

Smart, Creative and Entrepreneurial



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ESSAY WRITING

SRI LESTARI, MA

SESSION 10

CAUSE AND EFFECT ESSAY: WRITING THE FINAL DRAFT



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- By the end of this session, students are able to write a final draft of a cause and effect essay.
- Students are able to edit the first draft of essay by reviewing and revising:
 - **Writing strong thesis statements**
 - **Identifying transitions and connectors**
 - **Using appropriate vocabulary in context**
 - **Using consistent verb tense**
 - **Spelling and punctuation**

EDITING YOUR DRAFT

To rewrite your draft, follow the steps in writing an essay:

Step 1: Choose a topic

Step 2: Brainstorm

Step 3: Outline

Step 4: Write the first draft

Step 5: Get feedback from a peer

Step 6: Revise the First Draft

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DRAFTING A CAUSE AND EFFECT ESSAY

- After making an outline and learning transition signal words of a cause and effect essay, you are to **write your draft**.
- **Review your outline.** Then **write the first draft of a four-paragraph essay on the topic you chose.**
- There might be three types of cause and effect essay:
 - Many causes, one effect
 - One cause, many effects
 - Chains of causes and effects
- **Decide the topic.** When **selecting topics** for this type of essay, a good writer should consider relevant questions such as:
 - What is the end effect?
 - Is there one primary effect, or are there several effects?
 - Is there one primary cause, or are there several causes?

DRAFTING A CAUSE AND EFFECT ESSAY

- After writing your draft, **check it** using the following checklist:
 - Does the essay have min. four paragraphs?
 - Does the introduction include background information?
 - Do the connecting sentences describe the event or situation that is the result of the causes?
 - Is there a thesis statement that focuses the essay? Does it mention two causes that lead to the situation?
 - Does each body paragraphs have a topic sentence that states one cause mentioned in the thesis statement?
 - Does supporting sentences in each body paragraph explain the cause in the topic sentence of that paragraph?
 - Does the conclusion summarize the causes and comment on them?

REVISING THE FIRST DRAFT

- Read the feedback from your peer as you do peer editing.
- Revise the first draft while checking the checklist
 - Writing strong thesis statements
 - Identifying transitions and connectors
 - Using appropriate vocabulary in context
 - Using consistent verb tense
 - Spelling and punctuation
- Proofread the final draft

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WRITING A STRONG THESIS STATEMENT

- A strong thesis statement for a cause-effect essay indicates whether the essay focuses on causes or on effects.
- Sometimes the thesis statement uses the words *cause(s)* or *effects(s)*, but this is not necessary if either the cause or the effect is implied in the statement.
- In addition, a thesis statement sometimes includes a number, such as *three causes* or *two effects*, but this is also optional.

WRITING A STRONG THESIS STATEMENT

Focus	Example thesis statement
on causes	<p>Many customers prefer to shop online for three important reasons.</p> <p>The increase in obesity in our country is due to food commercials, cheap fast food, and video games.</p>
on effects	<p>This essay will discuss the effects of watching too much TV on children's family life, interpersonal skills, and school life.</p> <p>Most people are not aware of the positive effects of simply walking for 20 to 30 minutes per day.</p>

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WRITING A STRONG THESIS STATEMENT

EXERCISE

Write a thesis statement for each topic below.

1) the causes of bullying

.....

2) the effects of being an only child

.....

3) the causes of choosing a vegan diet

.....

4) the effects of society's love for computers

.....



IDENTIFYING TRANSITIONS AND CONNECTORS

- Transitions and connectors are important in cause-effect essays because they help indicate causation or effect regarding the topic.
- Perhaps the most familiar cause-effect transition word is because: “X happened because Y happened.”
- Precise use of transitions helps the reader to follow the writer’s reasoning about cause-effect relationships.
- The transitions for both a focus-on-causes essay and a focus-on-effects essay are the same because both kinds of essays discuss one or more causes or one or more effects.

IDENTIFYING TRANSITIONS AND CONNECTORS

Transitions and Connectors Commonly Used in Cause-Effect Essays

as a consequence	due to	on account of
as a result	(the) effect (of X)	owing to (for this) reason
(X can be) attributed to (Y)	(a key) factor of (X)	(X is the) reason for (Y)
because	for this reason	(X is a) result of (Y)
because of	furthermore	(X) resulted in (Y)
caused	if (X), then (Y)	since
(X is the) cause of (Y)	in addition (to)	so
(X is) caused by (Y)	in order to	therefore
(one) consequence of this (is that . . .)	(X) influences (Y)	this means that . . .
consequently	(X) leads to (Y)	thus

IDENTIFYING TRANSITIONS AND CONNECTORS

EXERCISE

Choose the appropriate connectors in the paragraph below.

- 3 3 (Another / Other) way to increase people's sense of personal happiness is for them to be true to themselves and keep their personal sense of integrity. While this advice may seem rather trite, people who respect and follow their authentic desires generally report being happier than people who do not. As Martin (2012) explains, "At its core, authenticity implies discovering and pursuing what we care about most deeply." He further explains the reciprocal relationship between happiness and authenticity: "As much as authenticity contributes to the pursuit of happiness, then, happiness in turn contributes to identifying our authentic selves" (p. 55). When people limit their personal desires 4 (in order / in spite) to obtain certain goals, they may achieve greater financial success but actually end up unhappier.

USING VOCABULARY IN CONTEXT

- It is important to choose appropriate words or vocabulary in context. In writing an essay, academic words are also needed. Do the exercise below. Circle the best synonym, antonym or collocation from column A, B or C.

Type of Vocabulary	Important Vocabulary	A	B	C
Synonyms	1. pursue	chase	mount	overlook
	2. obstacle	difficulty	extinction	forecast
	3. authentic	challenging	likely	real
	4. scenario	demeanor	example	verification
Antonyms	5. intriguing	accurate	uninteresting	worthwhile
	6. the former	the incentive	the latter	the organizer
	7. hinder	facilitate	navigate	range
	8. chief	essential, vital	far, remote	minor, lesser
Collocations	9. the means ___ something	do	doing	to do
	10. care about something ___	deeply	happily	tritely
	11. my overall ___ of	core	example	impression
	12. obtain a ___	desire	goal	tax

GRAMMAR: CONSISTENT VERB TENSE USAGE

- Good writers are careful to use the same verb tense throughout an essay. While it is true that an essay may have, for example, some information about the past and some information about the present, most of the information will be about one time, most likely either past or present. Do not change verb tenses without a specific reason for doing so.

Explanation	Examples
When describing an event in the past tense, maintain the past tense throughout your explanation.	In our experiment, we placed three live fresh-water plants (each approximately 20 centimeters in length) into a quart jar that was filled with fresh water at 70 degrees Fahrenheit. We left the top two centimeters of the jar with air. We then carefully added a medium goldfish.
When talking about facts that are always true, use present tense in your explanation.	The sun is the center of the solar system. The earth and other planets revolve around the sun. Most of the planets have at least one moon that circles the planet, and these moons vary tremendously in size, just as the planets do .
In writings such as a report, it is possible to have different verb tenses reflecting different times.	According to this report, the police now believe that two men stole the truck and the money in it.

GRAMMAR: CONSISTENT VERB TENSE USAGE

EXERCISE. *In the paragraph, correct the verbs where the tense shifts for no reason.*

The Experiment

In our experiment, we placed three live fresh-water plants (each approximately 20 centimeters in length) into a quart jar that is filled with fresh water at 70 degrees Fahrenheit. We left the top two centimeters of the jar with air. We then carefully added a medium goldfish. Next, we tighten the lid and wrapped tape tightly around the lid. This very last step is done to ensure that no air can enter or exit the bottle. The jar was placed on a shelf where it is exposed to indirect sunlight for approximately eight hours each day. At 1 p.m. every day for a week, we observed the fish swimming in the jar. On several occasions, we notice that the plants emit multiple bubbles of a gas. The fish survived for the entire week. No food or air was provided. Thus, these green plants in the jar produced a gas, and we believed this gas was oxygen.

GRAMMAR: SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

- For many writers, sentence fragments, or incomplete sentences, are difficult to avoid.
- Writing a fragment instead of a complete sentence is considered a very serious error because it shows a lack of understanding of the basic components of a sentence, namely a subject and a verb that express a complete thought.
- Because fragments are one of the most serious errors in writing, it is imperative to learn how to avoid them

Explanation	Examples
A sentence must have a subject and a verb and be able to stand by itself in meaning.	<p>✗ Because I read and studied the textbook often.</p> <p>✓ I scored 97 on the quiz because I read and studied the textbook often.</p>
It is possible to begin a sentence with because, although, if, when, or while , but the sentence needs a second part with another subject-verb combination.	<p>✗ Because I studied for the final exam a great deal.</p> <p>✓ Because I studied a great deal, my score on the final exam was 99.</p> <p>✓ My score on the final exam was 99 because I studied a great deal.</p>

GRAMMAR: SENTENCE FRAGMENTS

- **EXERCISE.** Write *C* on the line next to complete sentences. Write *F* if there is a fragment and circle the fragment.
 - 1) ____ Despite the heavy wind and the torrential rain, the young trees around the lake were able to survive the bad weather. It was a miracle.
 - 2) ____ The huge, two-story houses all have a very similar design. With no difference except the color of the roofs.
 - 3) ____ Shopping malls are a very popular tourist attraction in many cities, but some tourists are not interested in them. Shopping is not for everyone.
 - 4) ____ Because of the popularity of the film. Producers were anxious to begin work on its sequel.
 - 5) ____ Thousands of commuters were late for work this morning. Since the bus workers are on strike over pay and health benefits.

PEER EDITING

Exchange your writing with a partner. Read your partner's outline. Then use the following questions to help you to comment on your partner's outline. Use your partner's feedback to revise your outline.

- *How is the essay organised?*
 - *Focus-on-causes methods OR focus-on-effects methods?*
- *Is there any aspect of the outline that is unclear to you? Give details.*
- *Can you think of an area in the outline that needs more development? Make specific suggestions*
- *If you have any other ideas or suggestions, write them here.*

REVISE THE FIRST DRAFT

- Be sure to offer positive suggestions and comments that will help your partner improve his or her essay.
- Read the comments about your essay. Then reread your essay. Can you identify places where you should make revisions? List the improvements you plan to make.
- Use all the information from the previous steps to write the final version of your paper.
- Often, writers will need to write a third or even a fourth draft to express their ideas as clearly as possible. Write as many drafts as necessary to produce a good essay.
- Be sure to proofread your paper several times before you submit it so you find all the mistakes and correct them.

REVISE THE FIRST DRAFT

- ❖ After you have completed the first draft of the essay, set it aside for a while.
- ❖ When you reread what you have written, prepare for revising by asking yourself these questions:
 - Does the essay have a clearly stated thesis?
 - Have I backed up each main point with effective supporting details? Have I considered other patterns of development for my body paragraphs? Do I have enough detailed support to explain each cause or effect? Do I have a relatively equal amount of support for each main point?
 - Have I performed a logic check on my causes or effects?
 1. Have I made a time-sequence logical error?
 2. Have I considered multiple causes and chains of effects?

REVISE THE FIRST DRAFT

- Have I used transition words to help readers follow the sequence of my train of thought?
 - Does my concluding paragraph wrap up my essay and either strengthen my point or give it wider meaning?
- ❖ Continue to revise your essay until you can answer “yes” to each question. Then, be sure to check the next-to-final draft for sentence skills.

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WRITER'S TIPS FOR CAUSE & EFFECTS ESSAYS

1. Cause or effect essays begin with topics that are usually situations, events, or problems. Working out logically correct causes or effects for your topic means you need to *analyze* before you write. You *break apart* your topic, and you *examine* its causes or effects:
 - A cause is an action or situation that provokes some result or effect—it is a stimulus. Useful synonyms for *cause* include *reason (why)*, *root*, *factor*, *source*, *origin*, and *basis*.
 - An effect is the result of some cause, stimulus, or event—it is an outcome. Useful synonyms for *effect* include *consequence*, *result*, *upshot*, and *conclusion*.

Therefore, performing a logic check on supporting points for a cause or effect thesis is necessary before drafting. List the cause and its effects in your outline, or list the effect and its causes, then use the Logic Checklist below to ensure that your causes and effects are truly and logically related.

2. LOGIC CHECKLIST

1 “Time–sequence” logical errors: A cause is not necessarily a cause because it happens before an effect: if a dog crosses the road before your car stalls, it is not the cause of the stalling. Similarly, something that happens after another event is not necessarily an effect.

(Langan & Windstanley, 2014:186-188)

WRITER'S TIPS FOR CAUSE & EFFECTS ESSAYS

II Logical forms of causes: There are three main types of causal relationships:

- a. A *necessary cause* must be present for an effect to occur. For example, you must take the courses in your program to achieve your diploma or degree: the courses are *necessary* for obtaining that certificate.
- b. A *sufficient cause* is *enough* to make something happen. For example, not taking several courses will result in your not receiving your diploma or degree; that is *sufficient* to prevent you from graduating. Or, a number's being divisible by 4 is *sufficient* (but not *necessary*) to ensure its being even, but being divisible by 2 is both *sufficient* and *necessary*.
- c. A *contributory cause* helps produce an effect but cannot do so by itself: running a red light can help cause an accident, but other factors/causes, such as pedestrians and other cars, must also be present as *contributory causes*. *Sufficient* and *contributory causes* are often analyzed in causes essays.

III Oversimplifications and generalizations: A single cause usually involves multiple effects, and one effect is usually the result of multiple causes. Take special care in your prewriting and planning to avoid oversimplifying a cause–effect situation; for example, to blame gun violence in schools on videogames oversimplifies the case and ignores an important range of other possible causes. Similarly, generalizing from one instance to an assertion that something is always the case ignores all other possible contributing causes or effects—it bases its conclusion on insufficient evidence. Readers would likely be irritated by an essay arguing that all students are addicted to social media if it is based on a description of one student who Tweets all the time.

(Langan & Windstanley, 2014:186-188)

WRITER'S TIPS FOR CAUSE & EFFECTS ESSAYS

IV Chains of causes or effects:

- a. One cause may lead to an effect, which then becomes the cause of another effect. For example, when Rama was brainstorming for her essay, she created a causal chain: "international students leave home (cause)>they are lonely here (effect)>some realize they need support (cause)> they join clubs and interest groups (effect 1)—others withdraw & consider going home (effect 2).
- b. Effects may occur differently: some effects occur all at once, others in a sequence—these are chains of effects. Be specific and trace your cause or effect chains carefully. For an effects essay where this is the case, put your effects in order of importance, as Camilo does in "Choking the Lungs of the World." Other times, you will want to show causes or effects happening in a sequence/chronological order if the multiple causes or effects seemed to present a domino effect; for example, a severe flood (main cause) caused people to lose their homes (effect 1), which afterward caused a strain on a city's social-assistance programs (effect 2).
- c. Causes and/or effects may be nearer, or more closely related—these may be called *immediate* causes—or may be distant and not easy to discern—these are often called *remote* causes (or effects). In a brief essay, try to confine yourself to immediate causes or effects; while remote causes or effects may be true and logically connected, without sufficient explanation of how their connections come about, readers may have difficulty following your logic. For example immediate causes for the sinking of the *Titanic* would be its collision with the iceberg and the failure of nearby ships' radio signals. More remote causes could be weather conditions and the types of rivets used in its construction. Typically, remote causes are more speculative and less provable, another reason to avoid them.

(Langan & Windstanley, 2014:186-188)

WRITER'S TIPS FOR CAUSE & EFFECTS ESSAYS

3. TRANSITIONS

Readers of cause or effect essays benefit from the reinforcement that consistent use of transitions will provide. Your attention to effective transitions will help readers see the connections you present between causes and effects as correct and logical, making your essay clearer and more persuasive.

- a. Transitions for causes essays: *first, another, because (of), among (the causes), factoring (into), causing, creating*
- b. Transitions for effects essays: *consequently, then, as a consequence, so, resulting (from), as a result, thus, therefore*

Remember, if you choose chronological (sequential) order or order of importance for your causes or effects, you have additional transitions at your disposal:

- a. Chronological order: *first, second, next, then, after, in addition, another*
- b. Order of importance: *more than, even more, better (worse), particularly, significantly*

For more information about transitional material, refer to Chapter 4.

(Langan & Windstanley, 2014:186-188)

A CAUSE-EFFECT ESSAY EXAMPLE (1)

Why Students Are Poor

It is easy to recognize a college student because he or she is carrying books and usually wearing old pants or jeans and a T-shirt. You will not see a college student driving a new car. Instead, you will see him at a bus stop or on a bicycle. And at mealtimes, a college student is more likely to be eating a slice of pizza than dining in a fine restaurant. Very few college students have extra money to spend on clothes, cars, or good food. There are two main reasons why being poor is an unavoidable part of the college experience.

The first reason college students are poor is that they cannot work full-time. An eighteen year-old is an adult with the needs and wants of an adult; however, if that young person is taking courses at a university or a community college, he or she must spend as much time as possible studying. Therefore, the student has to sacrifice the extra money that a job would provide in order to have the freedom to concentrate on classes.

A CAUSE-EFFECT ESSAY EXAMPLE (2)

A second reason college students have little money is that they have other expenses that working adults do not have. A college student must pay tuition fees every semester. A full-time student usually takes three or four classes each semester, and the fees for these classes can cost thousands of dollars per year. Also, students need to buy several expensive textbooks each semester. A single textbook can cost as much as a hundred dollars. Other necessary expenses include computers, paper, pens, notebooks, and other items needed for school projects.

Many students cannot afford to attend college full-time, so they have a job and go to school part-time, but they are still poor because of are temporary. Most students do not mind because they have the hope that a college degree will get them a good job and they will have good prospects in the future.

(Savage & Mayer, 2005: 136-137)

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