

OLYMPIADS SCHOOL/GRADE 9 AND 10 WRITING/HANDOUT 13

Class 15 Final Assessment Announcement

Please study your handouts and homework from Class 9 onwards. Pay attention to:

- challenging vocabulary words,
- appropriate ways to respond to OSSLT reading comprehension questions,
- new article format,
- comma and semi-colon usage,
- noun, adverb, and adjective clauses,
- apostrophe (to signal possessives),
- simple and compound sentences,
- sentence fragments, and
- opinion essay in the OSSLT.

TODAY

Cause-and-Effect Linking Words

Here are a few linking words and phrases for cause and effect. There are three main types of linking words: conjunctions, transitions, and prepositions.

1. Conjunctions

The most important conjunctions are **because**, **as**, **since**, and **so**. “Because”, “as”, and “since” introduce a **cause**; “so” introduces an **effect**. These are used to join two complete sentences (or independent clauses) together. They are often used like this:

➡ **First sentence conjunction second sentence.**

For example:

I stayed at home **because** it was raining.

Or:

It was raining, **so** I stayed at home. (use a comma before “so”)

You can also reverse the order of the sentences with **because**, **as**, and **since**.

For example:

Because it was raining, I stayed at home. (use a comma between the first and second sentences)

Note that this is **not** possible with “so”.

2. Transitions

The most important transitions are **therefore**, **consequently**, and **as a result**. All of these introduce an **effect**. These are used to join two complete sentences (or independent clauses) together. They are often used like this:

➡ **First sentence; transition, second sentence.**

➡ **First sentence. transition, second sentence.**

For example:

It was raining; **therefore**, I stayed home.

Or:

It was raining. **Consequently**, I stayed at home.

3. Prepositions

The most important prepositions are **due to** and **because of**. Both of these introduce a **cause** in the form of a **noun phrase**. They are often used like this:

➡ **Sentence due to noun phrase.**

➡ **Because of noun phrase, sentence.**

For example:

I stayed at home **due to** the rain.

Or:

Because of the rain, I stayed at home.

Apart from using linking words or phrases, what are some other ways to express cause and effect? Read the following selections about peer pressure and discuss other ways to show causality.

Selection 1

<http://headsap.scholastic.com/students/peer-pressure-its-influence-on-teens-and-decision-making>

Peer Pressure: Its Influence on Teens and Decision Making

First published 2008



Say you're sitting around with some friends playing video games and someone mentions a particular game that happens to be one of your favorites. "Oh, that game's easy. So not worth the time," one of your friends says dismissively. The others agree. Inwardly, you know that it is a game you happen to enjoy quite a lot but, outwardly, not wanting to debate the issue, you go along with the crowd.

You have just experienced what is commonly referred to as peer pressure. It is probably more accurate to refer to this as peer influence, or social influence to adopt a particular type of behavior, dress, or attitude in order to be accepted as part of a group of your equals ("peers"). As a teen, it's likely you've experienced the effect of peer influence in a number of different areas, ranging from the clothes you wear to the music you listen to.

Peer influence is not necessarily a bad thing. We are all influenced by our peers, both negatively and positively, at any age. For teens, as school and other activities take you away from home, you may spend more time with your friends than you do with your parents and siblings. As you become more independent, your peers naturally play a greater role in your life. Sometimes, though, particularly in emotional situations, peer influence can be hard to resist—it really has become "pressure"—and you may feel compelled to do something you're uncomfortable with.

What scientific research tells us about peer influence

"There are two main features that seem to distinguish teenagers from adults in their decision making," says Laurence Steinberg, a researcher at Temple University in Philadelphia. "During early adolescence in particular, teenagers are drawn to the immediate rewards of a potential choice and are less attentive to the possible risks. Second, teenagers in general are still learning to control their impulses, to think ahead, and to resist pressure from others." These skills develop gradually, as a teen's ability to control his or her behavior gets better throughout adolescence.

According to Dr. B. J. Casey from the Weill Medical College of Cornell University, teens are very quick and accurate in making judgments and decisions on their own

and in situations where they have time to think. However, when they have to make decisions in the heat of the moment or in social situations, their decisions are often influenced by external factors like peers. In a study funded by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), teen volunteers played a video driving game, either alone or with friends watching. What the researchers discovered was that the number of risks teens took in the driving game more than doubled when their friends were watching as compared to when the teens played the game alone. This outcome indicates that teens may find it more difficult to control impulsive or risky behaviors when their friends are around, or in situations that are emotionally charged.

The positive side

While it can be hard for teens to resist peer influence sometimes, especially in the heat of the moment, it can also have a positive effect. Just as people can influence others to make negative choices, they can also influence them to make positive ones. A teen might join a volunteer project because all of his or her friends are doing it, or get good grades because the social group he or she belongs to thinks getting good grades is important. In fact, friends often encourage each other to study, try out for sports, or follow new artistic interests.

In this way, peer influence can lead teens to engage in new activities that can help build strong pathways in the brain. As described in the article "Teens and Decision Making: What Brain Science Reveals," neural connections that are weak or seldom used are removed during adolescence through a process called synaptic pruning, allowing the brain to redirect precious resources toward more active connections. This means that teens have the potential, through their choices and the behaviors they engage in, to shape their own brain development. Therefore, skill-building activities—such as those physical, learning, and creative endeavors that teens are often encouraged to try through positive peer influence—not only provide stimulating challenges, but can simultaneously build strong pathways in the brain.

While we are constantly influenced by those around us, ultimately the decision to act (or not to act) is up to us as individuals. So when it comes to decision making, the choice is up to you.

Reflection: Where does the article discuss the causes of peer pressure, and where does it emphasize its effects?

Selection 2, from Aspen Education Group's website. "Aspen Education Group is an organization that is committed to improving the quality of life for youth and their families. Aspen's programs exist at the intersection of therapy and education for students that have demonstrated behavioral issues that are interfering with their performance in school and life."

<http://aspeneducation.crchealth.com/factsheetindex/factsheetpeerpressure/>

Much research has shown that peer pressure has a much greater impact on adolescent behavior than any other factor. Think about it. Your teenager spends many more of his or her waking hours with peers than with family members. The interaction is direct, and much more powerful than the influence of teachers and other authority figures. Peer pressure tends to have more of an effect on children with low self-esteem. If a child feels compelled to fit in, the teen may do things that go against his or her beliefs simply to be part of the group.

Peer pressure can lead to experimentation with drugs and alcohol, sex, skipping school, and various high-risk behaviors. If you notice a sudden change in your child's appearance, clothing, and attitude, especially if accompanied by secretive behavior, he or she may be succumbing to the influences of peers. You should be especially alert to sudden changes in the friends who make up their core peer group. An unexplained change in the type of friends your child associates with would indicate that your child is vulnerable to new influences that may not be positive. How can parents, who spend far less time with their children than do their peers, have an influence on their teens? Parents need to set clear expectations for behavior, establish rules about communicating where and with whom their teenagers are spending their time, and should pre-set consequences for lying about activities or where they are going. By communicating your expectations, your adolescent cannot claim they "did not know" that you would be upset.

One of the most difficult issues can be when a teen decides to hang out with the "wrong crowd." Parents often find it is difficult to control such behavior. They will lament that when they forbid their teen to hang out with certain people, those people become a virtual magnet for their teen. Often by simply setting the rules about communicating their whereabouts, you will limit the effects of any peer group. However, if you really believe that a particular peer group is negatively impacting your child, it is important to deal with the reasons your teen is being influenced in this direction. He or she may have problems with self-esteem and self-confidence and feel it is necessary to fit in anyway possible, even if it means fitting in with a negative peer group. Parents will not change the teen's attitude by forbidding access to these peers. They can only change the attitude by dealing with the primary issues that cause it in the first place. An adolescent is drawn to a particular group because it "feeds" them in some way. If they are choosing the wrong group, there is a fundamental core issue that needs to be addressed therapeutically before any significant change can occur.

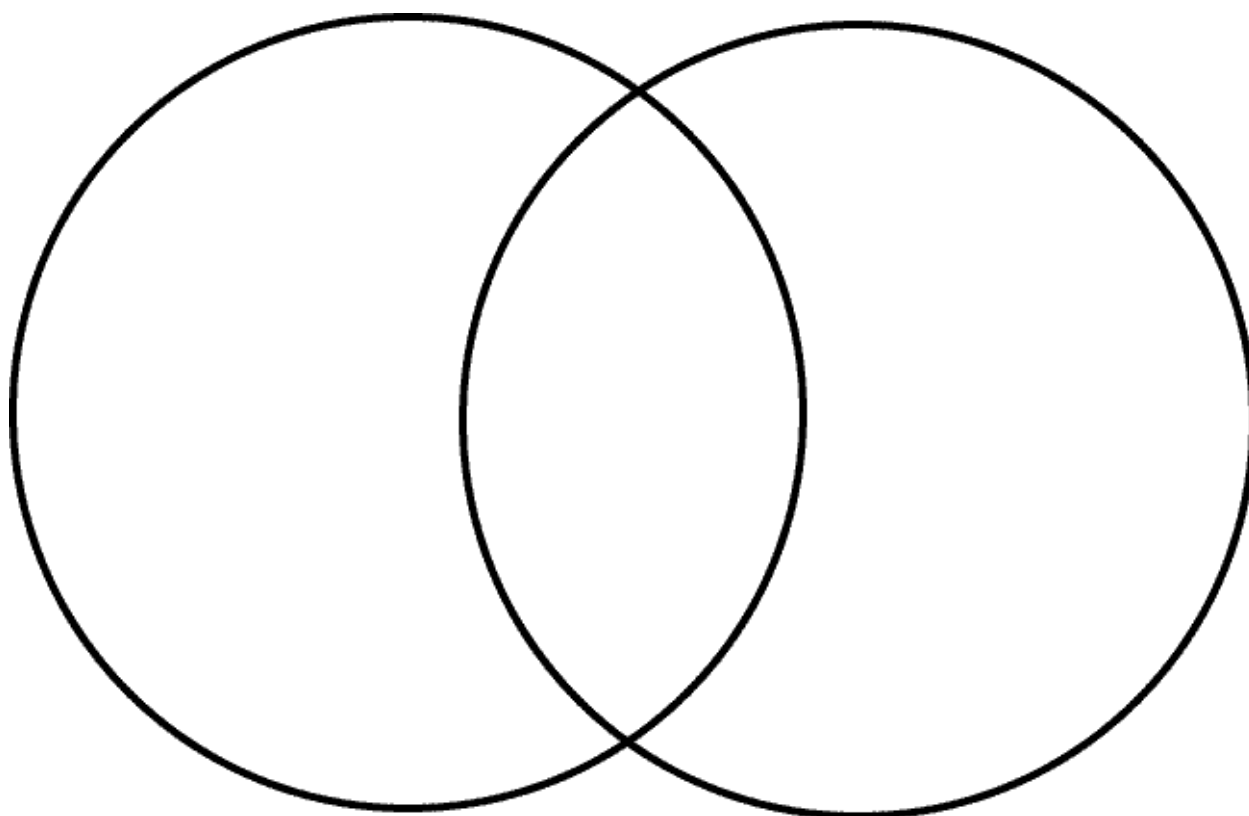
Reflection: Does the article emphasize the causes or effects of peer pressure? Why? Can peer pressure have positive effects?

Watch the following two short films and discuss where they emphasize the causes of peer pressure, and where they emphasize its effects.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ikGVWEvUzNM> ("Identity")

<https://www.shortoftheweek.com/2011/05/01/rolling-bomber-special/> ("Rolling Bomber Special")

Use a Venn diagram to compare and contrast the two short films.



Write a paragraph about one or both of the short films. Use linking words or phrases to express causality.
