

APSU Writing Center
Cause and Effect Essay

Cause and Effect Essay

- A cause-and-effect essay explains why things happen (causes) and what results from them (effects).
- **Cause:** The reason an event or situation occurs.
- **Effect:** The result or outcome of an event or situation.
 - **Example:** Excessive use of antibiotics (cause) leads to antibiotic resistance, and makes infections harder to treat (effect).
 - **Example:** Deforestation (cause) leads to loss of wildlife habitat, ecosystem disruption, and increased CO₂ levels (effect).

Steps to Write a Cause-and-Effect Essay

Choose a Topic

- Select a topic with a clear cause-and-effect relationship.

Research & Outline

- Gather evidence and examples to support your causes and effects.
- Create an outline.
- Focus one paragraph on one cause or effect.
 - **Example Outline:** Introduction, Cause 1, Cause 2, Effect 1, Effect 2, Conclusion

Use 3rd Person

- Focus on factual evidence and analysis, not opinions.
- Avoid using personal pronouns like "I" or "you."
 - **Example:** The issue of climate change has been a topic of concern for many years.
 - **Example:** Deforestation is widely recognized as a major cause of habitat loss.

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Questions to Ask While Writing

- What are the main causes of the event?
- What are the immediate effects?
- How do the causes directly lead to the effects?
- Are there secondary or indirect causes to consider?
- What is the overall impact on individuals, communities, or systems?
- What would happen if a cause were removed?
- What broader lessons or implications can be drawn?

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Cause and Effect Essay Outline

Introduction: Briefly introduce the topic, and state a thesis showing the cause and effects.

Body Paragraph 1: Present your first cause, and support it with evidence and examples.

Body Paragraph 2: Present your second cause, and support it with evidence and examples.

Body Paragraph 3: Present your first effect and support it with evidence and examples.

Body Paragraph 4: Present your second effect, and support it with evidence and examples.

Conclusion: Restate your thesis in new words, summarize causes, effects, and explain significance.

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References

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