

## **Cause & Effect Essay**

### **Elements of the Lecture**

- What's Cause & Effect Essay?
- Types of Cause & Effect Essay Organizations.

#### **a. Block Organization**

#### **b. Chain Organization**

### **What is a Cause and Effect Essay?**

- A Cause and Effect Essay provides reasons and explanations for events, conditions, or behaviors.
- It involves tracing probable or known effects of a certain cause or examining one or more effects and discussing the reasonable or known cause(s).

### **Intro : Cause and EffectCause and Effect**

- analyzes why something happens.
- Some effects are caused by multiple causes.
- Some causes, in turn, can result in multiple effects.

**Every event has a cause and every cause has a result.**

### **Hint: Cause and Effect**

- In this unit, you will look at the situation (effect) and examine the reasons (causes) for it.
- Usually there are more than one reason for the situation.
- When there are many reasons, there is usually one that is most important.

### **Remember !!!**

**Remember the following points when you write about the causes of an effect:**

- 1- Look at the possible causes and discuss them.
- 2- Support all the causes. Give good examples.
- 3- State your most important cause list. This will make your essay more interesting.

### Understanding the Assignment

- Cause and Effect Essay assignments typically use the following language:

"What are the causes of X?"

"What led to X?"

"Why did X occur?"

"Why does X happen?"

"What would be the effects of X?"

### Example:

- Define recession and discuss the probable effects a recession would have on American society.

### Transitions

- Transitions for showing cause: **because** and **as**
- **Because** and **as** introduce a reason clause. They both answer the question "why?" Both **because** and **as** can be used at the beginning of the sentence or in the middle.
- Use a comma after the reason if you start the sentence with **because** and **as**.

### Two Ways of Organization:

- **There are two ways to organize a cause-and-effect essay: block organization and chain organization.**
- Some topics work better when organized in block, while others work better when organized in a chain. If the causes and effects are closely related, it is better to use a chain organization.

### First Type:

#### **Block organization**

- You discuss all of the causes in one block (one, two or three paragraphs, depending on the number of causes). Then you discuss all the effects in another block.

### Cause-and-Effect Structure Words

- **Cause structure words:**  
the first reason is, the next cause, because
- **Effect structure words:**  
the first effect, as a result, consequently
- **Note:** use a semicolon before and a comma after **consequently** and **therefore**.

### Transition Paragraph

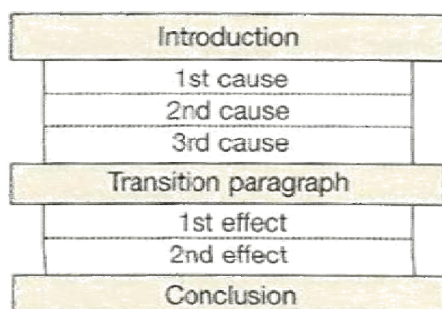
In block organization, a short paragraph concludes one major section and introduces another major section. This paragraph is to conclude one section and introduce another. To write a transition paragraph, but it is helpful. For example, an essay about global warming discusses the causes and several paragraphs about the effects. The transition paragraph is placed between the two blocks.

Essays that discuss mainly (or only) causes use a transition paragraph between blocks of causes and blocks of effects. For example, an essay might separate the personal effects of our increase in the economy.

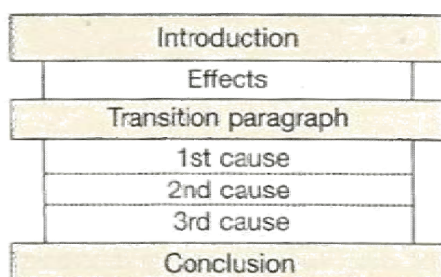
In short, a block-style cause/effect essay. Some possibilities are shown below.

### **Block Org:**

**A**



**C**



As you read the following model essay, identify which model essay follows: A, B, C, or D.

## Shyness

1 If you suffer from shyness, you are not alone, for shyness is a universal phenomenon.<sup>1</sup> According to recent research, "close to 50 percent of the general population report that they currently experience some degree of shyness in their lives. In addition, close to 80 percent of people report having felt shy at some point in their lives" (Payne, par. 3).<sup>2</sup> As shyness is so prevalent in the world, it is not surprising that social scientists are learning more about its causes. They have found that shyness in an individual can result from both biological and environmental factors.

2 Recent research reveals that some individuals are genetically predisposed to<sup>3</sup> shyness. In other words, some people are born shy. Researchers say that between 15 and 20 percent of newborn babies show signs of shyness: they are quieter and more vigilant. Researchers have identified physiological differences between sociable and shy babies that show up as early as two months. In one study, two-month-olds who were later identified as shy children reacted with signs of stress to stimuli such as moving mobiles<sup>4</sup> and tape recordings of human voices: increased heart rates, jerky movements of arms and legs, and excessive crying. Further evidence of the genetic basis of shyness is the fact that parents and grandparents of shy children more often say that they were shy as children than parents and grandparents of non-shy children (Henderson and Zimbardo 6).<sup>5</sup>

3 However, environment can, at least in some cases, triumph over biology. A shy child may lose much of his or her shyness. On the other hand, many people who were not shy as children become shy as adults, a fact that points to environmental or experiential causes.

4 The first environmental cause of shyness may be a child's home and family life. Children who grew up with a difficult relationship with parents or a dominating older sibling are more likely to be inhibited<sup>6</sup> in social interactions. Another factor is the fact that today's children are growing up in smaller and smaller families, with fewer and fewer relatives living nearby. Growing up in single-parent homes or in homes in which both parents work full time, children may not have the socializing experience of frequent visits by neighbors and friends. Because of their lack of social skills, they may begin to feel socially inhibited, or shy, when they start school (7).

5 A second environmental cause of shyness in an individual may be one's culture. In a large study conducted in several nations, 40 percent of participants in the United States rated themselves as shy, compared to 57 percent in Japan and 55 percent in Taiwan. Of the countries participating in the study, the lowest percentage of shyness was found in Israel, where the rate was 31 percent.

Researchers Henderson and Zimbardo say, "One explanation of the cultural difference between Japanese and Israelis lies in the way each culture deals with attributing credit for success and blame for failure. In Japan, an individual's performance success is credited externally to parents, grandparents, teachers, coaches, and others, while failure is entirely blamed on the person." Therefore, Japanese learn not to take risks in public and rely instead on group-shared decisions. "In Israel, the situation is entirely reversed," according to Henderson and Zimbardo. "Failure is externally attributed to parents, teachers, coaches, friends, anti-Semitism, and other sources, while all performance success is credited to the individual's enterprise." The consequence is that Israelis are free to take risks since there is nothing to lose by trying and everything to gain (10).



<sup>6</sup> In addition to family and culture, technology may play a role as well. In the United States, the number of young people who report being shy has risen from 40 percent to 50 percent in recent years (10). The rising numbers of shy young people may be “due in part to the growing dependence on non-human forms of communication, coming about as a result of our huge advances in technology” (Payne, par. 4). Watching television, playing video games, and surfing the Web have displaced recreational activities that involve social interaction for many young people. Adults, too, are becoming more isolated as a result of technology. Face-to-face interactions with bank tellers, gas station attendants, and store clerks are no longer necessary because people can use machines to do their banking, fill their gas tanks, and order merchandise. College students take online telecourses. Telecommuters work at home, giving up daily contact with coworkers. Everyone texts, e-mails, and converses anonymously<sup>7</sup> in online chat rooms. As a result, people have less opportunity to socialize in person, become increasingly awkward at it, and eventually start avoiding it altogether. In short, they become shy.

<sup>7</sup> While being shy has some negative consequences, it has positive aspects, too. For one thing, it has been mentioned that shy people are good listeners (“Shyness”).<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, a university professor writing about his own shyness says, “Because of their tendency toward self-criticism, shy people are often high achievers, and not just in solitary activities like research and writing. Perhaps even more than the drive toward independent achievement, shy people long to make connections to others, often through altruistic<sup>9</sup> behavior” (Benton).<sup>10</sup>

<sup>8</sup> To sum up, shyness has both genetic and environmental causes. Some people come into the world shy, while others become shy as a result of their experiences in life. It appears that most people have experienced shyness at some time in their lives, and recent research indicates that the number of shy people is increasing. Therefore, if you are shy, you have lots of company.

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### Writing Technique Questions

1. Is the topic of this essay primarily the causes or the effects of shyness?
2. Which paragraph(s) discuss(es) the causes?
3. Which paragraph(s) discuss(es) the effects?
4. What two subtopics are named in the thesis statement?
5. Which paragraph(s) discuss(es) the first subtopic?
6. Which paragraph(s) discuss(es) the second subtopic?
7. What is the function of paragraph 3?
8. Which pattern (A, B, C, or D) does the model follow?

1. It discusses mainly the causes of shyness.
2. Paragraph 2, 4, 5, and 6
3. Paragraph 7
4. (1) biological and (2) environmental factors.
5. Paragraph 2
6. Paragraphs 4, 5, 6
7. Paragraph 3 is a transition paragraph. It divides the biological from the environmental causes
8. Pattern B

### PRACTICE 1

#### Block Organization

Fill in the boxes to show topic of each paragraph have been filled in for you

#### INTRODUCTION

Thesis statement: They have found that shyness in an individual can result from both biological and environmental factors.

1st cause: genetics

#### CONCLUSION

#### INTRODUCTION

Thesis statement: They have found that shyness in an individual can result from both biological and environmental factors.

1st cause: genetics

Transition paragraph

2nd cause: home /family life

3rd cause: culture

4th cause: technology

Effects

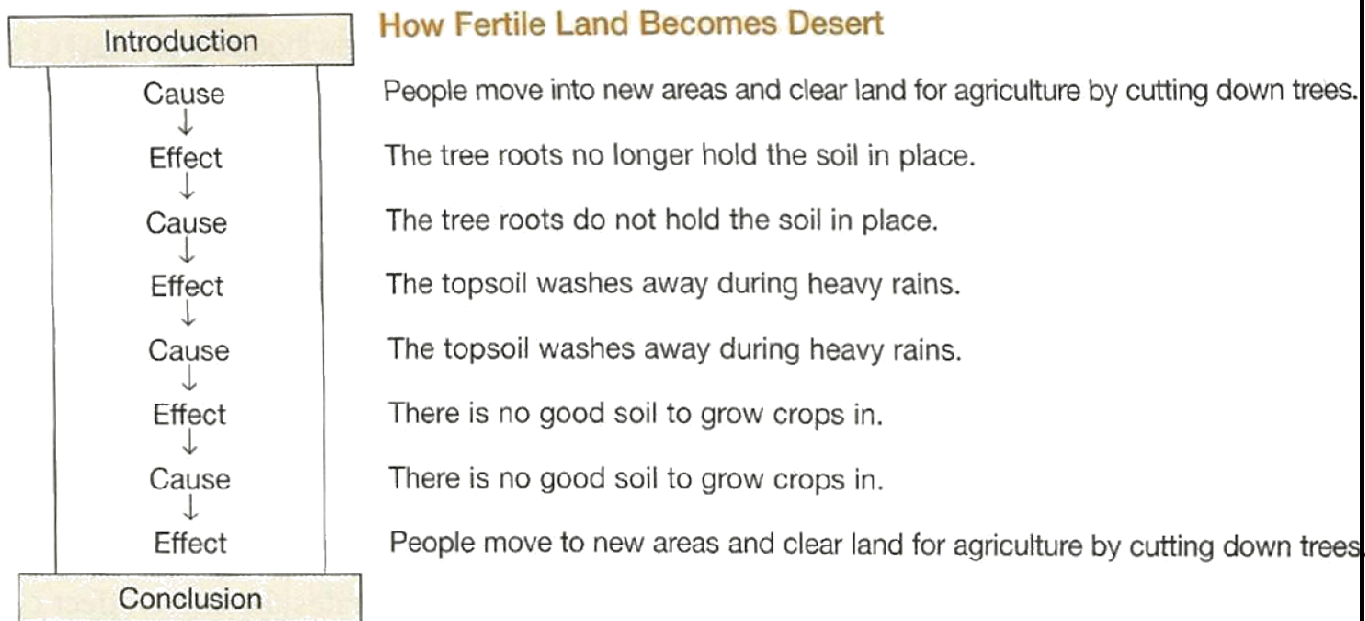
#### CONCLUSION

Shyness has both biological and environmental causes.

## Second Type: Chain organization

You discuss a first cause and then the effect, a second cause and its effect, a third cause and its effect, and so on.

### Notice the Chain Organization



The following short essay describes a simple chain reaction.

**1** Years ago, medical researchers they appropriately named Seasonal affective disorder (SAD) suffer from SAD become very depressed. They understand the causes of this condition, particularly in areas of the far north where the amount of daylight are few.

**2** SAD results from a decrease in sunlight. Doctors know that decreased sunlight affects a sleep-related hormone that is produced by the body. Therefore, when the days are shorter, the hormone increases. Shorter, darker days lead to a chemical that helps transmit nerve impulses to be a cause of depression ("Seasonal Affective Disorder," the resulting imbalance of these two hormones. They believe that a decrease in the amount of sunlight is a disturbance in the body's natural rhythm. They believe that the combination of chemical imbalance and disturbance results in symptoms such as depression, anxiety, and irritability—all signs of SAD).

**3** Since absence of light seems to be the cause, a dose of light appears to be the cure.

of a special light box that simulates<sup>1</sup> natural light for a few hours every day. An hour's walk outside in winter sunlight may also help (par. 4).

<sup>4</sup> In conclusion, the depressive effect of low sunlight levels may help explain the high suicide rate in the Scandinavian countries; more important, it may suggest a remedy: When the days grow short, turn on the lights.

### Writing Technique Questions

1. Which paragraph contains the chain of causes and effects?
2. What is the effect of decreased sunlight in winter?
3. What other change results from a decrease in the amount of sunlight?
4. What is the final result?

**1.** 1. Paragraph 1

**2.** 2. Chemical imbalance.

**3.** 3. Disturbance in the body's natural clock.

**4.** 4. Lethargy, oversleeping, weight gain, anxiety, and irritability – all signs of depression