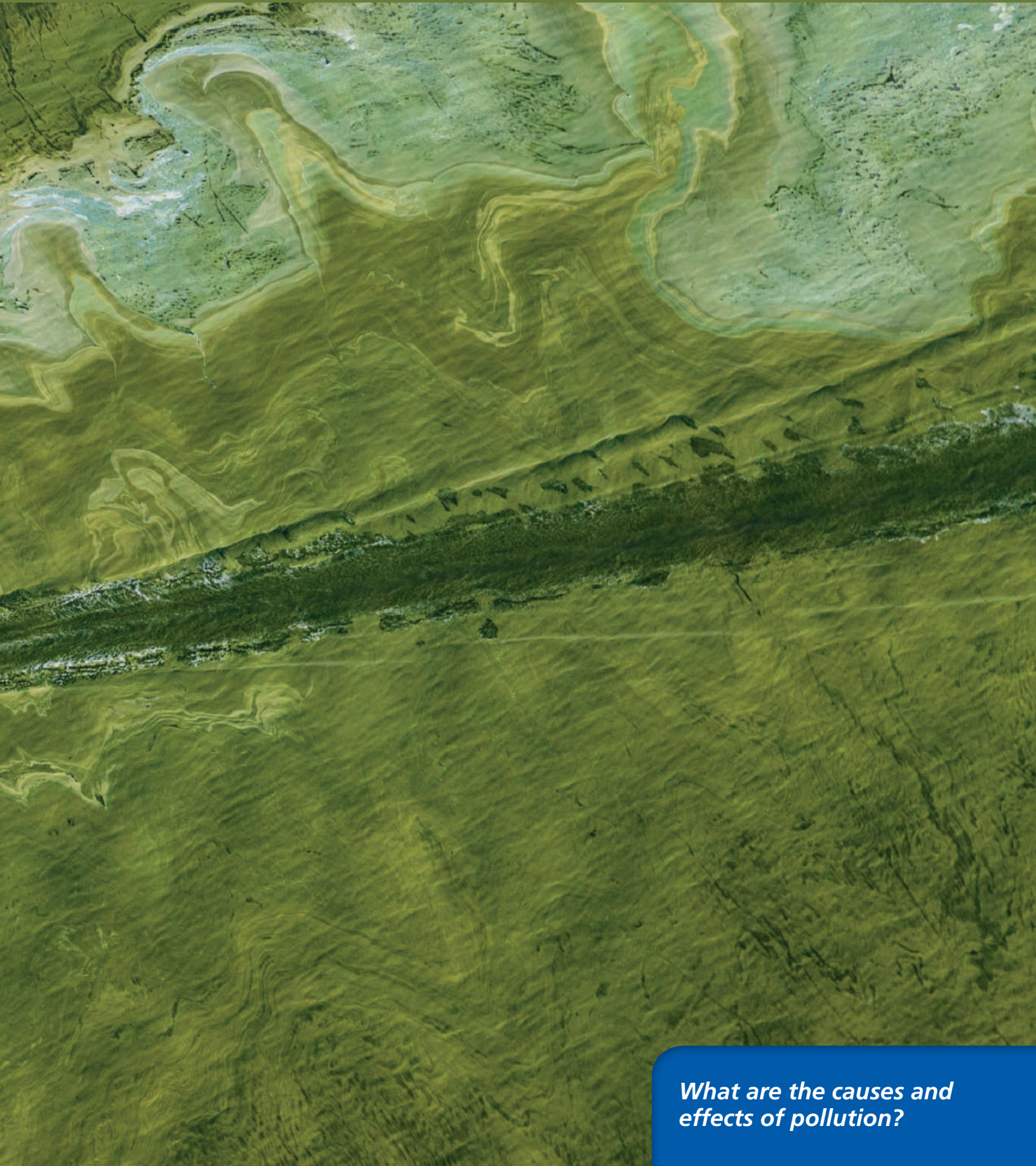




A toxic algal bloom from fertilizer runoff covers a third of Lake Erie in the United States.



- OBJECTIVES** To learn how to write a cause-effect essay  
To use effective transitions in cause-effect writing  
To use verb tenses consistently  
To recognize and avoid sentence fragments



*What are the causes and effects of pollution?*



# What Is a Cause-Effect Essay?

We all understand cause-effect relationships; for example, lightning can cause fire. As a student you know that if you stay up late the night before a test to watch a movie and do not study, you may not perform well on the test the following day. A **cause-effect essay** tells how one event (the cause) leads to another event (the effect).

A cause-effect essay can do one of two things:

- It can analyze the ways in which one or more effects result from a particular cause. (Focus-on-Effects Method)
- It can analyze the ways in which one or more causes lead to a particular effect. (Focus-on-Causes Method)

In other words, your essay may focus more on the effects of a cause or more on the causes of one effect. Either approach provides a useful means of discussing the possible relationship between the two events. It is not a good idea to mix several causes and several effects in an essay because your focus may become unclear.

In cause-effect essays, it is easy to suggest that because one event preceded another event, the former event caused the latter. Simply because one event follows another one sequentially does not mean that the two actions are related. For example, people often complain that as soon as they finish washing their car, it starts to rain. Obviously, washing a car does not cause rain. Writers need to be sure that the causes and effects they describe are logically connected.



# How Is a Cause-Effect Essay Organized?

There are two basic ways to organize a cause-effect essay: **focus-on-effects** or **focus-on-causes**. If your assignment is to write a cause-effect essay on the topic of global warming, you could write two kinds of essays:

- In a **focus-on-effects essay**, you would write about the threatened habitat of polar bears as a result of global warming and the melting of large parts of the Arctic Circle. Your essay might include five paragraphs and look like this:

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	Paragraph 1	Hook Connecting information Thesis
<b>BODY</b>	Paragraph 2	Effect 1: dangerous swimming conditions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sea ice platforms farther apart</li> </ul>
	Paragraph 3	Effect 2: scarcity of food <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• fewer hunting opportunities</li> </ul>
	Paragraph 4	Effect 3: reduced population <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Females with less body weight have lower reproduction rates.</li> </ul>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	Paragraph 5	Restated thesis Suggestion/opinion/prediction

- In a **focus-on-causes essay**, you would write about the causes of global warming, such as excessive carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. In this case, the organization for this essay could have five paragraphs and look like this:

<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	Paragraph 1	Hook Connecting information Thesis
<b>BODY</b>	Paragraph 2	Cause 1: human activities <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• carbon dioxide from vehicles</li> <li>• not recycling (requires creating more products from scratch)</li> </ul>
	Paragraph 3	Cause 2: increased industrial activity <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• greater carbon dioxide from burning fuels to run factories</li> </ul>
	Paragraph 4	Cause 3: deforestation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased human population requires more space, so trees are cut down.</li> <li>• Fewer trees mean less oxygen, which causes a higher percentage of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.</li> </ul>
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	Paragraph 5	Restated thesis Suggestion/opinion/prediction

# Great Topics for Cause-Effect Essays

What is a great topic for a cause-effect essay? This type of essay may focus more on the causes or more on the effects, but most writers answer this question by thinking of an effect or a final result. The brainstorming stage then requires thinking about one or more causes of that effect.

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?

As you read this list of some general topics that lend themselves well to a cause-effect essay, notice that the last two in each group do not use the obvious words *cause* or *effect*:

Focus on Causes	Focus on Effects
the causes of the high divorce rate in some countries	the effects of pollution in my country
the causes of World War I	the effects of high salaries for athletes
the causes of low voter participation in elections	the effects of the Internet on how businesses are run
the reasons new teachers quit	the impact of technology on education
why only a small percentage of people read newspapers today	what happens when a large percentage of adults cannot read well

## ACTIVITY 1 Identifying Topics for Cause-Effect Essays

Read these eight topics. Put a check mark (✓) next to the four that could be good topics for cause-effect essays.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. The reasons that the earth's weather has changed so much in the last century
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Bangkok versus Singapore as a vacation destination
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. A trip to visit my grandparents
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. The increasing use of computers in schools
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Explaining dietary guidelines for children
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. How to play the piano
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Why a student received a scholarship
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Why the birth rate is falling in many countries

Can you think of two additional topics that would be excellent for a cause-effect essay?

- 9. \_\_\_\_\_
- 10. \_\_\_\_\_

## Supporting Details

After you have selected a topic, your task is to determine whether you will focus more on the causes of the issue or the effects of it. This process will also help you to select and develop supporting details for your essay, which is an important step in constructing a solid essay.

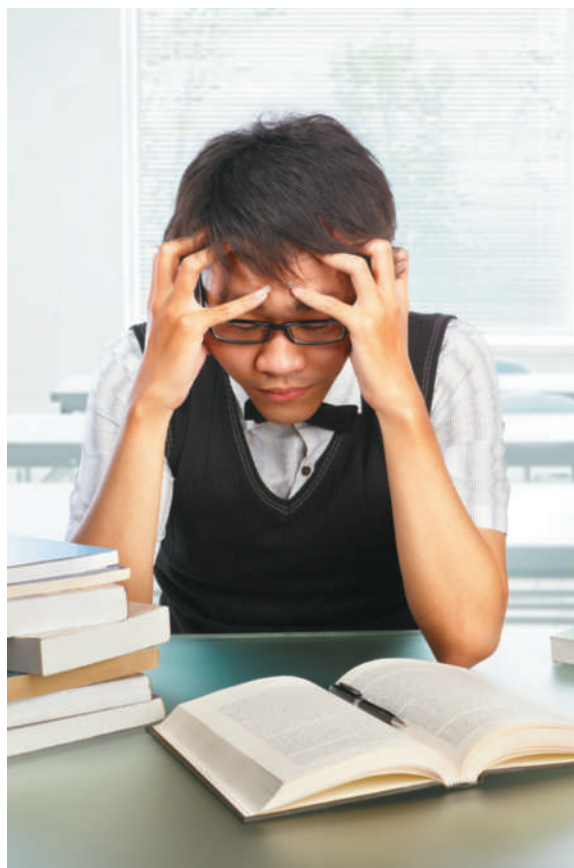
When you brainstorm your plan for this essay, a useful technique is to make two lists. One list has as many causes as you can think of. The second list has as many effects or results as you can think of. The list that is bigger—the causes or the effects—should determine the primary focus of your essay.

Here is an example for an essay about the difficulty of learning English:

Causes	Effects
14 vowel sounds	Some people study it for years.
unpredictable spelling system	People spend millions of dollars to learn it.
12 verb tenses	There are many jobs for teaching English.
phrasal verbs	Some people never learn it well.
vocabulary from German and from Latin	Some people have a weak vocabulary.

### ACTIVITY 2 Brainstorming for Two Methods

One of the topics that we hear so much about in today's society is stress. In this activity, you will use the space in the boxes on page 138 to brainstorm ideas for an essay on the topic of stress. In the first box, your organization will address the focus-on-effects method. In the second box, your organization will address the focus-on-causes method. After you complete these tasks, work with a partner or a small group to discuss your answers.



Focus-on-Effects Method

Cause:

---

---



Effects:

---

---

---

---

---

Focus-on-Causes Method

Causes:

---

---

---

---

---



Effect:

---

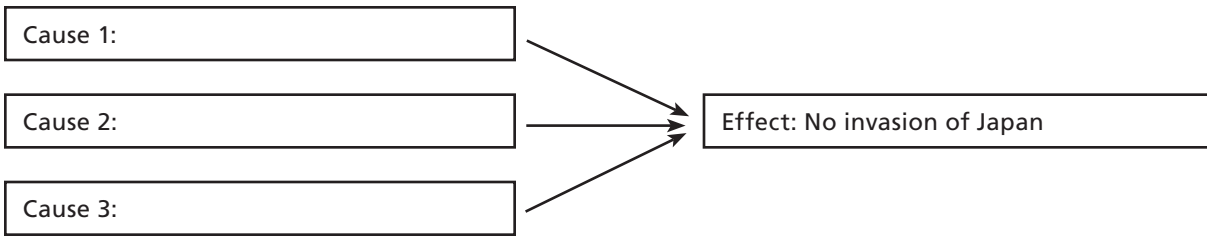
---

### ACTIVITY 3 Studying an Example Cause-Effect Essay

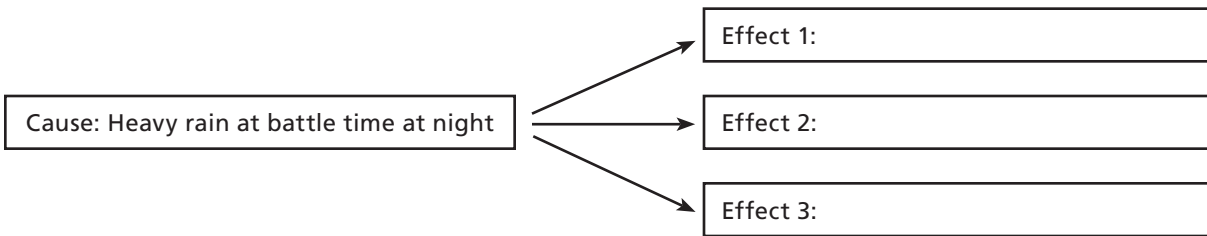
This essay discusses some effects that weather has had on events in history. Discuss the Preview Questions with a partner. Then read the essay and answer the questions that follow.

#### Preview Questions

1. Can you name a time when the weather had an effect on an event that you attended? Was it a positive effect or a negative effect?
2. In the 1200s, the warrior Kubilai Khan tried to invade Japan by sailing from the Asian mainland to Japan. A certain kind of weather event prevented the invasion. Write three guesses in the diagram about what this weather was. Do not consult the Internet, a book, or a person.



3. Go back in time. Imagine you are a captain of a troop of 500 soldiers and you want to attack your enemy at night. However, it is raining heavily. What are three possible effects of the rain?



## Essay 13

### How Weather Has Changed World History

- 1 It is **tempting**, and often comforting, to think that humans control their **fates**. The decisions that people make in their daily lives can affect many things, and the **course** of their lives **cumulatively** reflects these many small decisions. On the other hand, people cannot control every aspect of their environments, and forces beyond human control frequently **intervene** in human affairs. Notwithstanding many people's opinion that the weather has little influence in their lives besides determining what clothes they wear on a particular day, the weather has in fact caused world history to radically shift in important ways that are still felt today.
- 2 Numerous examples from world history **document** the long-term effects of weather in the formation of cultures and nations. In the thirteenth century, Khubilai Khan ruled over the vast Mongol empire, which **spanned** from the Pacific Ocean in the east to the Black

**tempting:** attractive; desirable

**fate:** the plan for the future that has been decided and that you cannot control

**a course:** a route or direction

**cumulatively:** formed over time by many parts or additions

**to intervene:** to become involved in something in order to influence the final result





Sea in the west, from present-day Siberia in the north to Afghanistan in the south. To expand his **reign** further, Khubilai Khan **mounted** two invasions of Japan. Two **monsoons**, however, caused him to end his attacks. Delgado (2008) describes legendary accounts of this event: “The legend, oft repeated in countless history books, speaks of gigantic ships, numbering into the thousands, crewed by indomitable Mongol warriors, and of **casualties** on a massive scale, with more than 100,000 lives lost in the final invasion attempt of 1281” (p. 4). Because of this unexpected defeat, Khubilai Khan decided to **stage** a third invasion of Japan, but he died before he could fulfill this **ambition**. Without these monsoons, Japan might have been defeated by the Mongols and thus lost its identity as a unique culture, with far-reaching consequences for Asian and world history.

- 3 In the early years of America’s Revolutionary War, which began in 1775, it appeared likely that the British would **crush** the armies of her colonial territory and incorporate it back into the empire. The British troops were a well-trained and disciplined army that was feared worldwide. In contrast, the American troops were newly trained, sometimes poorly organized, and lacked sufficient resources to fight effectively. General George Washington could have easily been defeated in the Battle of Long Island on August 22, 1776. Historical records show that Sir William Howe, the British commander, was clearly defeating Washington on Long Island and was actually winning **handily** (Seymour, 1995). Nonetheless, the weather intervened when a heavy **fog** rolled in, so the American forces were able to **retreat**, regroup, and survive to fight

**to document:** to maintain a written record of; to write about

**to span:** to extend from one point to another

**a reign:** a time of political control, especially for kings, queens, or unelected officials

**to mount:** to prepare something so that it takes place

**a monsoon:** a strong rain storm that happens at a certain time of the year

**a casualty:** an injury or death in a severe event such as an accident or a war

**to stage:** to plan, organize, and make something happen

**ambition:** a strong desire for power, wealth, or fame

another day. Because of this fog, the United States was not defeated in its struggle for freedom. Consequently, today's United Kingdom of England, Wales, Scotland, and Northern Ireland does not include the United States. The United States is not a commonwealth of a mother country, as Canada and Australia are, though the United States still has strong **ties** to its colonial past.

4 When Napoleon Bonaparte invaded Russia in the early nineteenth century, he met with early successes that appeared to guarantee that he might eventually rule the world as his personal **domain**. His soldiers **captured** Moscow and destroyed the city, which encouraged him to push farther in his military campaigns. However, because of his dreams of glory, Napoleon **overlooked** the simple fact that Russian winters are extremely cold. When the temperatures fell below freezing, many of his soldiers and their horses died in the **brutal** weather. As Belloc (1926) writes in his classic study of the Napoleonic wars, "The cold *was* the **abominable** thing: The **dreadful** enemy against which men could not fight and which destroyed them" (p. 217). As a result of the failure of Napoleon's Russian campaigns, his own rule ended relatively soon after. His defeat led to a reorganization of power throughout the European nations, as well as to the rise of Russia as a major world power.

5 As these three examples **unambiguously** demonstrate, the weather has caused numerous huge shifts in world history as well as in power balances among cultures and nations. Without the rainy storms of the monsoon season, Japan might be the eastern outpost of Mongolia; without the appearance of **dense** fog, the United States might still be a territory of the United Kingdom; and without winter snow, Muscovites might speak French. Today weather **forecasters** can usually predict with a high degree of accuracy when thunderstorms, hurricanes, tsunamis, and tornadoes will strike, but the course of history cannot be fully isolated from the effects of the weather.

### References

- Belloc, H. (1926). *Napoleon's campaign of 1812 and the retreat from Moscow*. New York: Harper.
- Delgado, J. (2008). *Khubilai Khan's lost fleet: In search of a legendary armada*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Seymour, W. (1995). *The price of folly: British blunders in the War of American Independence*. London: Brassey's.

### Post-Reading

1. What is the topic of the essay? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the writer's thesis? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. What is the cause that the writer describes in the essay? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**to crush:** to destroy

**handily:** easily

**fog:** a type of weather similar to a cloud very near the ground

**to retreat:** to go back

**a tie:** a connection

**domain:** land that a ruler or government controls

**to capture:** to catch; to trap

**to overlook:** to fail to notice or know about

**brutal:** severe

**abominable:** disgusting; causing hateful feelings

**dreadful:** extremely bad; causing fear

**unambiguously:** not ambiguously; clearly and definitely

**dense:** thick

**a forecaster:** a person who predicts something, often the weather

4. What are some of the effects that the writer describes?

---

---

5. Write one detail that strongly supports the thesis statement.

---

---

6. How is this essay organized?

- focus-on-causes method       focus-on-effects method

7. Can you think of any information that the author should have included to make the message of the essay stronger?

---

---

---

**Building Better Sentences:** For further practice, go to Practice 3 on pages 239–240 in the Appendix.

## Building Better Vocabulary

### ACTIVITY 4 Practicing Three Kinds of Vocabulary from Context

Read each important vocabulary word or phrase. Locate it in the essay if you need help remembering the word. Then circle the best synonym, antonym, or collocation from column A, B, or C.

Type of Vocabulary	Important Vocabulary	A	B	C
Synonyms	1. capture	catch	fulfill	prosper
	2. tempting	attractive	inherent	precise
	3. forecast	dread	predict	reign
	4. on account of	due to	prior to	regardless of
Antonyms	5. handily	by vehicle	on foot	with difficulty
	6. dense	thin	superior	reluctant
	7. eventually	beyond	cumulatively	immediately
	8. expand	differentiate	proceed	shrink
Collocations	9. span ___ Greece	from England to	near England and	with England or
	10. ___ in a dispute	duplicate	intervene	merge
	11. a brutal ___	friendship	lunch	storm
	12. defeat ___	an attack	an enemy	a reptile



## ACTIVITY 5 Analyzing the Organization

Use the words from the box to complete the outline of “How Weather Has Changed World History.” Reread the essay on pages 139–141 if you need help.

- the Battle of Long Island in the American Revolutionary War, during which fog helped the American forces to retreat
- The course of history cannot be fully isolated from the effects of weather.
- H. Belloc, who documents the effect of the Russian winter
- The weather has changed world history in important ways still felt today.
- Japan’s cultural identity would have changed if Khan had succeeded in his invasion.

Title: How Weather Has Changed World History

### I. Introduction

A. Describe how people think they control their fates.

B. Suggest, however, that people cannot control every aspect of their environments.

C. Thesis statement: \_\_\_\_\_.

### II. Body Paragraph 1

A. Provide the example of Khubilai Khan and his invasion of Japan.

B. Cite the study of J. Delgado, who describes Khubilai Khan’s failed invasion.

C. Discuss how \_\_\_\_\_.

### III. Body Paragraph 2

A. Provide the example of \_\_\_\_\_.

B. Cite the study of W. Seymour, who documents the circumstances of the battle.

C. Discuss how the United States might have remained a member of the British Commonwealth, if not for a heavy fog.

### IV. Body Paragraph 3

A. Provide the example of Napoleon Bonaparte’s invasion of Russia.

B. Cite the study of \_\_\_\_\_.

C. Discuss the consequences of Napoleon’s defeat in relation to Russia’s rise as a world power.

### V. Conclusion

A. Summarize the three examples from the body paragraphs.

B. Suggest that, although weather forecasters can predict the weather with more accuracy than in the past, \_\_\_\_\_.

# Strong Thesis Statements for Cause-Effect Essays

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.

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

## ACTIVITY 6 Writing Strong Thesis Statements for Cause-Effect Essays

Write a thesis statement for each topic. When you finish, compare your answers with a partner's.

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

---

---

# Transitions and Connectors in Cause-Effect Essays

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.

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

### ACTIVITY 7 Identifying Transitions and Connectors in an Essay

Reread “How Weather Has Changed World History” on pages 139–141. Find seven transitions or connectors. Copy the sentences here, underline the transition or connector, and write the paragraph number in the parentheses.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ( )
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ( )
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ( )
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ( )
5. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ( )
6. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ( )
7. \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ ( )



## Studying Transitions and Connectors in an Example Cause-Effect Essay

### ACTIVITY 8 Warming Up to the Topic

Answer the questions on your own. Then discuss them with a partner or in a small group.

1. What was the happiest time in your life? Describe what happened. Why were you so happy?

---

---

---

2. There is a saying that “Money can’t buy happiness.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement? In 75–100 words, explain your answer.

---

---

---

---

---

---

### ACTIVITY 9 Using Transitions and Connectors in an Essay

Read “Happiness” and circle the correct transition words or phrases.

#### Essay 14

### Happiness

- 1 What makes a person happy? **1** (If / So) people want to be happy—and few people **proclaim** their desire to be sad—should they seek money and professional success? Many experts in fields such as sociology, psychology, and public policy are attempting to answer this **seemingly** simple question of what makes people happy and how communities, social organizations, and employers can **facilitate** happiness by implementing a few simple strategies. In this new field of happiness studies, some **intriguing** answers are beginning to emerge about what makes people happy. Surprisingly, they support the longstanding **hypothesis** that money cannot buy happiness.

- 2 One of the **chief obstacles** to happiness is referred to as *social comparison*. When people compare themselves to other people, they prefer to see themselves as in some way superior. In an experiment, social

**to proclaim:** to state loudly or clearly for the record

**seemingly:** apparently

**to facilitate:** to make easier or more likely to happen

**intriguing:** extremely interesting

**a hypothesis:** an idea or theory that has not been proven

**chief:** main; principal

**an obstacle:** something that stops progress or forward movement



scientists asked whether people would prefer earning \$50,000 per year while their peers earned \$25,000 per year, or whether they would prefer earning \$100,000 per year while their peers averaged \$250,000 per year. Even though people would earn more in the **latter scenario**, most chose the **former** as a consequence of their desire to see themselves as more successful than others (Layard, 2005). **2** (In addition / Thus), a simple way to increase happiness is for people to reject the urge to compare themselves to others based on their finances and to live within their **means**.

**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.

**4** **5** (Finally / Therefore), sometimes people benefit from social rules that encourage them to improve their lives, even when these laws cost more money. While few people enjoy paying taxes, some taxes make people happier **6** (although / because) they improve the overall quality of people's lives. In their study of smoking and cigarette taxes, Gruber and Mullainathan (2006) conclude that "taxes may affect the happiness of former smokers (by making

**the latter:** the second of two presented options

**a scenario:** an imagined situation

**the former:** the first of two presented options

**means:** a person's ability to afford

**integrity:** the personal quality of being honest and fair

**trite:** boring, unimportant, or no longer special, especially due to overuse

**to pursue:** to try hard to obtain

**reciprocal:** inversely related; mutually agreed upon

**to end up:** to reach a final condition or place, often without an original intention

it easier to **resist** the temptation to resume smoking) or **prospective** smokers (by making it easier to never start smoking in the first place)” (p. 139). This example demonstrates how a society’s rules can 7 (cause / lead) to the general happiness of its populations, even through the apparently negative practice of increased taxation. Taxes also contribute to the funds available for other social purposes, which proves further justification for their use.

5 These are **merely** three ways that scholars of happiness studies have determined that people can employ to **enhance** their personal happiness. People should avoid comparing themselves to others financially. They should seek to live as their authentic selves in their personal and professional lives. 8 (Furthermore / In contrast), they should welcome rules, laws, and even taxes that increase the general happiness of the population. Everyone says they want to be happy, and happiness studies are helping people learn how to lead happier lives rather than to passively expect happiness to find them.

#### References

- Gruber, J., & Mullainathan, S. (2006). Do Cigarette Taxes Make Smokers Happier?. In Yew-Kwang Ng & Lok Sang Ho (Eds.), *Happiness and public policy: Theory, case studies, and implications* (pp.109–146). Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006.
- Layard, R. (2005). *Happiness: Lessons from a new science*. New York: Penguin.
- Martin, M. (2012). *Happiness and the good life*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

**to resist:** to fight against something so that it does not happen

**prospective:** related to future possibility of happening or coming true

**merely:** simply; only

**to enhance:** to improve

## Building Better Vocabulary

### ACTIVITY 10 Practicing Three Kinds of Vocabulary from Context

Read each important vocabulary word or phrase. Locate it in the essay if you need help remembering the word or phrase. Then 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 for Writing

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



## ACTIVITY 11 Working with Consistent Verb Tense Usage

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

### Paragraph 4

#### 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 for Writing

### 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>✗ <b>Because I read and studied the textbook often.</b></p> <p>✓ I scored 97 on the quiz <b>because I read and studied the textbook often.</b></p>
It is possible to begin a sentence with <b>because, although, if, when, or while</b> , but the sentence needs a second part with another subject-verb combination.	<p>✗ <b>Because I studied for the final exam a great deal.</b></p> <p>✓ <b>Because I studied a great deal</b>, my score on the final exam was 99.</p> <p>✓ My score on the final exam was 99 <b>because I studied a great deal.</b></p>

## ACTIVITY 12 Working with Fragments

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. Ireland has a rich and colorful history. One with many stories of fairies and elves.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Shopping malls are a very popular tourist attraction in many cities, but some tourists are not interested in them. Shopping is not for everyone.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Because of the popularity of the film. Producers were anxious to begin work on its sequel.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. The chef added so much spice to the stew that only the most daring of his patrons tasted it. The result was that less than half of the food was consumed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. There was a strange tension in the air. After so many years of separation.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. My mother is so organized that she uses a color-coding system in her kitchen pantry. My father, on the other hand, is one of the most unorganized people that I know.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. What is a dream and why do we dream? Scientists really do not understand dreams, but I wish someone could explain them to me.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Thousands of commuters were late for work this morning. Since the bus workers are on strike over pay and health benefits.

For more work with sentence fragments, see the *Brief Writer's Handbook with Activities*, pages 217–220.

### ACTIVITY 13 Editing an Essay: Review of Grammar

Ten of the fifteen words or clauses in parentheses contain an error involving one of the grammar topics featured in this unit. If the word or phrase is correct, write C. If it is incorrect, fill in the blank with a correction.

## Essay 15

### How the Light Bulb Changed the World

- 1 Few inventions have changed the world as **dramatically** as Thomas Alva Edison's light bulb. ① (With the **flip** of a switch. He turned darkness into light, thus **revolutionizing** people's lives.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

While the effects of the light bulb have been **overwhelmingly** positive, scientists have also identified some of its harmful effects, proving that even the greatest achievements often bring with them unexpected side effects that offset their advantages.

- 2 ② (One of the most positive of the light bulb's **accomplishments** is that it has allowed people to expand their lives into the dark hours of night.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Human productivity ③ (increases) \_\_\_\_\_  
dramatically after its invention because better lighting **enabled** people

**dramatically:** greatly; exceedingly

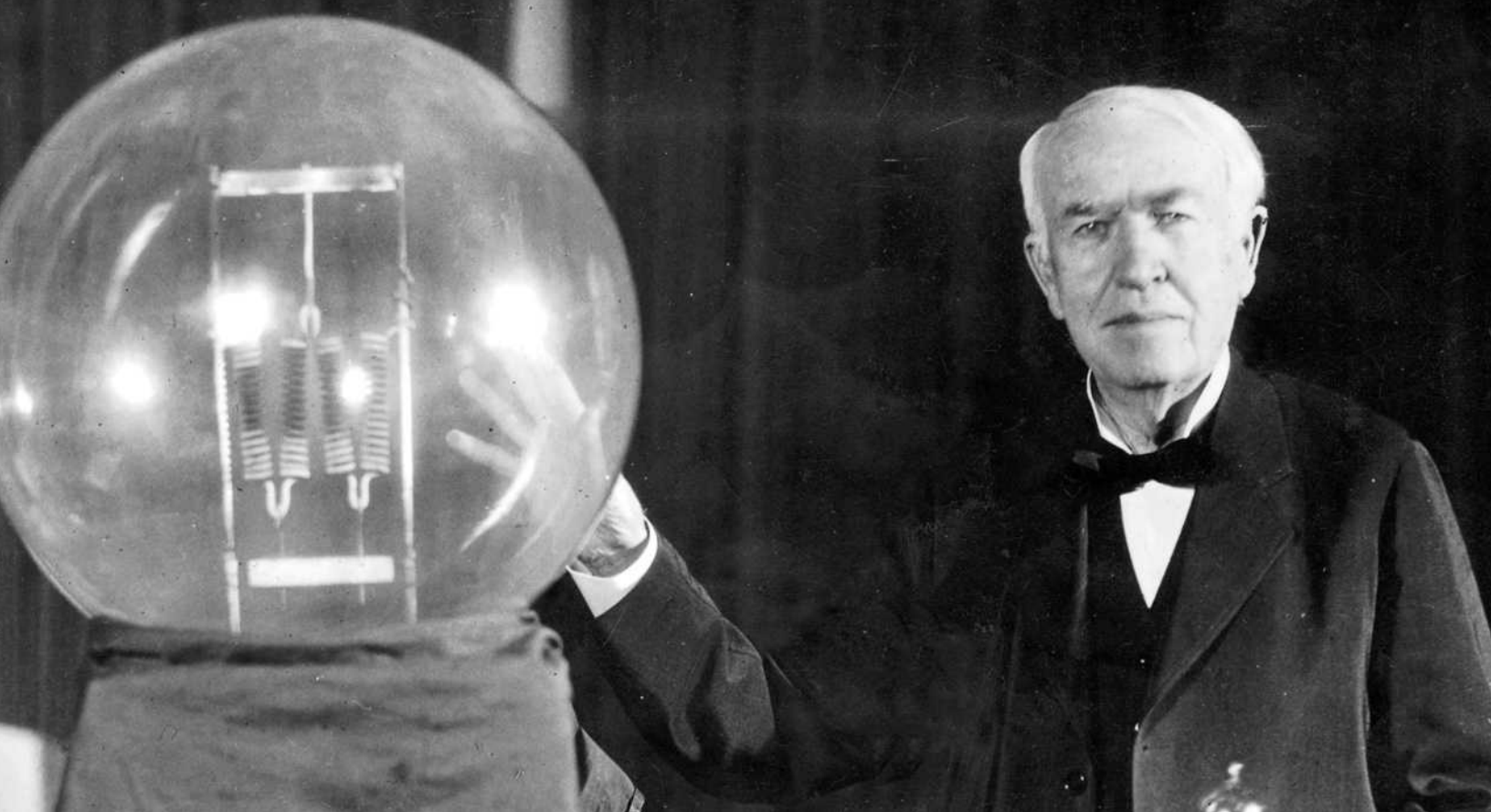
**a flip:** a turn from one position to the opposite

**to revolutionize:** to change completely (and possibly suddenly)

**overwhelmingly:** greatly; by a large number or amount

**an accomplishment:** anything a person has been able to do successfully, especially after some difficulty

**to enable:** to make able to happen



to read, study, work, play, and socialize into the late hours. 4 (Also, the **prevalence** of affordable lighting. This allowed companies to continue to manufacture their products during the night hours, when necessary.) \_\_\_\_\_

Electric lighting also **enhanced** public safety because of city streets being **illuminated** without the **potential** danger of gas. Now that light bulbs 5 (are) \_\_\_\_\_ everywhere, it is **virtually** impossible to imagine a world without them, for they are a core part of the **infrastructure** of modern society.

3 6 (Nonetheless, it is important to **acknowledge** the negative consequences of the light bulb as well, including a phenomenon that scientists term *light pollution*.) \_\_\_\_\_

Miranda (2003) **laments** the “changes in the biology of ecosystems, in the life of people due to invasive lighting, and the ‘artificialization’ of the

**prevalence:** the condition of being widespread or extremely common

**to enhance:** to improve

**to illuminate:** to light up

**potential:** possible

**virtually:** just about; almost completely

**infrastructure:** basic structures, such as roads and bridges, needed for a region to function properly

**to acknowledge:** to show recognition of; to admit that something is real

**to lament:** to regret



night” (p. 7). **7** (These problems have been caused by excessive lighting.

**Primarily** in **urban** areas.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**8** (Animals and humans are biologically prepared for the changing rhythms of night and day, and constant lighting undermines these rhythms.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Light pollution also **9** (clouded) \_\_\_\_\_ the night skies so that people cannot see the stars, which **10 (frustrated)** \_\_\_\_\_ astronomers and anyone who **11** (loved) \_\_\_\_\_ looking up to the heavens to inspect its wonders.

**4** **12** (Another unintended consequence of the light bulb. Is a phenomenon referred to as *switch psychology*, which theorizes that people become conditioned by light switches and other modern conveniences to expect immediate solutions to their problems.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Switch psychology lessens a person’s sense of **self-efficacy**, which Hockenbury and Hockenbury (2006) define as “The degree to which you are subjectively **convinced** of your own capabilities and effectiveness in meeting the demands of a particular situation” (p. 486). People are so used to light switches immediately bringing light that some find themselves at a loss for words when a light **13** (did not go) \_\_\_\_\_ on; they feel that they are incapable of correcting the situation or undertaking any steps to solve the problem.

**5** Edison’s achievement with the light bulb rightly **14 (deserves)** \_\_\_\_\_ celebration for its contributions to human comfort and productivity. At the same time, we must be careful to recognize

**primarily:** mainly  
**urban:** city; the opposite of *rural*

**frustrated:** disappointed; unsatisfied

**self-efficacy:** the power to produce a desired result or effect

**convinced:** very sure; certain

**to deserve:** to merit

some of its unintended consequences, such as light pollution and switch psychology, that threaten to **tarnish** his shining **legacy**.

15 (Many lasting **innovations** that have contributed dramatically to humanity's advancement. These innovations can also be the cause of unintended results, and we must **strive** to **mitigate** these consequences to take full advantage of their predominant benefits.) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**to tarnish:** to stain; to lessen the image of

**a legacy:** a personal history or record

**an innovation:** a new idea, invention, or method

**to strive:** to try hard to do or achieve something

**to mitigate:** to make something less harsh or severe

### References

Hockenbury, D., & Hockenbury, S. (2006). *Psychology* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). New York: Worth.

Miranda, P. (2003). Discurso del representante de CONAMA (Both versions, in English and in Spanish). In H. Schwarz (Ed.), *Light pollution: The global view* (pp. 3–14). Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.

## Building Better Vocabulary

### ACTIVITY 14 Practicing Three Kinds of Vocabulary from Context

Read each important vocabulary word or phrase. Locate it in the essay if you need help remembering the word or phrase. Then circle the best synonym, antonym, or collocation from column A, B, or C.

Type of Vocabulary	Important Vocabulary	A	B	C
Synonyms	1. incapable	can not	must not	should not
	2. prevalent	common	intentional	key
	3. revolutionize	anticipate	change	mate
	4. tarnish	make dirty	make happy	make tired
Antonyms	5. urban	indigenous	rural	vivid
	6. convinced	doubting	dreading	learning
	7. excessive	dramatic	on account of	very little
	8. mitigate	deserve	increase	mimic
Collocations	9. the main cause ___ something	by	of	with
	10. ___ everywhere	dramatically	substantially	virtually
	11. ___ someone's help	acknowledge	denote	merge
	12. unintended ___	consequences	fog	goal

# Original Student Writing: Cause-Effect Essay

In this section, you will follow the seven steps in the writing process to write a cause-effect essay. If you need help, refer to Unit 2, pages 34–46.

## ACTIVITY 15 Step 1: Choose a Topic

Your first step is to choose a topic for your essay. For a cause-effect essay, you want to choose a topic for which you can develop three causes of one effect or three effects from one cause. Your teacher may assign a topic, you may think of one yourself, or you may choose one from the suggestions in the chart. As you consider possible topics, ask yourself, “What do I know about this topic? What do my readers know? What else do I need to know? Do I need to research this topic?”

<b>Humanities</b>	<i>Literature:</i> The effects of writing a novel on a computer <i>History:</i> The causes of an important historical event such as World War I <i>Philosophy:</i> The effects of Socrates on modern thought
<b>Sciences</b>	<i>Biology:</i> The causes of cancer <i>Geology:</i> The effects of burning oil and gas <i>Meteorology:</i> The causes of climate change
<b>Business</b>	<i>Economics:</i> The causes of inflation
<b>Personal</b>	The effects of your attitude toward challenges in life

1. What topic did you choose? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Why did you choose this topic? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How well do you know this topic? What is your experience with it?  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**ACTIVITY 16** Step 2: Brainstorm

A. Use the chart to brainstorm a list of possible causes and effects for your topic.

TOPIC: _____	
Causes: _____	Effects: _____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

B. Now carefully consider the causes and effects. Which focus do you think would be better for your essay? If you have more causes, then you should write a focus-on-causes essay with one effect. If you have more effects, then you should write a focus-on-effects essay with one cause.

**ACTIVITY 17** Step 3: Outline

Prepare a simple outline of your essay. Focus either on causes or on effects.

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

I. Introduction

A. Hook: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

B. Connecting information: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

C. Thesis statement: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



II. Body Paragraph 1 (Cause 1 or Effect 1): \_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

III. Body Paragraph 2 (Cause 2 or Effect 2): \_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

IV. Body Paragraph 3 (Cause 3 or Effect 3): \_\_\_\_\_

A. \_\_\_\_\_

B. \_\_\_\_\_

V. Conclusion: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### **Peer Editing of Outlines**

Exchange books 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.

1. How is this essay organized?

focus-on-causes method

focus-on-effects method

2. Is there any aspect of the outline that is unclear to you? Give details.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3. Can you think of an area in the outline that needs more development? Make specific suggestions.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

4. If you have any other ideas or suggestions, write them here.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

### ACTIVITY 18 Step 4: Write the First Draft

Use the information from Steps 1–3 to write the first draft of your cause-effect essay. Use at least four of the vocabulary words or phrases from the Building Better Vocabulary activities in this unit. Underline these words and phrases in your essay. Try to also use at least two of the words from the Academic Word List in the *Brief Writer's Handbook with Activities* on pages 230–231.

### ACTIVITY 19 Step 5: Get Feedback from a Peer

Exchange papers from Step 4 with a partner. Read your partner's first draft. Then use Peer Editing Sheet 6 (available online at [NGL.Cengage.com/GW5](http://NGL.Cengage.com/GW5)) to help you to comment on your partner's writing. Be sure to offer positive suggestions and comments that will help your partner improve his or her essay.

### ACTIVITY 20 Step 6: Revise the First Draft

Read the comments on Peer Editing Sheet 6 about your essay. Then reread your essay. Can you identify places where you should make revisions? List the improvements you plan to make.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

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.

### ACTIVITY 20 Step 7: Proofread the Final Draft

Be sure to proofread your paper several times before you submit it so you find all the mistakes and correct them..

## Additional Topics for Writing

Here are ten more ideas for topics for additional cause-effect essay writing.

#### PHOTO

**TOPIC:** Look at the photo on pages 132–133. There are several different types of pollution, for example, water, land, and light pollution. Choose one type of pollution. What are the causes or effects of this type of pollution on the environment?

**TOPIC 2:** What are the causes of illiteracy?

**TOPIC 3:** What are the effects of overcrowding in cities?

**TOPIC 4:** What effects can one person have on the government?

**TOPIC 5:** Why do many people prefer foreign goods?

**TOPIC 6:** What are the causes of credit card debt?

**TOPIC 7:** Discuss how people's childhood experiences influence their lives.

**TOPIC 8:** What are the effects of sudden wealth (such as when a person wins the lottery)?

**TOPIC 9:** What are the effects of poverty?

**TOPIC 10:** What are the causes of a recent political crisis?

## Timed Writing

How quickly can you write in English? There are many times when you must write quickly, such as on a test. It is important to feel comfortable during those times. Timed-writing practice can make you feel better about writing quickly in English.

1. Read the essay guidelines below. Then take out a piece of paper.
2. Read the writing prompt below the guidelines.
3. Write a basic outline including either **one cause** and more than one effect or a few causes and **one effect**. You should spend no more than five minutes on your outline.
4. Write a five-paragraph essay.
5. You have 40 minutes to write your essay.

### Cause-Effect Essay Guidelines

- Use the focus-on-causes or the focus-on-effects organization for this essay. Do not write about multiple causes and multiple effects.
- Remember to give your essay a title.
- Double-space your essay.
- Write as legibly as possible (if you are not using a computer).
- Include a short introduction (with a thesis statement), three body paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Try to give yourself a few minutes before the end of the activity to review your work. Check for mistakes in spelling and consistent verb tense, and look for sentence fragments.

---

*We all face personal troubles in our lives. Think about a recent challenging situation in your life at home, at work, at school, or with friends. What were the causes of this situation? What were its effects? Although you will discuss both causes and effects, remember to emphasize either the causes of the situation or the effects of the situation.*