



CRITICAL THINKING SKILLS

Sequencing and Categorizing Information

Sequencing involves placing facts in the order in which they occurred. Categorizing entails organizing information into groups of related facts and ideas. Both actions help you deal with large quantities of information in an understandable way.

- Look for dates or clue words that provide you with a chronological order: *in 2004, the late 1990s, first, then, finally, after the Great Depression*, and so on.
- If the information you're studying did not happen in a sequential order, you may categorize it instead. To do so, look for information with similar characteristics.
- List these characteristics, or categories, as the headings on a chart.
- As you read, fill in details under the proper category on the chart.

LEARNING THE SKILL

To learn sequencing and categorizing skills, follow the steps listed on the left.

PRACTICING THE SKILL

Read the passage below, then answer the questions that follow.

Twinkies were invented in 1930 by James A. Dewar, a plant manager for Continental Baking Company. Faced with economic hardship, it didn't make sense to Dewar that the bakery had lots of expensive pans dedicated to a product called Little Short Cake Fingers that was baked only six weeks a year—during strawberry season. Dewar thought the little cakes could sell year-round if the company came up with something to replace the strawberry cream placed inside. He mixed up a banana-flavored 'crème' and figured out a way to inject it into the shortcake using three syringe-like injection tubes.

—Adapted from Jack Mingo's *How the Cadillac Got Its Fins*, HarperCollins, ©1994

1. How can the facts here be organized sequentially?
2. Now organize the facts under the categories of *Land, Labor, Capital, and Entrepreneurship*.

APPLICATION ACTIVITY

Find a newspaper or magazine article about a local business. Sequence or categorize the information in a chart.

Practice and assess key skills with *Skillbuilder Interactive Workbook, Level 2*.