

# Reading Comprehension



## HISTORY: THE UNCORRUPTED ELIZABETHAN ENGLISH OF TANGIER ISLAND

*Before reading the text, please find Tangier Island (Virginia, USA) on Google Maps. Here is the URL:<https://maps.google.com/>*

When it comes to the history of any country there are a million things one could talk about. In the case of the history of the USA, we could discuss facts and events related to indigenous people, who were there long before Europeans first set foot in the country. We could deal with slavery and how racial issues in the US are an extremely delicate topic nowadays. We could address other major events in the history of this country, such as the Declaration of Independence (July 4<sup>th</sup>, 1776); Lewis and Clark's expedition, thanks to which a practical route to the West Coast was found; the American Civil War, which took place from 1861 to 1865; the Wall Street Crash of 1929; President Truman's authorization to drop the atomic bomb on Hiroshima or, more recently, Donald Trump being elected president.

Clearly, history is made up of important turning points like the ones listed above. Usually, these are the events, heroes, and places that make their way into textbooks, movies, novels, etc. But, hidden in the vastness of a country like the US, there are also less well-known events and places which also deserve some attention. This is the case of Tangier Island, which is located in the middle of Virginia's Chesapeake Bay (Can you find Chesapeake Bay on Google Maps?).

To understand the singularity of this place, let us briefly go back in time. As you probably know, England and the country we now know as the US bear a close historical relation. In what was called the New World (that is, America), Jamestown (Virginia) was the first permanent British settlement, which was established in 1607. The State of Virginia was named after Queen Elizabeth I, who was also known as the Virgin Queen.

Queen Elizabeth died in 1603, and James I was proclaimed King. The New World still awaited more explorers. Thus, with King James' blessing, Captain John Smith and a group of men left England in December 1606 and crossed the Atlantic on three ships: the Discovery, the Susan Constant, and the Godspeed.<sup>1</sup> Four months later, on April 1607, they arrived in Virginia, and eventually Jamestown was established, which was named after King James I. A year later, John Smith discovered Tangier Island, and the British claimed it. Although this was the first time that white men set foot on this island, the area was not unknown to the Pocomoke Indians, who had been using the place as a summer retreat for many years. The first permanent European settlement on the island was founded in 1686, and most of the original settlers came from Southwest England.

<sup>1</sup> Just so you know, "Godspeed" is an old-fashioned word used to wish somebody good luck before their journey.

If you look at the map on Google, you will notice that Tangier Island sits right in the middle of Chesapeake Bay, far from the mainland in all directions. This obviously made it very hard for its inhabitants to travel off the island. As a result of this peculiar geographical situation, the island remained an isolated place, thus an old-fashioned English accent could be preserved. In his book called *Teaching English Language Learners Worldwide*, T. J. Baker (2012: 126) says that it sounds like “an uncorrupted Elizabethan-era English”.

If you want to listen to the way these people talk, just type “the odd accent of Tangier VA” on YouTube and you can see for yourself. If you do, that is, if you listen to the Restoration-era English of Tangier Island, you will in fact be witnessing a piece of American history. And, if you feel like making a trip there, I’d suggest you do it soon, because it seems that the sea level is rising and this fascinating place is slowly being swallowed by seawater.

Unfortunately, Tangier may eventually disappear, and with it, a piece of the history of both America and Britain will vanish, a piece of history which is still alive in the 21<sup>st</sup> century through the unique dialect of Tangier Island.



## Notes



## **Exercises** (see answers on page 277)

## Exercise 1:

**Fill in the gaps with the suitable verb form of the verbs in the following table.**

<b>know</b> (saber)	<b>arrive</b> (llegar)	<b>drop</b> (tirar)	<b>remain</b> (permanecer)
<b>travel</b> (viajar)	<b>take place</b> (tener lugar)	<b>call</b> (llamar)	<b>live</b> (vivir)

- 1) Indigenous people \_\_\_\_\_ in America before the Europeans \_\_\_\_\_.
  - 2) The Wall Street Crash \_\_\_\_\_ in 1929.
  - 3) The first atomic bomb was \_\_\_\_\_ on Hiroshima.
  - 4) Queen Elizabeth I of England was also \_\_\_\_\_ the Virgin Queen.
  - 5) John Smith and a group of English men \_\_\_\_\_ to the New World on three ships.
  - 6) The Pocomoke Indians already \_\_\_\_\_ of Tangier Island.
  - 7) Because Tangier Island is so isolated its dialect has \_\_\_\_\_ intact.

### Exercise 2:

**Complete the following sentences using information from the text. There may be more than one possible answer to each sentence!**

- 1) Among the important events in the history of the US, we could....

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- 2) There is an island in the Chesapeake Bay...

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- 3) After Queen Elizabeth died...

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- 4) Capitan John Smith arrived in...

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- 5) The majority of the original settlers of Tangier Island...

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Tangier Island is an isolated place because...

If the sea swallows Tangier Island, a piece of history...



## Notes

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## Glossary

<b>to set foot in (some place)</b>	v expr.	pisar
<b>to address</b>	v.	abordar, tratar
<b>to take place</b>	idiom.	ocurrir, tener lugar
<b>to be made up of (sth.)</b>	expr.	estar compuesto, -a de
<b>hidden</b>	adj.	escondido, -a
<b>vastness</b>	n.	inmensidad
<b>well-known</b>	adj.	conocido, -a
<b>settlement</b>	n.	asentamiento, colonia
<b>to establish</b>	v.	establecer
<b>to await</b>	v.	esperar, aguardar
<b>blessing</b>	n.	bendición
<b>eventually</b>	adv.	finalmente, con el tiempo
<b>to found</b>	v.	fundar
<b>settler</b>	n.	colonio, -a
<b>to sit</b>	v.	estar (en un lugar), encontrarse
<b>isolated</b>	adj.	aislado, -a
<b>to witness</b>	v.	presenciar
<b>to swallow</b>	v.	tragar, engullir
<b>to vanish</b>	v.	desvanecerse



## Notes

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For more information about the National Assessment of Educational Progress, visit [ope.ed.gov/nass](http://www.ope.ed.gov/nass).



# Use of English

## Past Tenses

### 1. REGULAR PAST

**Remember:** Add "ed" to the infinitive to form regular past.

**Intransitive Verbs:** Verb+ed + Prepositional Phrase + Adverbial Phrase

I walked to the post office to send my letters yesterday. (walk + ed)  
He moved to New York last year. (move + d)  
The water evaporated very quickly. (evaporate + d)

**Transitive Verbs:** Verb+ed + Nominal Phrase + Adverbial Phrase

You visited my brother last summer. (visit + ed)  
She kissed her daughter last night. (kiss + ed)  
They watched a movie last Saturday. (watch + ed)

**Pay attention:** To the spelling conditions of some regular verbs in the past.

1) If a regular verb ends in a silent **e**, add **/-d/** in the simple past:

**Example:** close=closed

2) If a regular verb ends in a vowel + **y**, add **/-ed/** in the simple past:

**Example:** play=played

3) If a regular verb ends in a consonant + **y**, add **/-ied/** in the simple past (the **y** becomes an **i** followed by **/-ed/**):

**Example:** marry=married

4) If a regular verb has a consonant after a stressed vowel at the end, the consonant is doubled:

**Examples:** stop – stopped

ban – banned

swap – swapped



## Exercises (see answers on page 278)

### Exercise 1:

**Choose the correct past tense for each sentence.**

- 1) John \_\_\_\_\_ the stairs quickly.
  - 2) American women \_\_\_\_\_ for the first time in 1920.
  - 3) She \_\_\_\_\_ her hat down over her ears.
  - 4) We \_\_\_\_\_ the canoe into the lake.
  - 5) The Puritans \_\_\_\_\_ to emigrate to America in the 17th century.
- a) pulled
  - b) pushed
  - c) decided
  - d) climbed
  - e) voted

### Exercise 2:

**Put the verbs in parentheses in simple past tense.**

- 1) The child (play) \_\_\_\_\_ with the ball on his birthday.
- 2) The car (stop) \_\_\_\_\_ quickly that day.
- 3) John (hurry) \_\_\_\_\_ to arrive on time last Saturday.
- 4) The girl (cry) \_\_\_\_\_ before going to bed.
- 5) The old dog (die) \_\_\_\_\_ at home.

## 2. IRREGULAR PAST

**Remember:** Irregular verbs have different patterns such as *sing–sang–sung* or *stand–stood–stood*, (Infinitive – Past simple – Past Participle) (see list on pages 311-315).

The colonists **came** to America in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries for several reasons, such as overpopulation, religious persecution and poverty. In those centuries England **had** an unstable economy and, as inflation and poverty **grew**, English immigrants **chose** to seek out new sources of economic prosperity in the New World.

Come – **came** – come

Have – **had** – had

Grow – **grew** – grown

Choose – **chose** – chosen

Note: The past simple is the same for all subjects (Singular or Plural), but the verb "to be" is irregular for all singular subjects and there is one form for all the plural subjects:

**Singular:** I was - you were - he was - she was - it was

**Plural:** we were - you were - they were



## Exercises (see answers on pages 278-279)

### Exercise 3:

**Choose the correct past tense verb for each sentence.**

- 1) Religious freedom \_\_\_\_\_ also a motive for emigration.
  - 2) Colonial wars \_\_\_\_\_ place between different immigrants.
  - 3) The British \_\_\_\_\_ the war in 1763.
  - 4) The colonial economy \_\_\_\_\_ to focus on crafts and trade.
  - 5) The American Depression \_\_\_\_\_ the region hard in 1930.
- a) won
  - b) began
  - c) hit
  - d) took
  - e) was

### Exercise 4:

**Fill in the blanks in the following story about Abraham Lincoln with regular or irregular verb forms using the verbs in brackets.**

Abraham Lincoln (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (be born) in a log cabin in Hardin County, Kentucky on February 12, 1809. Unlike the rest of his family he (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (love) books and (3) \_\_\_\_\_ (attend) school when he (4) \_\_\_\_\_ (can). When he (5) \_\_\_\_\_ (grow up), he (6) \_\_\_\_\_ (become) a lawyer and (7) \_\_\_\_\_ (enter) politics. In 1842 he (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (marry) Mary Todd. They (9) \_\_\_\_\_ (have) four children but only two (10) \_\_\_\_\_ (survive). In 1846 he (11) \_\_\_\_\_ (be elected) to Congress and he (12) \_\_\_\_\_ (speak out) against slavery and the Mexican American war. In 1860 he (13) \_\_\_\_\_ (win) the Presidential election. He (14) \_\_\_\_\_ (free) all the slaves in all the American states. Many former slaves (15) \_\_\_\_\_ (join) the Union Army. On April 14, 1865, President Lincoln (16) \_\_\_\_\_ (be assassinated) by John Wilkes Booth. People in the nation's capital (17) \_\_\_\_\_ (mourn) his death for months.

## 3. ASKING QUESTIONS IN THE PAST

**Remember:** Use the auxiliary verb **did** in past tense questions with the main verb in the infinitive form, unless the verb "to be" or other modal verbs are used.

### Examples:

Why **did** Europeans **come** to Europe?

Why **did** so many people **move** to Colonial America?

Why **did** America **expand** westwards?

Where **did** English immigrants **settle** in America?

Where **did** the American Depression **take place**?

**Did** Abraham Lincoln **find** the United States of America?  
**Did** he **win** the second presidential election?  
**Did** he **abolish** slavery in America?

**Verb "to be" and modal verb "can" in the past:**

**Was** Lincoln a Puritan? **Were** his children very famous?  
**Were** the Puritans a large group then?  
**Could** Lincoln abolish slavery?



## Exercise (see answers on page 279)

### Exercise 5:

Match questions with the suitable answers.

#### Questions

- 1) Did Lincoln own slaves?
- 2) Did Lincoln write the Gettysburg Address on the back of an envelope?
- 3) Was there a death mask made of Lincoln?
- 4) Did Lincoln leave a diary?
- 5) How old was he when he died?

#### Long Answers

- a) No, there wasn't, but two life masks were made, one in 1860 and one in 1865.
- b) He was 56 years old when he died.
- c) There is no evidence that Lincoln kept a diary. However, he did keep correspondence and scraps of speeches in the lining of his hat.
- d) No, he didn't own slaves.
- e) No, he didn't. He prepared his speeches with great care.



## Notes

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## Glossary

### Regular Verbs

<b>to abolish</b>	abolir
<b>to attend</b>	asistir
<b>to climb</b>	subir, escalar
<b>to decide</b>	decidir
<b>to enter</b>	entrar
<b>to evaporate</b>	evaporarse
<b>to expand</b>	expandirse
<b>to found</b>	fundar
<b>to free</b>	liberar
<b>to join</b>	unirse
<b>to kiss</b>	besar
<b>to love</b>	encantar
<b>to marry</b>	casarse
<b>to mourn</b>	lamentar, llorar (la muerte de alguien), estar de luto
<b>to move</b>	trasladarse
<b>to own</b>	tener, poseer
<b>to pull</b>	tirar
<b>to push</b>	empujar
<b>to settle</b>	asentarse
<b>to survive</b>	sobrevivir
<b>to visit</b>	visitar
<b>to vote</b>	votar
<b>to walk</b>	caminar
<b>to watch</b>	ver

### Irregular Verbs

Irregular Verbs	Infinitive / Past Tense
be born: nacer	be born/was born (sing.); were born (pl.)
be: ser o estar	be/was (sing.); were (pl.)
begin: empezar	begin/began
can: poder (modal verb)	can/could
choose: escoger	choose/chose
come: venir	come/came
grow: crecer	grow/grew
have: tener	have/had
hit: golpear	hit/hit
speak out: denunciar	speak/spoke
take place: tener lugar	take place/took place
win: ganar	win/won



# Oral Skills

## READ AND LISTEN TO THIS CONVERSATION BETWEEN A GRANDMOTHER AND HER GRANDDAUGHTER ABOUT THE TWENTIETH CENTURY IN AMERICA

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** Grandma, can you tell me something that was genuinely born in the United States?

**GRANDMOTHER:** Definitely denim, hot dogs, skyscrapers, supermarkets and mass production and rock music. All these things can be found in every country and most importantly, they have conquered the world.

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** That's awesome but I think you forgot a powerful new force—television.

**GRANDMOTHER:** Yeah! That's exactly right! As early as 1947, around 170,000 American families had television sets flickering in their living rooms.

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** Wow! Amazing! What kind of programmes did they broadcast?

**GRANDMOTHER:** As far as I remember most early television programmes were general entertainment. I was especially fond of stories about policemen and detectives. The goal of such shows was to attract all kinds of audiences. Then, CBS and NBC paid a lot of money to show advertisements during the programmes.

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** Do you remember any show that the whole family watched together?

**GRANDMOTHER:** But of course. *I Love Lucy*, a 1950s comedy series, was my parents' favourite. People watched it not only in the United States but all over the world for decades.

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** Really? Did the United States export TV programmes?

**GRANDMOTHER:** Ha ha, it was of course part of the process of Americanization. And besides, it was cheaper for other countries to buy American TV shows than to make their own.

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** Wasn't it in the 1950s when rock-and-roll began?

**GRANDMOTHER:** That's right! It came from the American South, and believe it or not, it combined black blues with the country music of working-class whites to produce that "rocking-like" sound!

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** Oh! I've heard of Chuck Berry and Little Richard but, above all, I'm impressed by Elvis Presley.

**GRANDMOTHER:** Totally! He symbolized a new youth culture. This guy from Mississippi became an international superstar by the end of the decade. Oh my God! His way of talking, dressing, even hair styles rejected the norms of social behaviour.

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** But mom told me that it was rock that changed ideas in the 70s.

**GRANDMOTHER:** Well, on the other hand, fast food, hamburgers and fried chicken spread American habits throughout the world. Along with blue jeans and chinos they americanized daily life on every continent.

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** Shopping culture in supermarkets and malls. Is it true that Mr Khrushchev was taken to visit a supermarket?

**GRANDMOTHER:** That's a true story! I think they just wanted to show off US economic superiority and did just that.

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** Didn't skyscrapers contribute to make America great?

**GRANDMOTHER:** No doubt about it, sweetie. Since the 1920s they've enhanced cities and housed people, offices and factories by using the free space in the sky.

**GRANDDAUGHTER:** Oh, my! Those towers are so inspiring. Chicago and New York were examples for other nations. They are symbols of the twentieth century—the American Century.

### **LISTEN TO THIS CONVERSATION BETWEEN A UNIVERSITY STUDENT AND HER PROFESSOR AT UNIVERSITY ABOUT TUDOR ENGLAND**

**STUDENT:** Good morning, Professor Smith. I'd like to ask you some questions about the Tudor period and England's relationship with Spain for my PhD thesis.

**PROFESSOR:** Actually it's my favourite area of research. The period from 1485 to 1603 is fascinating!

**STUDENT:** I think the kings and queens of the Tudor dynasty based their foreign policy on trade, didn't they?

**PROFESSOR:** Yes, especially Elizabeth I. Like her grandfather Henry VII, she considered trade to be the most important foreign policy matter. Her father Henry VIII was more interested in politics and her half-sister Mary allied England to Spain by her marriage, but that move was unpopular and politically unwise.

**STUDENT:** Really? Why?

**PROFESSOR:** Because England gained nothing from being allied to a more powerful country. Spain was a trade rival and thus, its greatest enemy.

**STUDENT:** I believe that Spain ruled the Netherlands, right?

**PROFESSOR:** And England took advantage of the Spanish rivalry with France and technically declared the war on Spain.

**STUDENT:** In what ways?

**PROFESSOR:** Simply because the Netherlands wanted to be independent from Catholic Spain and the only way that Spanish soldiers could reach the country was by sea. England supported the Dutch Protestants by letting their ships use English harbours and attack Spanish ships when they sailed up the English Channel.

**STUDENT:** And what about America? Didn't the English also attack Spanish ships when they returned from America loaded with silver and gold?

**PROFESSOR:** That was the result of Spain's refusal to allow England to trade freely with Spanish American colonies around 1570.

**STUDENT:** Wasn't Sir Francis Drake involved in this venture?

**PROFESSOR:** Yes, he was one of the so called "sea dogs."

**STUDENT:** What a name!

**PROFESSOR:** Historically these seamen were traders as well as pirates and adventurers encouraged by the Queen to take her share from Spanish ships.

**STUDENT:** And what about the Spanish Armada?

**PROFESSOR:** Oh! The great famous fleet of ships built by Philip II to move his army across the English Channel from the Netherlands.

**STUDENT:** I've heard they were defeated because they were not as good as the English ones, which were longer, narrower, faster and their guns could also shoot farther than the Spanish ones.

**PROFESSOR:** To tell you the truth, the Spanish Armada was defeated more by harsh weather than by English guns.

**STUDENT:** How was that possible?

**PROFESSOR:** Some Spanish ships were sunk, but most were blown by the wind onto the rocky coasts of Scotland and Ireland.

**STUDENT:** That must have been glorious for England!

**PROFESSOR:** Absolutely! However, it didn't put an end to the war with Spain. Peace was only made when Elizabeth died.

**STUDENT:** Thanks very much, Professor. Very instructive!

**PROFESSOR:** My pleasure! Good luck with your thesis.



## Glossary

<b>genuinely</b>	adv.	auténticamente
<b>denim</b>	n.	mezcla de tejido de algodón azul para vaqueros
<b>skyscraper</b>	n.	rascacielos
<b>awesome</b>	adj.	increíble, impresionante
<b>to flicker</b>	v.	parpadear
<b>shocking</b>	adj.	impactante
<b>to broadcast</b>	v.	retransmitir
<b>entertainment</b>	n.	espectáculo, entretenimiento
<b>goal</b>	n.	propósito, finalidad
<b>advertisement</b>	n.	anuncio
<b>chinos</b>	n.	pantalón de algodón
<b>to enhance</b>	v.	mejorar
<b>research</b>	n.	investigación
<b>foreign</b>	adj.	extranjero, -a
<b>policy</b>	n.	política
<b>trade</b>	n.	comercio
<b>to rule</b>	v.	gobernar
<b>rivalry</b>	n.	rivalidad
<b>harbour</b>	n.	puerto
<b>to load</b>	v.	cargar
<b>to allow</b>	v.	permitir
<b>to trade</b>	v.	comerciar
<b>to encourage</b>	v.	animar
<b>to defeat</b>	v.	derrotar
<b>gun</b>	n.	arma



## Notes

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# Writing Skills

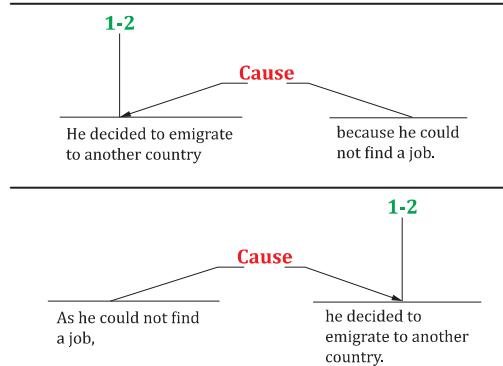
## Writing: Coherence and Cohesion (CAUSE)

Another discourse relation that can be found in texts is CAUSE. This relation is usually between two fragments in a sentence: one fragment shows the cause of the information included in the other fragment. The fragment that expresses the cause can be placed before or after the other fragment. For example:

"He decided to emigrate to another country **because** he could not find a job."

"**As** he could not find a job, he decided to emigrate to another country."

These examples could be represented in this way:



With connectors, we can link both fragments to show a CAUSE. See for example the items in bold in the previous sentences.

More connectors of CAUSE:

1	as
2	because
3	because of
4	due to
5	owing to
6	since

**Pay attention:** Some connectors of CAUSE are usually preceded by a comma.

### Examples:

"He developed the software, **as** his boss had ordered."

"They stayed at home yesterday, **since** it was raining."



## Glossary

cause	n.	causa
to hold	v.	mantener
to place	v.	colocar
to emigrate	v.	emigrar
country	n.	país
because	conj.	porque
to find	v.	encontrar
job	n.	trabajo
as	conj.	porque, como, puesto que
because of	conj.	porque, ya que, puesto que
due to	conj.	debido a
owing to	conj.	debido a
since	conj.	ya que
to precede	v.	preceder
to develop	v.	desarrollar
software	n.	programa informático
boss	n.	jefe, -a
to order	v.	ordenar
to stay	v.	quedarse
to rain	v.	llover



## Notes

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## **Exercises** (see answers on page 279)

### Exercise 1:

**Match each fragment 1-4 with another fragment a-d to form a sentence with a CAUSE relation.**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) John emigrated to the US  | a) <b>due to</b> the difficult political situation in their country.          |
| 2) Unfortunately, they had to emigrate   | b) <b>because of</b> the terrible damage in their villages.                   |
| 3) Those grandparents were very brave: they decided to sell their house and move to the UK | c) <b>since</b> their daughter was working there and she had a newborn.       |
| 4) After the earthquake, a lot of people had to leave their homes very quickly             | d) <b>because</b> he got a great job at one of the top American universities. |

### Exercise 2:

**Fill in the blanks in the following sentences with the provided words (there are four extra words).**

persecution      town      emigrate      politician  
poverty      economy      country      decision

- 1) Many English people decided to \_\_\_\_\_ to America in the 1600s **owing to** the founding of English colonies on the east coast of North America.
  - 2) Before emigration to America began, a lot of English families lived in a situation of \_\_\_\_\_ **due to** the unstable economy and inflation in the country.
  - 3) **As** many families desired a better life and to own a house and some land, they made the \_\_\_\_\_ to move to America.
  - 4) A lot of people also decided to emigrate **because of** religious and political \_\_\_\_\_.

### Exercise 3:

**Read the following conversation and mark the CAUSE connectors.**

**Mary:** Hello, Paul! How was school today?

**Paul:** Fine, mum. I'm happy because we had history class today and I loved it.

**Mary:** What was the subject today?

**Paul:** American History and, specifically, English emigration to America. I learned lots of things!

**Mary:** That sounds exciting! Please tell me one of those new things you have learned.



Paul: Well, for example, I have learned that in the beginning, in New England, there were many farmers, who produced their own food. Then, during the period between 1790 and 1850 there were incredible changes in the agricultural economy of New England due to the rise of its manufacturing industry, that is, industrialization. I didn't know that.

**Mary:** That is interesting! I'm glad you enjoyed your history class.



## Notes