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**Course number:** Unit 5

**Course Title:** Cause and Effects Essays

**Reference:** Belkhir, F.Z., & Messaoudi, Y.(2018-2019). *Comprehension and Written Expression-LMD2*. Pedagogical handout. University of Tlemcen, Algeria.

**Unit 5 Cause and Effects Essays**

**5.1 Definition**

The cause and effect essay is an exploration of the *reasons for* or *results of* things or events. This type of essay can include both causes and effects, but generally contains only one of the two.

**5.2 Sample**

**Why Students are Poor**

It is easy to recognize a college student because he or she 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 or on 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 in 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 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 second reason college student 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 of 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 the cost of attending college. Fortunately, the causes of student poverty 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.

**5.3 Organisation**

A cause and effect essay explains why something happens. Both causes and effects are examined in longer essays. Your short essay will focus only on causes that lead to an event or situation. Consider the following organization for a short essay.

*A. Introduction*

* The hook engages the reader’s interest by *personalizing* the topic or showing why it is important for the reader to know about it.
* The middle sentences describe the event or situation that is the result of the causes. This background information helps the reader understand the relationship between the causes and effects.
* The thesis statement at the end of the introduction states two causes that lead up to the event or situation. It may also include a comment by the writer that explains why it is important to understand the causes of the event.

*B. Body Paragraphs*

* There are two body paragraphs in the essay, which support the thesis statement by explaining the causes in detail.
* Each body paragraph begins with a topic sentence that states one cause for the event or situation.
* The sentences that follow support the idea in the topic sentence. These supporting sentences include details such as examples, description, reasons, and facts to help the reader understand the relationship between the cause and the event.

*C. Conclusion*

* The conclusion restates the thesis statement, often using different language.
* It summarizes the main causes and their relationship to the event.
* It may include a comment by the writer that explains why it is important to understand the causes of the event.

**5.4 Language**

* **Using Transitional Words/Phrases**

When moving between causes and effects in your essay, the following transitional words/phrases may be used.

***A. Transitions for Cause & Effect Essays***

* *Transitions for Causes:*

as a result of, results from, the reason for, since, because (of), due to, leads to, is caused by

* *Transitions for Effects:*

so, so that, so then, a consequence of, consequently, therefore, thus, then, for this reason, as a result

***B. Signal Words for Cause & Effect Essays***

You also may want to use words to indicate the certainty of your statements. Be sure not to over understate the strength of your arguments. You also want to use words to indicate the level of importance of your points.

* *Degrees of Certainty:*

certainly, may, necessarily, perhaps, probably, undoubtedly, unquestionably

* *Levels of Importance:*

above all, equally important, finally, first, initially, last, primarily, second, third

* **Using *Will* with *So that***

The future with *will* can also be used with the logical connector *so that*. In this type of sentence, the main clause uses the simple present and states the cause. It is followed by *so that* and a second main clause with *will*.

**main clause (present) time clause (future)**

Students work hard in school ***So that***  they ***will be*** successful.

**5.5 Practice**

**Activity 1: Rewrite the sentences below using *so that* and *will*.**

a. Some drivers drink a lot of caffeinated drinks in order to stay awake.

*Some drivers drink a lot of coffee so that they will stay awake.*

b. Students sacrifice many things in order to save money for school.

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c. Many stores advertise sales in order to attract customers.

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d. Many people pay bills online in order to save money and time.

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e. Some people carpool to work in order to save money.

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f. Many people work very hard in order to be successful.

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* **Expressing Future Possibility with if Clauses**

Sentences with an *if* clause show a cause and effect relationship. The *if* clause introduces a possible situation (the cause). The main clause talks about the possible result (the effect) of the situation.

* Use the present tense in the *if* clause and *will* in the main clause.

**Cause Effect**

**If** X happens Y **will happen**, too.

* The cause and effect clauses can come in either order. When the *if* clause comes first, it is followed by a comma.

**If Clause Main clause**

**If** Pedro plays**,** we **will win** the game.

**Main clause If Clause**

We **will win** the game **if** Pedro plays.

**N.B:** Do not use will in the *if* clause.

If the price of oil will increase, people will drive less. (INCORRECT)

If the price of oil increases, people will drive less.

**Activity 2: Combine the ideas so that they will form one sentence with an *if* clause.**

a. (money managers/be discipline/achieve financial goals)

If money managers are disciplined, they will achieve financial goals.

b. (applicant/interview well/ receive job offers)

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c. (you/ exercise regularly/ be healthy in old age)

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d. (restaurant/serve delicious food/ be successful)

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e. (I/work hard/be promoted)

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f. (parents/ be good at solving problems/ be successful at raising children)

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g. (she/invests money wisely/become wealthy)

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h. (students/ study hard/ graduate college)

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* **Writing a Cause and Effect Essay**

Topic: What causes people to get a pet, such as a cat or a dog?

*Step 1: BRAINSTORMING*

Consider the above-mentioned topic, and write down ideas and vocabulary for your brainstorming here or on a separate piece of paper.

*Step 2: OUTLINING*

Write an outline for your essay.

**Introduction**

Hook:

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Background Information:

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Thesis Statement:

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**Body Paragraph 1**

Topic Sentence:

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Supporting Detail:

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Supporting Detail:

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**Body Paragraph 2**

Topic Sentence:

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Supporting Detail:

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Supporting Detail:

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Supporting Detail:

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**Conclusion**

Summary:

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Comment:

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*Step 3: WRITING*

Use your brainstorming notes and outline to write your essay on a separate piece of paper.