

# Cause-and-Effect Essay

## Writing Workshop

When you hear a tone (TONE), pause the CD and follow the instructions. Pause the CD any time you don't understand something. You might also ask your teacher or classmates for help.

### See How It's Done

Why did you win the race? Why did the president write a law to protect animals? Writing about why and how things happen is a good way to learn and to share what you know.

- ◆ Listen to the first paragraph and question of the model on Worksheet A. Then, pause the CD and read the rest of Worksheet A on your own. Discuss the model and the questions with your teacher. (TONE)

### Do It Yourself

For this assignment you will write about why and how something happened. You will write about the **causes**, or reasons for, and event, as well as the **effects**. Effects are the results of an event.

## 1 Prewriting .....

### Begin exploring ideas to write about.

Here are two ways to get started:

1. Make a list of things you have done and are proud of. It could be winning a race, passing an exam, getting a job, or getting in better shape. Next to each thing, write why it happened.
2. Look through newspapers and magazines to find events or ideas that you'd like to understand better. Make a list of those topics.

- ◆ Now pause the CD and make your lists. (TONE)

### Choose a topic for your paper.

Look at the ideas you have written. Which idea interests you the most? Which idea do you know the most about? You might want to ask several friends which idea they would prefer to read about.

- ◆ Pause the CD and choose a topic. Discuss it with your teacher. (TONE)

### Think about your topic.

Remember these facts about causes and effects as you think about your topic: A cause is the reason something happens. An effect is what happens because of the cause. One cause can have more than one effect.

Then, think about your topic. What is its cause? What are its effects? Are the effects the results of the cause you named?

Next, think about your audience, or readers. Who will read your paper? What do your readers already know about your topic? Think about the information you will need to give to your readers.

- ◆ Now answer the questions on Worksheet B. (TONE)

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### Find more information about your topic.

You need to learn more about why and how the event happened. You can brainstorm ideas with a friend. You can also ask your teacher or school librarian to help you do research at a library. Write down all the facts, quotations, and details that will help explain the cause and effects of your topic.

- ◆ Pause the CD and find more information about your topic. (TONE)

## 2 Drafting .....

### Organize the information you have collected.

You need to clearly identify the cause and effects of your topic. A cause-and-effect chart can help you do this. Fill in the chart on Worksheet C with information about your topic. Write the effects in the order they happened. Then add details to answer questions such as how, why, when, and who.

- ◆ Now turn to Worksheet C and fill in the chart with information about your topic. (TONE)

### Start drafting your cause-and-effect essay.

You have already begun your writing on Worksheets B and C. Now you will turn your information into an essay. Follow these hints to help you organize your work:

1. An easy way to organize a cause-and effect essay is to describe one cause, and then explain its many effects. For example, in his paper, Jason explains how joining the track club led him to run cross-country, to win gold medals, and to win the state finals.
2. Start by writing the cause and effect of your topic. Next, give background information. See how Jason Nemo does this in the second paragraph of his essay (lines 10–19). Then, write the different effects of the cause you wrote at the beginning. End by summarizing the cause and its effects in one or two sentences. Look at Jason’s ending in lines 60–64 of his paper.
3. Make sure to write the effects in chronological order, that is, in the order in which they happened.

- ◆ Pause the CD. Talk with your teacher about how your final paper will look. Then begin your draft. (TONE)

## 3 Revising .....

### Read over what you have written.

Ask a friend to read it too. You might want to ask your friend to explain the cause and its effects to you in his or her own words.

- ◆ Now turn to Worksheet D. With your friend, discuss the questions about your writing. Then write down the answers. (TONE)

## 4 Editing and Proofreading .....

### Decide how to make your writing better.

Think about your answers to the questions on Worksheet D. You could also ask your friend or teacher to suggest changes.

- ◆ Now begin changing your writing. (TONE)

## Cause-and-Effect Essay

*Writing Workshop*

**Continue changing your writing until you are happy with it.**

You may want to ask your teacher for help on how to proofread your paper for mistakes. Pay special attention to the verbs. Do they all agree with their subjects? For help with subject-verb agreement, see page 432 of your book.

- ◆ Make a final clean copy of your cause-and-effect essay. (TONE)

### 5 Sharing and Reflecting .....

**Think about what you have learned by writing a cause-and-effect essay.**

Share your final copy with an audience. You may want to record your essay and play it for your classmates. You may also copy it and publish it in the school paper.

Think about what you learned while writing the essay. How did you solve any problems that you had? How was this type of writing different from other writing you have done? What have you learned about the cause and effect relationship?

- ◆ Think about these questions and be ready to discuss your answers with your teacher and your classmates. (TONE)

**Worksheet A****Writing Workshop**

This is an essay that one student wrote about an important sports event. As you read his paper, think about the effects he writes. Words that you may find difficult to understand are underlined and are explained on the right side of the page. Circle any other words that you don't understand, and ask your teacher for help.

**Moments***by Jason Nemo*

1 I've just run in the state championship 3200-meter  
 2 relay race with three teammates. We won! In the past I  
 3 usually chalked up our wins to raw talent, but winning  
 4 this event in a state meet made me realize how far from  
 5 raw my talent is. I had actually started working out in  
 6 seventh or eighth grade. The training that began back  
 7 then made this victory possible. After the race, I jogged  
 8 around the track to cool off, and I reflected on the stages  
 9 of training that led me to this moment. |—————→

*relay*—running in teams*chalked up*—thought it was because*raw*—natural*meet*—race*working out*—exercising*training*—practice*jogged*—ran slowly

**? What does Jason say is the cause of his victory? (TONE)**

10 The summer before I entered high school I joined a  
 11 track club, where I was able to compete against other  
 12 clubs for the first time. Our team was good enough to  
 13 participate in a national meet, so we were able to  
 14 practice our skills against other track clubs from all over  
 15 the country. We were often pitted against imposing relay  
 16 teams of 12- and 13-year olds who looked like cousins of  
 17 the Incredible Hulk. Even though we were just training  
 18 for the upcoming school year, I felt more inadequate  
 19 than I have ever felt in my running career. The effect of  
 20 those competitions was that I learned to overcome  
 21 whatever doubts I had about myself and just run as well  
 22 as I knew I could. |—————→

*track*—running*pitted*—made to compete  
*imposing*—to be admired, scary*Incredible Hulk*—comic book super hero*upcoming*—next*inadequate*—not good enough

**Circle one main cause. Then underline one of its effects.**

**Worksheet A (cont.)****Writing Workshop**

23 That fall I ran cross-country for my school. If  
 24 running two or three miles in a cross-country meet across  
 25 rugged terrain in pouring rain doesn't build your  
 26 stamina, I don't know what will. Daily practices  
 27 throughout the fall and spring paid off when I was named  
 28 best freshman in the conference in the 400-meter event.  
 29 It was the first time I had distinguished myself in my  
 30 sport. Consequently, my pride and confidence increased,  
 31 and I was ready to push myself to the next level. |————→

*cross-country*—on roads and paths

*rugged terrain*—bumpy ground

*stamina*—energy, strength

*conference*—group

*distinguished*—done something noticeable

*Consequently*—Because of that

**? What are two effects of Jason's practice?**

32 The following summer, I practiced every morning  
 33 for the fall cross-country season. By steamy August we  
 34 were pushing six to eight miles a day. It was hard work,  
 35 but all that cross-country running had prepared me for it.  
 36 The highlight of my career came in the last meet of the  
 37 season, on our archrival's track. I won all three races,  
 38 including the 400-meter, which I won with my fastest  
 39 time ever. I left the track with three gold medals. As a  
 40 result, I knew that expectations would be high for next  
 41 year. That was fine with me. My expectations for myself  
 42 had been increasing with each new success. |————→

*confidence*—knowing that you can do something

*steamy*—hot and humid

*highlight*—best part

*archrival*—main enemy

*expectations*—hopes, goals

**? What did Jason do in August? What did he do next?**

43 Because of all our success, everyone was expecting  
 44 us to go all the way. Our hard work and training paid off  
 45 and we made it to the big show—the state finals. I was a  
 46 wreck before the race. I had been nervous about races  
 47 before, though, so I knew that I could overcome it. I  
 48 stepped onto that big blue track, looking into the huge  
 49 crowd with my whole season on the line. If I could excel

*was expecting*—thought we would

*wreck*—very nervous

*overcome*—get over

**Worksheet A (cont.)****Writing Workshop**

50 at all the meets before now, I told myself, I could do the  
 51 same here at the state championship. |—————>

52 My legs felt like lead. When the gun went off the  
 53 jitters wouldn't go away, and I hardly noticed the race. I  
 54 finished my leg of the race in less than two minutes,  
 55 which was a record run for me. Even in my nervous state,  
 56 I had exceeded my expectations for myself. A couple of  
 57 minutes later my teammate crossed the finish line. I  
 58 looked up and saw that we had won. Still exhausted, I  
 59 hobbled over to my teammates to share the victory. |—————>

60 Thanks to four years of training, facing intimidating  
 61 opponents, and proving my abilities to myself and others,  
 62 my team and I had proven ourselves winners. With sweat  
 63 still pouring off my face, I was already thinking about  
 64 next year's team. |—————>

**? What was the effect of the team's hard work?**

*lead*—heavy metal

*jitters*—nervous, shaking

*leg*—part

*exceeded*—done better than

*exhausted*—very tired

**? What did Jason and his team do?**

*hobbled*—walked weakly

**? What was the cause of the event Jason wrote about? What was its effect?**

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Worksheet B

## Writing Workshop

Write down your topic, then answer the questions about it.

The event I am going to write about is

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What caused this to happen?

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What happened because of it?

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What details do I know about the cause and effects of my topic?

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What do I need to learn?

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Where can I find the information I need?

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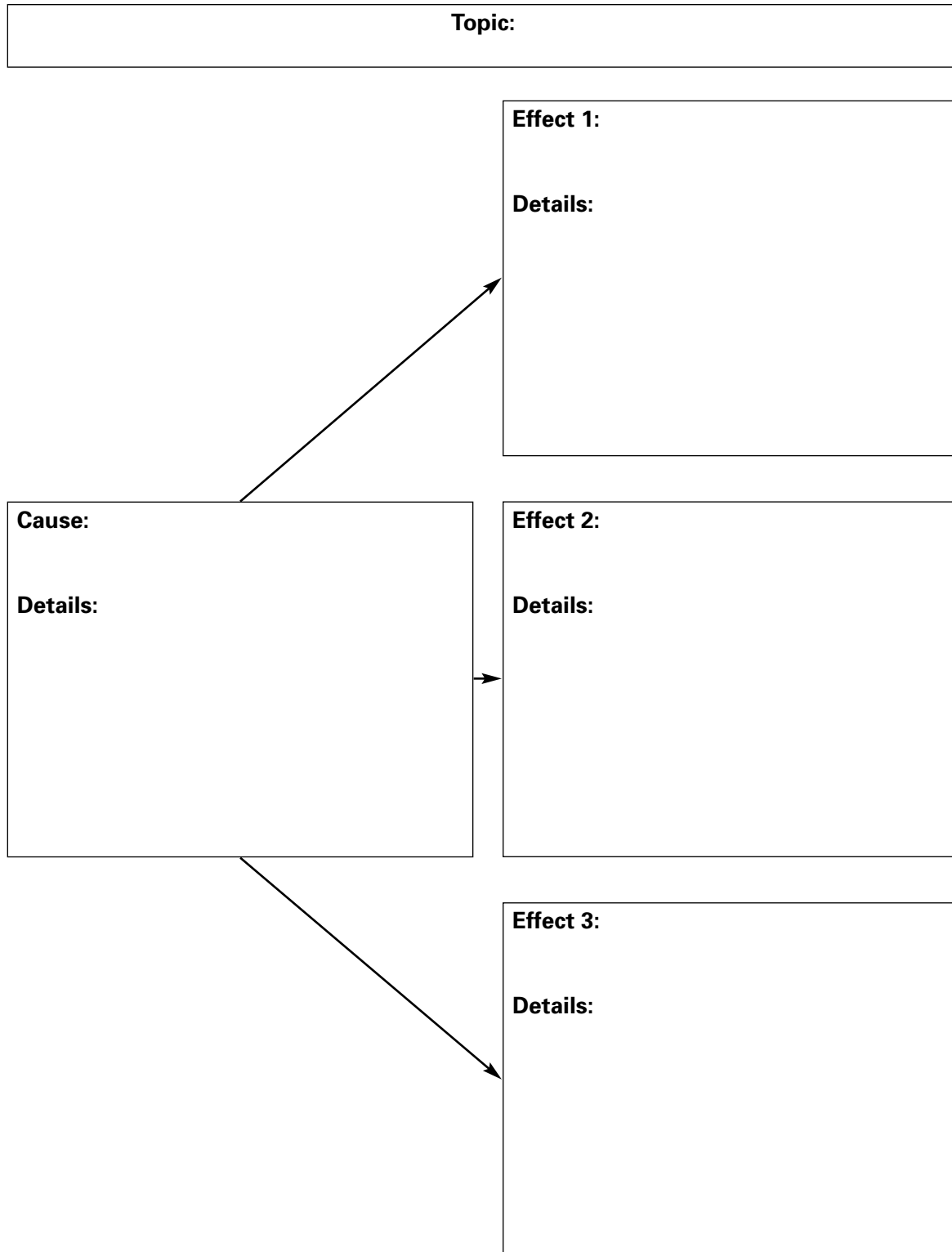
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# Worksheet C

## Writing Workshop

Fill in the chart below with information about your topic. Make sure to write the effects in the order they happened. Use your own paper if you need more space or need to add boxes to the chart.



# Worksheet D

## Writing Workshop

Read over the first draft of your writing and share it with a friend. Answer the following questions together. Then write down the answers.

1. Did I clearly write a cause and effect in the beginning? How could I explain it more clearly?

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2. How could I make my introduction more interesting?

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3. What other details could I add to explain the cause and effects more clearly?

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4. Did I write the effects in time order? Is any effect in the wrong place? If so, where should it be in the essay?

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5. How could I make the connections between the cause and the effects clearer?

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6. What other important effects could I add?

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