

# Cause and Effect Writing



# What is the Purpose?

- To discuss the reasons why something occurs

- To discuss the results of an event, feeling or action



Knowing how to write a good Cause or Effect paragraph is important – most classes, history, biology, journalism, marketing, for example, use this technique to analyze things.

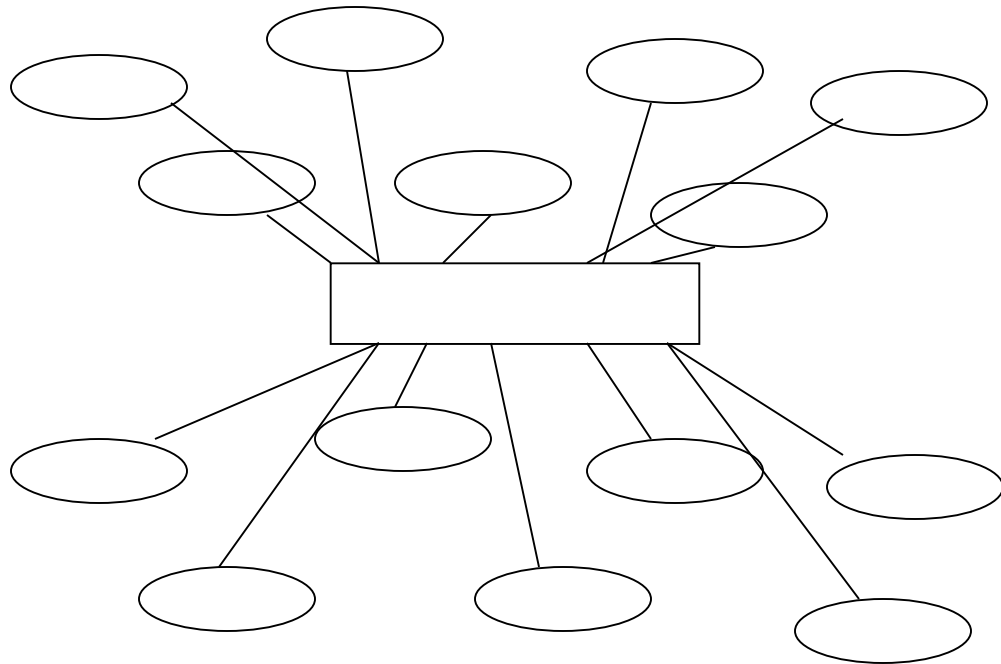
# Why do we write these types of paragraphs?

- To understand a situation
- To solve a problem
- To predict an outcome
- To entertain
- To persuade



# Brainstorming Techniques

- Listing Causes
- Listing Effects
- Organizer



# Achieving Unity

- Unity is achieved in a paragraph by deciding if causes or effects will be the focus
- Create a topic sentence that focuses on central event, feeling or action.
- Is there a link between the causes or effects? Use that link as the controlling idea (ex. negative effects, positive outcomes, happy reasons.)

# Enhancing Coherence

- To increase coherence, limit the number of causes or effects.
- Decide if there is a chain reaction or individual causes/ effects.
- Use transitional words that focus the purpose of the paragraph.
- Use support sentences to identify the causes or effects.

# Useful Vocabulary

## Cause

- **For**
- **Because**
- **Since**
- **Due to**

## Effect

- **So**
- **But**
- **For this reason**
- **As a result**
- **Consequently**
- **Otherwise**
- **Therefore**
- **Thus**

# Sample Paragraph

## Headaches

Headaches can have several causes. Many people think that the major cause of headache is nervous tension, but there is strong evidence that suggests diet and environment as possible factors. Some people get headaches because they are dependent on caffeine. Other people may be allergic to salt, or they may have low blood sugar. Still other people are allergic to household chemicals including polishes, waxes, bug killers, and paint. If they can manage to avoid these substances, their headaches tend to go away. When a person has recurring headaches, it is worthwhile to look for the underlying cause, especially if the result of that search is freedom from pain.



# Sample Paragraph with clear support sentences

## Headaches

Headaches can have several causes. **One obvious cause is stress.** People have hectic lives and frequently have multiple stressors everyday, like work, family and money. **Another reason for headaches in some people has to do with diet.** Some get headaches because they are dependent on caffeine. Other people may be allergic to salt, or they may have low blood sugar. **The environment can also cause this uncomfortable condition.** Allergens such as household chemicals including polishes, waxes, bug killers, and paint can lead to headaches. Lowering stress, controlling your diet and avoiding allergens can help avoid headaches.

# Sample Paragraph

## Headaches

Recurring headaches can have several disruptive effects on a person's life. Severe headaches are more than temporary inconveniences. In many cases, these headaches make a person nauseous to the point that he or she must go to bed. Sleep is often interrupted because of the pain. This worsens the physical and emotional state of the sufferer. For those who try to maintain a normal lifestyle, drugs are often relied on to get through the day. Such drugs, of course, can have other negative side effects. Productivity on a job can certainly be reduced, even to the point of regular absences. Finally, perhaps the most distressing aspect of all this is the seemingly unpredictable occurrence of these headaches. The interruption to a person's family life is enormous: cancelling plans in the last minute and straining relationships with friends and family. It is no wonder that many of these people feel discouraged and even depressed.

# Sample Paragraph with cause/effect signal words

## Headaches

Recurring headaches can have initiate disruptive effects in a person's life. **Initially**, in many cases, these headaches make a person nauseous to the point that he or she must go to bed. **Furthermore**, sleep is often interrupted because of the pain. Disrupted sleep worsens the physical and emotional state of the sufferer. For those who try to maintain a normal lifestyle, drugs are often relied on to get through the day. Such drugs, of course, **can lead to** other negative effects. Drugs can inhibit productivity on a job, perhaps even **causing** regular absences. Not only is work affected, but the seemingly unpredictable occurrence of these headaches **leads to** disruption in family life. The interruption to a person's family life is enormous: cancelling plans in the last minute and straining relationships with friends and family. It is no wonder that many of these people feel discouraged and even depressed due to the cycle of misery reoccurring headaches cause.