**Embracing New Ideas**

The growth of towns and cities and the increasing importance of trade provided fertile ground for the development of new ideas and technologies. The Indo-Arabic counting system that moved from India to the Middle East, and from there to Europe, is just one example of an idea that was embraced by Europeans because it helped improve trade.

These new ideas and new technologies, combined with a desire to profit through trade, helped lay the foundation of historical globalization.

From about the 9th to the 13th century, Middle Eastern civilizations were centres of innovation and learning. Europeans drew on many of these innovations, especially in astronomy, to develop technologies that made travel, trade, exploration – and conquest – easier.

As historians and analyst of past events, it is important that we look at things as a relationship of ‘**cause and consequence**’. Complete the table below, using cause and consequence to analyze the introduction of new technologies and ideas.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Cause** | **Consequence** |
| The introduction of large, square sails and the lateen – a triangular, mobile stern sail that could be set at an angle to the wind – meant that larger ships could be built. These ships were also faster and more maneuverable.  |  |
| Improvements in navigational tools, such as the magnetic compass, the mariner’s astrolabe, the sextant, and maps, meant that sailors could travel farther from land without losing their way.  |  |
| Gunpowder, which was invented by China, was first used in European warfare in 1324. Its introduction marked a dramatic change in the way wars were conducted. Muskets and cannons came to be widely used. |  |