

## Academic Writing Lesson 7: Cause & Effect Writing

According to Mkono (2012), the rapid growth of fast food (defined as a term given to food that is prepared and served very quickly, also refers to food sold in a restaurant or store which is often processed, preheated and served to the customer in a packaged form for take-away) has become a global phenomenon, and a growing number of people have chosen to frequent fast food outlets because of convenience, instead of eating at home. However, fast food has gradually developed into a staple diet in many cultures. This may lead to some changes that people should pay attention to. This essay will consider the basic causes such as pace of life and irregular working hours and also will explore its main effects such as people's ways of life, the problem of obesity and family relationships.

The rise of the fast food industry in recent years has been attributed mainly to the fast pace of life and irregular working hours. Gray (2001) stated that people are busy working and they do not have enough time to prepare food for themselves, especially since more women are also working in the society and this can lead to less time available for them to prepare family meals.

Another factor which has produced an increase in fast-food consumption is advertising. Dougherty (1981) provided an example: Burger King, in order to advertise its brand, spent \$80 million that year with \$23 million going into prime time network TV. As a result, people are likely to try different kinds of fast food or even new products which customers are interested in.

These two events have planted the causes of an increase in fast-food consumption. The effects of this change are being felt in a variety of areas. The three most significant ones are lifestyle, obesity, and family relationships.

One of the biggest effects associated with fast-food consumption is that it can affect people's way of life, including eating habits (Bhattacharya, 2014). Typically traditional diets are characterised by the diversity of flavours and ingredients, and cooking styles. Therefore, it is a way to reflect the evolution of cuisine in different regions. Currently, a mass of fast food chains provide American or European food including hamburgers, fried chicken and pizzas. People's diets are becoming increasingly monotonous, while some traditional recipes may vanish.

The effects of fast-food are being felt not only in people's lifestyle, but also on obesity. Fast food has a deep impact on obesity in some countries, such as in India, where the number of obese people has grown rapidly. It is not only because fast food is high in fat, sugar, salt, and calories but also because this kind of food is served in large portions. Bhattacharya (2014) pointed out that, in general, people who suffer from obesity are more likely than average-weight people to suffer from heart disease, insulin resistance and other health threats.

The problem of family gathering is another area that is feeling the effects of fast-food consumption. As a general rule, family meals provide family members with an opportunity to communicate with each other and improve mutual understanding. Due to their busy urban lifestyle people are less aware of each other's emotional needs and not eating together will weaken their emotional ties.

In conclusion, the effects of fast food on people are multifaceted. It not only poses a threat to people's health but also damages family relationships and culture. It is difficult to address these changes because of the fast pace of life and working. In order to improve people's health and quality of life, it is necessary to limit fast-food consumption.

### Practice 7.3 Prompts

Social media addiction: Do personal or cultural factors play a bigger role in whether someone becomes addicted to social media in the first place? What are the effects that such an addiction can have on a student's life?

Childhood obesity: Obesity rates are at an all-time high. Why is this the case? What has changed in the last few decades? What are some of the most pressing health issues for children who are obese?

Vaping among teens: Many health professionals are getting increasingly concerned about the vaping trend among teenagers. How did this trend come about? Are the supposed health risks as bad as they sound?

Rush hour traffic: Focusing on a specific area or roadway, why can traffic get really bad during a certain time of day? If these factors were addressed, would traffic flow more smoothly?

Climate change: Are individual choices, like drinking from a reusable bottle, making as much of an impact in slowing or preventing climate change as larger factors, like industry practices? Who are the biggest polluters?

Music streaming: It used to be the case that most people would buy their music in some form, like on cassette or as an MP3 download, but music streaming services have become the norm. Why did this happen? What does it mean for artists and the music industry as a whole?