**Cause and Effect Essay**

**What is a cause and effect essay?**

Cause and effect essays are concerned with why things happen (causes) and what happens as a result (effects). Cause and effect is a common method of organizing and discussing ideas.

**Follow these steps when writing a cause and effect essay**

1. Distinguish between cause and effect. To determine causes, ask, "Why did this happen?" To identify effects, ask, "What happened because of this?" The following is an example of one cause producing one effect:

**Cause**

You are out of gas.

**Effect**

Your car won't start.

Sometimes, many causes contribute to a single effect or many effects may result from a single cause. (Your instructor will specify which cause/effect method to use.) The following are examples:

**Causes**

liked business in high school

salaries in the field are high

have an aunt who is an accountant

am good with numbers

**Effect**

choose to major in accounting

**Cause**

reduce work hours

**Effects**

less income

employer is irritated

more time to study

more time for family and friends

However, most situations are more complicated. The following is an example of a chain reaction:

1. Develop your thesis statement. State clearly whether you are discussing causes, effects, or both. Introduce your main idea, using the terms "cause" and/or "effect."
2. Find and organize supporting details. Back up your thesis with relevant and sufficient details that are organized. You can organize details in the following ways:
	* Chronological. Details are arranged in the order in which the events occurred.
	* Order of importance. Details are arranged from least to most important or vice versa.
	* Categorical. Details are arranged by dividing the topic into parts or categories.
3. Use appropriate transitions. To blend details smoothly in cause and effect essays, use the transitional words and phrases listed below.

**For causes**

because, due to, one cause is, another is, since, for, first, second

**For Effects**

consequently, as a result, thus, resulted in, one result is, another is, therefore