

PHIL 105 - Unit 10 Casual Reasoning

Causal Reasoning

A way to describe cause and effect

The moon blocked the sun's light.

The moon **caused** the sun's light to be blocked.

Explanatory Language

The tower of Pisa leans **because** it has a shallow foundation in unstable soil.

Its shallow foundation in unstable soil **causes** the Tower of Pisa to lean.

Prevention Language

Dissolved salt keeps water from freezing

dissolved salt **causes** water to *not* freeze

The Method of Difference

Almost every animal collected at these depths has been contaminated with microplastics. The researchers said: “Does it **harm** (*cause*) their ability to feed, to maneuver, to reproduce? We don’t know, because we can’t compare an animal that’s full of microplastics with one that’s not. Because there aren’t any.”

After the patient was treated with "healing crystals" and conventional medicine, they got better.

The Crystals worked!

Problems with this

- it could have been the conventional medicine
- the person could have just gotten better

We look for relevant differences to see what caused something.