim to land
3. Mexico refused to recognize annexation
4. Polk sent troops to contested borderland
5. Mexican patrol clashed with U.S. soldiers
6. Polk asked Congress to declare war
7. Congress declared war on Mexico

**Directions:** Read the text in Section 1 under the heading "Slavery and Western Expansion." On a separate sheet of paper, list important events surrounding the Wilmot Proviso and the Compromise of 1850. Then, on a separate sheet of paper, answer the questions below.

**Hint:** As you read, look for dates. Dates will help you place events in the correct sequence. For each date, you should have at least one matching event.

1. Which took place first—the proposal of the Wilmot Proviso or the formation of the Free-Soil Party?
2. Did Congress pass the Compromise of 1850 before or after California applied to enter the Union?
3. What law caused many northern states to pass personal liberty laws?