

UNDERSTANDING ORGANIZATIONAL PATTERNS

CAUSE/ EFFECT PATTERN

Explanation

One of the most common patterns of organization found in paragraphs is the **Cause/Effect Pattern**. This pattern occurs any time there is something (a cause) that makes something else (an effect) happen.

Certain words signal the use of the **Cause/Effect Pattern**. Some of these signal words are reason, because, since, therefore, thus, result, so and consequently. (See Writing Lab handouts: Paragraph 5.58 and Essay 6.68 and Reading Lab handouts: Reading Comprehension B12.0, B15.0 and B15.1.)

There are several forms of the **Cause/Effect Pattern**. The causes are underlined once and the effects twice.

1. **One cause** leads to ---→ **One effect**

Example: Mr. Brown suffered from high blood pressure which is responsible for thousands of deaths in the u.s. each year.

Cause:		Effect:
<u>High blood pressure</u>	leads to---→	<u>Thousand of deaths a year</u>

2. **One cause** leads to ---→ **Several effects**

Example: Drastic reduction in the supply of blood to the body's vital organs can result in heart attack, stroke, and kidney failure it is also not uncommon for someone with this condition to suffer total blindness.

Cause:		Effect:
<u>Reduction in blood Supply to vital organs</u>	leads to --→	1. Heart attack 2. Stroke 3. Kidney disease 4. Blindness

3. **Several causes** leads to --→ **One effect**

Example: Many of America's teenagers are in poor physical condition. They eat the wrong foods, keep late hours, don't get enough exercise,

And hardly ever see a doctor for a routine physical examination.

Causes:

1. Eat wrong foods
2. Keep late hours
3. Do not get enough exercise
4. Have fewer physical exams

leads to-→

Effect:

Many American teenagers are in poor health.

4. A chain reaction is where a First Cause leads to a First Effect. This effect in turn, becomes a cause and leads to a Second Effect which can become a cause and lead to a Third Effect. Etc.

Example: When the pressure of the blood in the arteries is higher than it should be, the heart must pump harder. Over a long period of time, a heart that must pump harder enlarges and eventually weakens. When it weakens, the heart pumps less blood on each beat.

Cause: Higher blood pressure leads to --→ Effect: Heart pumps faster

Cause: Heart pumps faster leads to --> Effect: Heart enlarges and Weakens

Cause: Weakened heart leads to → Effect: Pumps less blood

EXERCISE:

Identify the cause (or causes) and effect (or effects) in each sentence. Bracket and label each cause (C) and effect (E).

C

E

For example: {High blood pressure} is responsible for (thousands of deaths in the U.S. each year.)

1. The lettuce crop in California was poor last year because of excessive rainfall.
2. Human behavior is a product of our basic biological heritage and the learning experiences of the particular culture in which we live.
3. Last winter, I broke my ankle by slipping on the ice.
4. Since the defense attorney's objection was valid, the judge threw out the evidence and dismissed the case.
5. Tony's grades have improved since he put himself on a study schedule and stopped going out on weeknights.

6. The construction of federally subsidized highways and the shortage of housing in cities led to the development of the suburbs.

Identify the cause (or causes) and effect (or effects) in each paragraph.

7. By studying the sets of heart spectrographs he's collected, the doctor has been able to identify other heart troubles in patients.

Cause (s):

Effect (s):

8. For twelve years, the money needed to finance the Statue of Liberty project could Not be raised in the United States. Art critics and architects predicted the statue would be a horrible monstrosity. Construction experts said that copper-covered lady would blow over in the first big wind. People were uncertain as to where the statue would be built. Meanwhile, back in Paris Bartholdi was hard at work on the statue helped by a legion of carpenters, steelworkers, plasterers, and other workers.

Cause (s):

Effect (s):

9. In 1961, Yankee outfielder Roger Maris was under great pressure as he pursued as he pursued Babe Ruth's homerun record. In addition to being plagued by the usual tension any player feels on the brink of such a great athletic achievement, Maris found himself hounded by fans. The press followed him everywhere. fellow athletes teased him. It was no thanks to any of there nagging followers that Maris met the challenge and broke the spectacular record.

Cause (s):

Effect (s):

10. Blood vessels have a tendency to weaken from the increased pressure of the blood and can actually blow out as would a car tire. The real tragedy of it all is that medical experts have been unable to pinpoint the cause or come up with a cure.

Cause (s):

Effect (s):

11. Throughout millions of years of evolution, groups developed the ability to survive In certain climates. As a result, various peoples may share certain physical

characteristics even though they come from very dissimilar racial backgrounds. American Plains Indians, Ethiopians, and Northern Europeans, for example, share the trait of a high-bridged, narrow nose because they all developed in similar cold, dry climates, or higher latitudes.

Cause(s):

Effect(s):

12. Most of the destruction in the great San Francisco earthquake of 1906 was result of fires that the earthquake triggered and not of the actual tremor. When the building collapsed or were damaged in the quake, stoves and furnaces were overturned, resulting in the setting of numerous fires around the city. Fallen electrical wires supposed to supply water for fire fighting. Thus, fire fighters watched helplessly as the fires caused by the earthquake grew and grew until they leveled the city.

Cause (s):

Effect (s):

13. Many social scientists agree that being the first-born child in a family has significant influence on the development of personality. First born children. are likely to be more trusting of authority figures than later-born children. This probably due to having extra amounts of interaction with their parents early in life. It has also been said that those who were first born are apt to conform easily to social pressures. Finally, first born children seem eager to attain power. this could explain the high number of prominent people, including politicians, artist, and entertainers who were first-born children.

Cause (s):

Effect (s):

14. Middle-aged adults are returning to school in increasing numbers. Some want to learn to do their jobs better. Evidence suggests, college courses can help them improve their job skills and keep up in their fields. Others return to school because more credits amt mean a raise or promotion. Teachers, for instance, get raises fro reaching certain levels of education. Also, some adults return to the classroom because of interest in a new field, such as telecommunication or computer programming. Finally, others want to study subjects for the sake of learning, such foreign languages, history, or literature. Such classes help adults spend their time in more productive and interesting ways and deepen their understanding of themselves and their world.

Cause (s):

Effect (s):

15. In the Bavarian, French, and Italian Alps, once-magnificent forest are slowly being destroyed by the effects of air pollution. Trees dying from pollution lose their leaves or needles, allowing sunlight to reach the forest floor. During this process, grass prospers in the increased light and pushes out the native plants and moss which help to hold rainwater. The soil thus loses absorbency and becomes hard, causing rain and snow to slide over the ground instead of sinking into it. This, in turn results in erosion of the soil. After a heavy rain, the eroded land finally falls away in giant rockslides and avalanches, destroying entire villages and causing floods.

Cause (s):

Effect (s):

16. Today's high cost of college causes problems for many students. It prevents some students from attending at all. For those who are able to attend, high tuitions affect the amount of time available for studying since many students have to work. Also, those who manage to get loans know that they must begin their careers with debts to repay.

Cause (s):

Effect (s):

Answers to Exercises

1. [The lettuce crop in California was poor last year] because of [excessive rainfall.]
E **C**
2. [Human behavior] is a product of [our basic biological heritage] and the [learning experiences of the particular culture in which we live.]
E **C** **C**
3. Last winter, I [broke my ankle] by [slipping on the ice.]
E **C**
4. Since [the defense attorney's objection was valid.] [the judge threw out the evidence] and dismissed the case.
C **E**
5. {Tony's grades have improved} since [he put himself on a study schedule] and {stopped going out on weeknights.}
E **C** **C**
6. [The construction of federally subsidized highways] and [the shortage of housing in cities] led to [the development of the suburbs.]
C **C** **E**
7. Cause: The doctor studied heart spectrographs.
 Effects: 1) He could spot hidden heart impairments.
 2) He could better identify heart problems.
8. Causes: 1) Art critics and architects predicted the statue would be ugly.
 2) Construction experts said the statue would blow over.
 3) People were uncertain about the location of the statue.
 Effect: Money to finance Statue of Liberty could not be raised.
9. Cause: Roger Maris pursued Babe Ruth's homerun record.
 Effects: 1) There was great pressure on Maris to succeed.
 2) Fans and the press hounded Maris.
 3) Athletes teased Maris.
10. Chain of Causes and Effects.
 Cause: There is increased blood pressure -> Effect: Blood vessels weaken
 Cause: Blood vessels weaken -> Effect: Blood vessels burst
11. Cause: Group developed the ability to survive in certain climates.
 Effect: Various peoples share certain physical characteristics even though they come from different racial backgrounds.

12. Two related chains of causes and effects take place here:

Earthquake -> Building Collapsed -> Stoves/furnaces overturned and Electrical wires Fell -> Fires started -> Destruction of San Francisco

Earthquake -> Water mains Ruptured -> Firefighters couldn't put Out fires --> Destruction of San Francisco

13. Cause: The child is the first-born in the family.
Effects: 1) The child is more trusting of authority figures.
(Notice that having extra interactions with parents is a MINOR detail In this paragraph because it explains why the child may be more Trusting of authority figures.)
2) The child conforms easily to social pressures.
3) The child is eager to attain power.
(Notice the MINOR detail—the number of prominent people who Were first-born provide evidence to prove that the first child is Eager to attain power.)

NOTICE: The three effects are MAJOR details in this paragraph.

14. Causes: 1) Adults want to learn to do their jobs better.
2) They want to get more credits for a raise or promotion.
3) They have an interest in new field.
4) They study for personal satisfaction and interest.
Middle-aged adults are returning to school.

NOTICE: The four causes are MAJOR details in this paragraph. There Are MINOR details that relate to several of the major details.

15. Chain of causes and effects:

Air pollution -> Trees Dying -> Leaves/needles fall of trees --> Sunlight reaches forest floor-->
---> Grass Grows --> Grass Kills plants/moss --> Soil becomes dry / erodes ----> Rockslides, floods -> avalanches

---> Alpine forest and villages are being destroyed.

- Cause: The cost of college is high.
Effects: 1) Some students are unable to attend because of cost.
2) Study time is less because students must work.
3) Students must repay loans after graduation.

