

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

The Essay

— Readings: Styles of Communication —

Communicating with other people is part of our daily lives. On any given day, we may talk with spouses, children, friends, teachers, co-workers, store clerks, and government bureaucrats. While we might talk with each of these people differently, we all have a particular way of communicating that seems self-evident and natural to us. Thus we can be surprised, frustrated, or hurt when someone misunderstands us. Yet there are many different styles of communication. Within a specific culture, we can find differences between individuals—one teacher talks faster than another—and between large groups. For example, American women and American men communicate differently. If we compare two different cultures, we again find different styles of communication, different ideas of what is polite and impolite, of who talks first and who second, and of how the conversation should proceed. It should not be surprising, then, to realize that these different styles of talking lead to misunderstandings between people of the same culture and between people of different cultures.

In the following readings, you will read about the differences in styles of communication between the two genders (men and women) and between two cultures. As you read, try to answer the following questions:

1. What is the difference between eastern- and western-style conversations?
2. What is the difference between men's and women's styles of communicating? In this culture? In your culture?
3. Have you ever been misunderstood because of different styles of communication?



READING I

Conversational Ballgames

Nancy Masterson Sakamoto

In the following reading, Nancy Masterson Sakamoto explains the difference between Japanese and American conversational styles. Born in the United States, Sakamoto has lived and taught English in Japan. She is currently professor of American Studies at Shitennoji Gakuen University, Hawaii Institute. The following selection is an excerpt from her textbook, Polite Fictions (1982).

By: Classroom and Computer Class

After I was married and had lived in Japan for a while, my Japanese gradually improved to the point where I could take part in simple conversations with my husband, his friends, and family. And I began to notice that often, when I joined in, the others would look startled, and the conversational topic would come to a halt.¹ After this happened several times, it became clear to me that I was doing something wrong. But for a long time, I didn't know what it was.

2 Finally after listening carefully to many Japanese conversations, I discovered what my problem was. Even though I was speaking Japanese, I was handling the conversation in a western way.

3 Japanese-style conversations develop quite differently from western-style conversations. And the difference isn't only in the languages. I realized that just as I kept trying to hold western-style conversations even when I was speaking Japanese, so my English students kept trying to hold Japanese-style conversations even when they were speaking English. We were unconsciously playing entirely different conversational ballgames.

4 A western-style conversation between two people is like a game of tennis. If I introduce a topic, a conversational ball, I expect you to hit it back. If you agree with me, I don't expect you simply to agree and do nothing more. I expect you to add something—a reason, for agreeing, another example, or an elaboration to carry the idea further. But I don't expect you always to agree. I am just as happy if you question me, or challenge me, or completely disagree with me. Whether you agree or disagree, your response will return the ball to me.

5 And then it is my turn again. I don't serve a new ball from my original starting line. I hit your ball back again from where it has bounced. I carry your idea further, or answer your questions or objections or challenge, or question you. And so the ball goes back and forth, with each of us doing our best to give it a new twist, an original spin, or a powerful smash.

6 And the more vigorous the action, the more interesting and exciting the game. Of course, if one of us gets angry, it spoils the conversation, just as it spoils a tennis game. But getting excited is not at all the same as getting angry. After all, we are not trying to hit each other. We are trying to hit the ball. So long as we attack only each other's opinions, and do not attack each other personally, we don't expect anyone to get hurt. A good conversation is supposed to be interesting and exciting.

THREE

7. If there are more than two people in the conversation, then it is like doubles in tennis, or like volleyball. There's no waiting in line. Whoever is nearest and quickest hits the ball, and if you step back, someone else will hit it. No one stops the game to give you a turn. You're responsible for taking your own turn.

8. But whether it's two players or a group, everyone does his best to keep the ball going, and no one person has the ball for very long.

9. A Japanese-style conversation, however, is not at all like tennis or volleyball. It's like bowling. You wait for your turn. And you always know your place in line. It depends on such things as whether you are older or younger, a close friend or a relative, stranger to the previous speaker, in a senior or junior position, and so on.

10. When your turn comes, you step up to the starting line with your bowling ball, and carefully bowl it. Everyone else stands back and watches politely, murmuring encouragement. Everyone waits until the ball has reached the end of the alley, and watches to see if it knocks down all the pins, or only some of them, or none of them. There is a pause, while everyone registers your score.

11. Then, after everyone is sure that you have completely finished your turn, the next person in line steps up to the same starting line, with a different ball. He doesn't return your ball, and he does not begin from where your ball stopped. There is no back and forth at all. All the balls run parallel.^o And there is always a suitable pause between turns. There is no rush; no excitement, no scramble for the ball.

12. No wonder everyone looked startled when I took part in Japanese conversations. I paid no attention to whose turn it was, and kept snatching the ball halfway down the alley and throwing it back at the bowler. Of course the conversation died. I was playing the wrong game.

13. This explains why it is almost impossible to get a western-style conversation or discussion going with English students in Japan. I used to think that the problem was their lack of English language ability. But I finally came to realize that the biggest problem is that they too, are playing the wrong game.

14. Whenever I serve a volleyball, everyone just stands back and watches it fall, with occasional murmurs of encouragement. No one hits it back. Everyone waits until I call on someone to

The Comparison as Contrast Essay

take a turn. And when that person speaks, he doesn't hit my ball back. He serves a new ball. Again, everyone just watches it fall.

is So I call on someone else. This person does not refer to what the previous speaker has said. He also serves a new ball. Nobody seems to have paid any attention to what anyone else has said. Everyone begins again from the same starting line, and all the balls run parallel. There is never any back and forth. Everyone is trying to bowl with a volleyball.

16 Now that you know about the difference in the conversational ballgames, you may think that all your troubles are over. But if you have been trained all your life to play one game, it is no simple matter to switch to another, even if you know the rules. Knowing the rules is not at all the same thing as playing the game.

too late without thinking 17 Even now, during a conversation in Japanese I will notice a startled reaction, and belatedly^o realize that once again I have rudely interrupted by instinctively^o trying to hit back the other person's bowling ball. It is no easier for me to "just listen" during a conversation than it is for my Japanese students to "just relax" when speaking with foreigners. Now I can truly sympathize with how hard they must find it to carry on a western-style conversation.

EXERCISE 3-1 Comprehension/Discussion Questions

1. What happened when Sakamoto first began participating in Japanese conversations? Why?
2. Sakamoto uses two *analogies*, long comparisons of familiar things with unfamiliar things, to ultimately contrast the two styles of conversation. In her first analogy, what does she compare a western-style conversation to?
3. Explain the analogy. How is a western-style conversation like a game of tennis?
4. What does she compare an eastern-style conversation to? Explain the analogy.
5. In drawing the analogies, Sakamoto contrasts the two styles of conversation. Explain the differences in the following:
 - a. taking turns
 - b. approach to the topic (the ball)
 - c. pausing
 - d. reactions of participants
 - e. determining the score

The Essay

6. What is the author's thesis? Where in the essay is it stated?
7. In what ways does Sakamoto establish her authority to speak on this topic?
8. In paragraph 17, why are "just listen" and "just relax" in quotation marks?
9. Have you had experience conversing with Asians, especially Japanese? If so, do you agree with Sakamoto's thesis? Is her analysis of eastern-style conversations accurate? Support your answer with specific examples.
10. Have you ever been in different "conversational ballgames"? What "rules" were you following? What "rules" was the other person following? What happened in the conversation?
11. Are the conversational rules in your culture similar to the western style or the eastern style? Be prepared to explain the similarities and differences between the conversational styles in your culture and those of another culture.
12. Try to think of an analogy to describe the conversational style of your culture.

 **EXERCISE 8-2** Vocabulary Development

A. Because the author is comparing conversations to games, she uses some vocabulary associated with tennis, volleyball, and bowling. Some of these words and phrases are listed below. Be prepared to explain their meaning.

1. (Paragraph 5) *serve a new ball*
2. (Paragraph 5) *a powerful smash*
3. (Paragraph 7) *doubles* in tennis
4. (Paragraph 10) *the end of the alley*
5. (Paragraph 10) *knocks down all the pins*

B. Here are some lists of words associated with various games. Be prepared to explain the meanings of the words. Then add as many words as you can to each list.

1. Tennis: court, net, racquet, in bounds, out of bounds
-

2. Bowling: strike, spare
-

The Communication Reader

3. Basketball: court, basket, hoop, tip-off, free throw

4. Soccer: field, goal, goal post

C. Be prepared to explain how to play each of these games.

READING 2



Intimacy and Independence

Deborah Tannen

In the following excerpt from her book, You Just Don't Understand, Deborah Tannen examines the different ways that American men and women view decision making. She notes that the different notions of communication that women and men have can lead to conflict between couples. Tannen, a well-known sociolinguist who teaches at Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., bases her research on Americans. As you read the excerpt, consider whether men and women in your culture have similar conflicts in communication.

feeling close to other people / build, bargain to reach agreement / make less important / agreement / position, rank

1. Intimacy^o is key in a world of connections where individuals negotiate^o complex networks of friendship, minimize^o differences, try to reach consensus^o and avoid the appearance of superiority, which would highlight differences. In a world of status,^o independence is key, because a primary means of establishing status is to tell others what to do, and taking orders is a marker of low status. Though all humans need both intimacy and independence, women tend to focus on the first and men on the second. It is as if their lifeblood ran in different directions.

friend

2. These differences can give women and men differing views of the same situation, as they did in the case of a couple I will call Linda and Josh. When Josh's old high-school chum^o called him at work and announced he'd be in town on business the following month, Josh invited him to stay for the weekend. That evening he informed Linda that they were going to have a houseguest, and that he and his chum would go out together the first night to shoot the breeze^o like old times. Linda was upset. She was going

stay for an important talk

to be away on business the week before, and the Friday night when Josh would be out with his chum would be her first night home. But what upset her the most was that Josh had made these plans on his own and informed her of them, rather than discussing them with her before extending the invitation.

3 Linda would never make plans, for a weekend or an evening, without first checking with Josh. She can't understand why he doesn't show her the same courtesy and consideration that she shows him. But when she protests, Josh says, "I can't say to my friend, 'I have to ask my wife for permission!'"

4 To Josh, checking with his wife means seeking permission, which implies that he is not independent, not free to act on his own. It would make him feel like a child or an underling.⁹ To Linda, checking with her husband has nothing to do with permission. She assumes that spouses discuss their plans with each other because their lives are intertwined,¹⁰ so the actions of one have consequences¹¹ for the other. Not only does Linda not mind telling someone, "I have to check with Josh"; quite the contrary—she likes it. It makes her feel good to know and show that she is involved with someone, that her life is bound up with someone else's.

a subordinate; a person with low status

closely woven together / results, effects

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

5 Linda and Josh both felt more upset by this incident, and others like it, than seemed warranted,⁹ because it cut to the core of their primary concerns. Linda was hurt because she sensed a failure of closeness in their relationship; He didn't care about her as much as she cared about him. And he was hurt because he felt she was trying to control him and limit his freedom.

6 A similar conflict exists between Louise and Howie, another couple, about spending money. Louise would never buy anything costing more than a hundred dollars without discussing it with Howie, but he goes out and buys whatever he wants and feels they can afford, like a table saw or a new power mower. Louise is disturbed not because she disapproves of the purchases, but because she feels he is acting as if she were not in the picture.

7 Many women feel it is natural to consult¹⁰ with their partners at every turn, while many men automatically make more decisions without consulting their partners. This may reflect a broad difference in conceptions¹¹ of decision making. Women expect decisions to be discussed first and made by consensus. They appreciate the discussion itself as evidence of involvement and communication.¹² But many men feel oppressed by lengthy discussions about what they see as minor decisions, and they feel hemmed in¹³ if they can't just act without talking first. When women try to initiate¹⁴ a freewheeling¹⁵ discussion by asking, "What do you think?" men often think they are being asked to decide.

8 Communication is a continual balancing act, juggling the conflicting needs for intimacy and independence. To survive in the world, we have to act in concert with¹⁶ others, but to survive as ourselves, rather than simply as cogs in a wheel,¹⁷ we have to act alone. In some ways, all people are the same: We all eat and sleep and drink and laugh and cough, and often we eat, and laugh at, the same things. But in some ways, each person is different, and individuals' different wants and preferences may conflict with each other. Offered the same menu, people make different choices. And if there is cake for dessert, there is a chance one person may get a larger piece than another—and an even greater chance that one will think the other's piece is larger, whether it is or not.

*The Essay***25 EXERCISE 8-3:** Comprehension/Discussion Questions

1. Explain what Tannen means by *intimacy* and *independence*.
2. According to Tannen (paragraph 1), what is important to women in order to get along with others? To men?
3. In paragraph 2, the author begins with "These differences." What differences is she referring to?
4. In paragraphs 2–5, Tannen gives the example of Linda and Josh. Explain the situation that caused the conflict.
5. Why was Linda upset with Josh?
6. What was Josh's reaction when she protested?
7. Explain the basic difference in their reactions in terms of intimacy and independence.
8. What is the point of the second situation, the example of Louise and Howie?
9. In paragraph 7, Tannen connects different ways of making decisions with communication. What is the connection?
10. In paragraph 8, Tannen says, "Communication is a continual balancing act." What does she mean?
11. In paragraph 8, does Tannen suggest that one style of communication is better than another? Support your answer.
12. In this excerpt, Tannen is discussing American women and men. Do men and women in your culture have similar or different conflicts in communication? Can you give a specific example?

26 EXERCISE 8-4: Vocabulary Development. Paragraph 1 of the Tannen reading has a lot of abstract words that may make it difficult to understand. In this exercise you will paraphrase, or state in other words, the sentences in this paragraph. The long sentences are broken down into parts. First paraphrase each part. Then combine the parts to make a complete, grammatical sentence. The first one is done for you.

Sentence 1:

1. Intimacy is key in a world of connections

Feeling close to other people is the most important thing when

society emphasizes personal relationships.

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

2. in a world of connections, individuals negotiate complex networks of friendship

3. they minimize differences

4. they try to reach consensus

5. they avoid the appearance of superiority

6. an appearance of superiority would highlight differences

The Essay

Sentence 2:

1. In a world of status, *independence* is key

2. because a primary means of establishing status is to tell others what to do

3. and because taking orders is a marker of low status

Sentence 3:

1. Though all humans need both intimacy and independence

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

2. women tend to focus on the first

3. and men tend to focus on the second

Comparison &

1. It is as if their lifeblood ran in different directions.



Although details and examples can be used in all kinds of expository writing, not all essay topics are best developed in an example essay pattern. Very often, for example, you are asked to compare and contrast two things, ideas, or people. In your history class you might be asked to compare and contrast the Greek and Roman empires; in your biology class you might be required to compare and contrast DNA and RNA. Comparing and contrasting is a process we all do every day. We compare and contrast to determine the superiority of one thing over another. When we buy a car, for instance, we usually shop around and compare deals. We explain something that is unknown by comparing it to something that is known. We might explain what a barometer is by saying it looks like a thermometer but

The Essay

measures atmospheric pressure instead of temperature. We also compare and contrast when we want to show that two apparently similar things are in fact quite different in important ways, or to show that two apparently dissimilar things are really quite similar in significant ways. For instance, it might be quite enlightening to discover that two very different cultures have some important things in common. We also compare and contrast to show how something or someone has changed, such as California before and after the earthquake in 1994.

We have many reasons for comparing and contrasting, and since the process of comparison and contrast is such a common method of thinking and of developing topics, it is important to write well-organized comparison and contrast papers. There is one thing to keep in mind, however. With comparison and contrast, the purpose is not just to point out similarities and differences or advantages and disadvantages; the purpose is to persuade, explain, or inform. Think of comparison and contrast as a method of development—not as a purpose for writing.

When you are planning a comparison and contrast essay, there are several points to consider.

POINTS OF COMPARISON

Suppose that you are asked to compare and contrast two people—perhaps two generals, two politicians, or two religious leaders. What would you compare and contrast about them? You could compare their looks, backgrounds, philosophies, the way they treat people, their attitudes toward life, their intelligence, their lifestyles, and so on. The list could continue, but this is the problem: You would have just a list. When comparing and contrasting two things, people, countries, and so forth, especially for a standard 300- to 500-word essay, it is best to restrict the points of comparison to two to four. Therefore, be selective and choose the most significant points for comparison that will support the central idea in your essay. For instance, if you wanted to compare two politicians in order to show that one is a better public servant, you would not bother comparing and contrasting their tastes in food because this point would be irrelevant.

EXERCISE 8-5 Writing Assignment. Choose one of the following writing assignments:

1. Think of two educational systems that you are familiar with, such as the university system in your country and the system in this country. Brainstorm a list about the things they have in common—their similarities—and another list about the ways they differ—their differences. From these lists, find three or four general points of comparison.

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

2. Choose two people or two products (such as two different automobiles, cameras, hair dryers, or stereos) and brainstorm a list of their similarities and differences. From that list, find three or four general points of comparison.

B EMPHASIS ON COMPARISON OR CONTRAST

In a comparison and contrast essay, the emphasis is usually on one or the other; that is, you spend more time either comparing or contrasting, depending on your purpose. If you are comparing two rather similar things, you should acknowledge the obvious similarities but focus on the differences. If you are comparing two obviously dissimilar things, you should acknowledge the obvious contrasts but emphasize the similarities.

B PATTERNS OF ORGANIZATION

There are two basic patterns of organization for developing the comparison and contrast essay. Although they are called by various names, we refer to them here as Pattern A and Pattern B. To show how these patterns work, let's consider the topic of two automobiles: the Road Runner XL and the Speed Demon 280. Your points of comparison might be cost of maintenance, performance, and comfort. Using Pattern A, you could organize the essay in this way:

Pattern A (Point-by-Point)

Thesis Statement:

The Speed Demon 280 is a better car than the Road Runner XL.

I. Cost of Maintenance

- A. The Road Runner XL
- B. The Speed Demon 280

II. Performance

- A. The Road Runner XL
- B. The Speed Demon 280

III. Comfort

- A. The Road Runner XL
- B. The Speed Demon 280

The Essay

Pattern A—point by point—is useful for organizing more complex topics. It is also an easy pattern to follow because the comparison/contrast is made clear throughout the essay.

A developmental paragraph in a comparison and contrast essay following Pattern A appears to be more complex than a developmental paragraph in an example essay. In the developmental paragraph in a comparison and contrast essay, the writer introduces a topic (the point of comparison), but the topic is broken down into two parts to make the comparison. For example, suppose you were asked to compare the two automobiles, the Road Runner XL and the Speed Demon 280. For one of your points of comparison, you have chosen the cost of maintenance. You have found that the Road Runner XL is expensive to maintain and the Speed Demon is economical. What you have, then, are really two controlling ideas: one for each car. Here is how that paragraph might be developed:

The Road Runner XL and the Speed Demon 280 differ in cost of maintenance. The Road Runner is rather expensive to maintain. This car gets rather poor mileage, with 23 miles per gallon on the highway and 18 miles per gallon in the city. Moreover, it requires the more expensive premium gasoline. In addition, the Road Runner has to have a tune-up every four months and an oil change every ninety days. The average driver who owns a Road Runner must pay approximately \$1,400 a year to keep this car running. The Speed Demon, on the other hand, is quite economical. It gets an impressive 40 miles per gallon on the highway and 35 in the city, and unlike the Road Runner, the Speed Demon takes the less costly regular gasoline. In addition, whereas the Road Runner requires tune-ups and oil changes, the Speed Demon requires little maintenance. It needs to be tuned up only every twelve months; the oil needs to be changed only every four months. In summary, instead of paying \$1,400 per year to keep the car running, the owner of a Speed Demon only has to pay \$600, which is significantly less.

This paragraph can be outlined as follows:

- I. The Road Runner XL and the Speed Demon 280 differ in cost of maintenance.
 - A. The Road Runner is rather expensive to maintain.
 1. Mileage.
 2. Tune-ups.
 3. Oil changes.
 4. Average cost of maintenance.

The Compare-and-Contrast Essay

B. The Speed Demon is economical to maintain.

1. Mileage.
2. Tune-ups.
3. Oil changes.
4. Average cost of maintenance.

In this outline, the Roman numeral *I* introduces the point of comparison (the topic); the next point of comparison would be outlined as Roman numeral *II*. Since the paragraph is rather long, it is possible to break it into two paragraphs, with the second one beginning "The Speed Demon, on the other hand, is quite economical."

 **EXERCISE 8-6** Writing Assignment. Study the following information about the comfort of the Road Runner XL and the Speed Demon 280, and find a controlling idea about the difference in comfort. Then write a paragraph comparing and contrasting the comfort of the Road Runner and the comfort of the Speed Demon.

THE ROAD RUNNER XL

1. Spacious interior—ample head and leg room in both front and back.
2. Two people can sit comfortably in the front and three in the back.
3. Uncomfortable seats—although the seats are large, they are vinyl and get hot in spring and summer.
4. Cooling and heating not ideal—the air conditioner does not cool the backseat area; the heater is effective.

THE SPEED DEMON 280

1. Not as spacious interior—ample head and leg room in front, but cramped in the back (less used).
2. Two can sit comfortably in front, but only two can sit comfortably in back.
3. Comfortable seats—suede seats are cool in the summer and pleasant all year round.
4. Excellent air conditioning and heating system—the air conditioner cools the entire car rapidly; the heater is equally effective.

This same topic can be developed in another way: Pattern B, called "all of one/all of the other."

The Essay

Pattern B (All of One/All of the Other)

Thesis Statement:

The Speed Demon 280 is a better car than the Road Runner XL.

- I. The Road Runner XL
 - A. Cost of Maintenance.
 - B. Performance.
 - C. Comfort.
- II. The Speed Demon 280
 - A. Cost of Maintenance.
 - B. Performance.
 - C. Comfort.

Note that the points of comparison are the same and that they are discussed in the same order under each section in both patterns of organization. One of the problems with Pattern B, however, is that it is sometimes difficult to remind the reader in the second section of how the points compare or contrast with the points mentioned in the first section. Therefore, generally speaking, Pattern B is more useful for very limited topics.

Read the sample student essay that follows. As you read the essay, determine whether it focuses more on comparison or contrast and note which pattern of development it uses.

MY TWO BROTHERS

No two people are exactly alike, and my two older brothers, Nhan and Hung, are no exceptions. When I think of them, I think of Rudyard Kipling's words:

East is East
West is West
Never the twain shall meet.

Even though they have the same parents, their considerable differences in looks, personality, and attitude toward life reflect the differences between Eastern and Western cultures.

Like the majority of Asian men, Nhan is short, small, and has a full, moon-shaped face. His smooth white skin and small arms and feet make him look somewhat delicate. Nhan always likes to wear formal, traditional clothes. For example, on great holidays or at family rite celebrations, Nhan appears in the traditional black gown, white pants and black silky headband, all of which make him look like an early twentieth-century intellectual.

In contrast to Nhan, Hung, who is his younger brother by ten years, looks more like an American boxer. He is tall, muscular and big-boned. He is built straight as an arrow and his face is long and angular as a western character. Unlike Nhan, Hung has strong feet and arms, and whereas Nhan has smooth skin, Hung's shoulders and chest are hairy, large and full. Unlike Nhan, too, Hung likes to wear comfortable T-shirts and jeans or sports clothes. At a formal occasion, instead of wearing traditional formal clothes, Hung wears stylish western style suits.

Nhan and Hung also differ in personality. I don't know how my father selected their names correctly to reflect their personalities. Nhan's name means "patience," and his patience is shown in his smile. He has the smile of an ancient Chinese philosopher that western people can never understand. He always smiles. He smiles because he wants to make the other person happy or to make himself happy. He smiles whenever people speak to him, regardless of whether they are right or wrong. He smiles when he forgives people who have wronged him. Nhan likes books, of course, and literature and philosophy. He likes to walk in the moonlight to think. Nhan also enjoys drinking hot tea and singing verses. In short, in our family, Nhan is the son who provides a good example of filial piety and tolerance.

Hung, on the other hand, does not set a good example of traditional respectful behavior for his brothers and sisters. His name means "strength," but his strength is self-centered. As a result, unlike Nhan, Hung only smiles

The Body

when he is happy. When he talks to people, he looks at their faces. Because of this, my eldest brother Nhan considers him very impolite. As one might expect, Hung does not like philosophy and literature; instead, he studies science and technology. Whereas Nhan enjoys tea and classical verses, Hung prefers to take sun baths and drink Coca-Cola while he listens to rock and roll music. And like many American youths, Hung is independent; in fact, he loves his independence more than he loves his family. He wants to move out of our house and live in an apartment by himself. He is such an individualist that all the members in my family say that he is very selfish.

My brothers' differences do not end with looks and personalities. Concerning their attitudes toward life, they are as different as the moon and the sun. My eldest brother Nhan is concerned with spiritual values. He is affected by Confucian, Taoist and Buddhist theories. These theories consider that the human life is not happy. Therefore, if a man wants to be happy, he should get out of the competitiveness of life and should not depend on material objects. For example, if a man is not anxious to have a new-model car, he does not have to worry about how to make money to buy one. Or, if he does not have a car, he does not have to worry about the cost of gas. My oldest brother is deeply affected by these theories, so he never tries hard to make money to buy conveniences.

In contrast to Nhan, my brother Hung believes that science and technology serve human beings and that the West defeated the East because the West was further advanced in these fields. Therefore, each person must compete with nature and with other people in the world in order to acquire different conveniences, such as cars, washing machines, and television sets. Hung is affected by the western theories of real values; consequently, he always works hard to make his own money to satisfy his material needs.

In accordance with the morality of the culture of my country, I cannot say which one of my brothers is wrong or right. But I do know that they both want to improve and maintain human life on this earth. I am very lucky to inherit both sources of thought from my two older brothers.

—Ha Sau Hoa

EXERCISE 8-7 On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about the essay.

1. What is the thesis of the essay? What are its points of comparison?
2. Does the essay focus more on comparison or on contrast?
3. Which pattern of organization does the writer follow? Why was this pattern selected?

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

4. Does the essay have topic sentences that state the controlling idea for each point of comparison? If so, what are they?
5. Is the essay unified? Coherent?
6. Is the conclusion logical?
7. Make a detailed outline of the essay.



EXERCISE 8-8: Writing Assignment. Using the preceding essay as a model and the brainstorming notes you made in Exercise 8-5, write a first-draft essay that compares and contrasts two educational systems, two people, or two products.

As you read the essay that follows, try to locate its thesis statement and determine its purpose—that is, why the author is writing about this topic. Before reading, however, you might need to look up some vocabulary words. For example, the writer uses the word *branch* to mean a “branch of a river,” probably a small stream. Here are some other terms to check: *medieval, pirate, bin, chute, instinct, honeysuckle, alligator, disrepair, graffiti, knight, adolescent, idyllic*.

MY OLD NEIGHBORHOOD

Several years ago I returned to Washington, D.C., and visited one of my old neighborhoods. I had not been on Nash Street for more than twenty years and as I walked along the street, my mind was flooded by waves of nostalgia. I saw the old apartment building where I had lived and the playground where I had played. As I viewed these once-familiar surroundings, images of myself as a child there came to mind. However, what I saw and what I remembered were not the same. I sadly realized that the best memories are those left undisturbed.

As I remember my old apartment building, it was bright and alive. When I was a child, the apartment building was more than just a place to live. It was a medieval castle, a pirate's den, a space station, or whatever my young mind could imagine. I would steal away with my friends and play in the basement. This was always exciting because it was so cool and dark, and there were so many things there to hide among. Our favorite place to play was the coal bin. We would always use it as our rocket ship because the coal chute could be used as an escape hatch out of the basement into “outer space.”

All of my memories were not confined to the apartment building, however. I have memories of many adventures outside of the building also. My mother restricted how far we could go from the apartment building, but this placed no restrictions on our exploring instinct. There was a small branch in back of the building where my friends and I would play. We enjoyed it there because

honeysuckles grew there. We would go there to lie in the shade and suck the sweet smelling honeysuckles. Our biggest thrill in the branch was the day the police caught an alligator there. I did not see the alligator and I was not there when they caught it, but just the thought of an alligator in the branch was exciting.

This is how I remembered the old neighborhood; however, as I said, this is not how it was when I saw it.

Unlike before, the apartment building was now rundown and in disrepair. What was once more than a place to live looked hardly worth living in. The court was dirty and broken up, and the windows in the building were all broken out. The once-clean walls were covered with graffiti and other stains. There were no medieval knights or pirates running around the place now, nor spacemen; instead, there were a few tough looking adolescents who looked much older than their ages.

As for the area where I used to play, it was hardly recognizable. The branch was polluted and the honeysuckles had died. Not only were they dead, but they had been trampled to the ground. The branch itself was filled with old bicycles, broken bottles, and garbage. Now, instead of finding something as romantic as an alligator, one would expect to find only rats. The once sweet-smelling area now smelled horrible. The stench from my idyllic haven was heart wrenching.

I do not regret having seen my old neighborhood. However, I do not think my innocent childhood memories can ever be the same. I suppose it is true when they say, "You can never go home again."

—Floyd Bonner

25 EXERCISE 8-9 On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about "My Old Neighborhood."

1. What is the thesis? Where is it stated?
2. What is the controlling idea about the apartment building as it was when the author was a child?
3. What is the controlling idea about the apartment building when he visited it twenty years later?
4. What is the controlling idea about the branch as it was when he was a child?
5. What is the controlling idea about the branch as he saw it twenty years later?
6. One of the paragraphs is only one sentence long. What function does that sentence serve?

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

7. What pattern of organization does the writer use? Why? Does he cover the same points in the first part as he does in the second?
8. What do you think the writer's purpose is in writing about this topic?
9. Is the essay coherent? Unified?
10. In a couple of places the author uses *would* when referring to the past. What kind of action does "*would + verb*" indicate when referring to the past?
11. What are some of the expressions the author uses to indicate the change from the past to the present? Reread the essay and underline the expressions and phrases that clarify the changes. (For example, "The *once-clean walls* were covered with graffiti....")
12. Make an outline of the essay.

**EXERCISE 8-10** Writing Assignment. Choose one of the following writing assignments. Begin by prewriting, using one of the techniques given in Chapter One.

1. Have you ever visited a place you had left a long time ago and found it had changed considerably? Write an essay comparing and contrasting the "way it was" with the "way it is now." Try to formulate a controlling idea about the change. Have things changed for the better or the worse?
2. Before you came to this country, you undoubtedly had certain ideas and expectations about it. After you had been here awhile, did any of those ideas change? Did you find certain things to be different from what you expected? Choose several aspects of your life and experiences in this country, and contrast the way you thought they would be with how you find them now.

The Essay

Composition Skills

COHERENCE

Transitions for Comparison and Contrast

Transitional expressions give writing coherence; that is, they help you to move smoothly from one idea to the next. In addition, a variety of transitions adds interest to an essay. In this lesson you will practice using transitions that will give a comparison-contrast essay both coherence and interest. Note the transitional expressions used in these sentences:

In contrast to American universities, Lebanese universities have stricter admissions requirements.

American and Lebanese universities also differ in graduation requirements.

In Lebanon, on the other hand, only one limit exists.

Whereas American students may go part-time, Lebanese students must attend school full-time.

Unlike before, the apartment building was now rundown and in disrepair.

Even though both systems provide a good education, one system makes earning a college degree much easier than the other.

There are quite a large number of transitions that can be used for comparison and contrast. They fall into the following three major groups. Study them carefully and note the necessary punctuation for each type.

1. Transitions in Phrases

All the transitions in this group need to be followed by a noun. The phrase in which they occur is often used at the beginning of a sentence and is generally followed by a comma. The following transitions indicate similarity: *similar to, like*. The following indicate difference: *different from, in contrast to, compared with, unlike*. Note the following examples:

Similar to New Orleans, San Francisco attracts many tourists.

Like this American university, a Lebanese university also asked for my high school grades.

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

Different from the Road Runner, the Speed Demon has comfortable seats.

Compared with New Orleans, San Francisco has a very cold climate. (This means that the climate in San Francisco is not really that cold; it is just that the climate in New Orleans is extremely hot.)

Unlike the Road Runner, the Speed Demon is quite economical.

2. Coordinating Conjunctions as Transitions

The coordinating conjunctions *but* and *yet* are often used as transitions to indicate the opposite of what was expected. Coordinating conjunctions occur between two complete sentences and are preceded (but not followed) by a comma. Study these examples:

San Diego is very dry, *but* Houston is not.

The Speed Demon 280 is cheaper than the Road Runner XL, *yet* it has a better air-conditioning system.

Note: Sometimes these conjunctions are used as transitions at the beginning of a sentence:

Several events contributed to my depression last year. *But* my greatest sadness was losing the mathematics contest.

3. Transitional Expressions Between Sentences

The transitions in this group generally occur between two independent clauses. When they do, they must be preceded by either a period or a semicolon.

Ecuador ships out a lot of bananas. *In addition*, it is an exporter of oil.

Ecuador ships out a lot of bananas; *in addition*, it is an exporter of oil.

Ecuador exports oil. *Moreover*, it is a coffee producer.

Ecuador exports oil; *moreover*, it is a coffee producer.

Occasionally, these transitional expressions are used in an independent clause. In this case, the expressions (except *also*) should be set off with commas:

Ecuador ships out a lot of bananas. *It is, in addition*, an exporter of oil.

Ecuador exports oil. *It is, moreover*, a producer of coffee.

Ecuador exports oil. *It is also* a coffee producer.

This group of transitions has the greatest number of words and phrases. Examine them in three parts:

The Essay

- a. Additive Transitions: *first, next, besides, in addition, moreover, furthermore, also, then.* We discussed most of the transitions in this group in Chapters Three and Five. They can be used to indicate chronological order, to number or list examples, or to add more information to something that was just stated. In comparison-contrast, they can fulfill all these functions.

The tropical rain forest is a beautiful and fascinating place. Besides, it is extremely important to our ecosystem.

In addition, the tropical rain forest contains many important species of plants.

Moreover, valuable plant life is threatened.

The rain forest is also home to a wide variety of animals.

Also, the rain forest is home to a wide variety of animals.

- b. Transitions to Indicate Similarity: *likewise, similarly, in the same way.* These words are used to indicate a similarity between the items given in the two sentences.

Smog is adversely affecting the trees in the mountains near Los Angeles. Likewise, acid rain is harming trees in the Northeast.

New Orleans has a big seafood business. Similarly, a great deal of fishing and oyster farming is done around San Francisco.

- c. Transitions to Indicate Difference: *on the other hand, conversely, in contrast, however.* These words are used to indicate a difference or a contrast between the items given in the two sentences.

Senator Smith wants to reduce the budget deficit by raising taxes. Jones, on the other hand, advocates making more cuts in spending.

New Orleans has hot, humid summers. In contrast, San Francisco's summers are cool and windy.

As I viewed these once familiar surroundings, images of myself as a child there came to mind. However, what I saw and what I remembered were not the same.

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

The expression *on the contrary* is also in this group, but it is very restricted in its use. It indicates that the two ideas being expressed cannot both be true. It is often confused with *on the other hand*. Compare the following:

- Jose: It's rather hot today.
 Hong: It is not very hot today. *On the contrary*, it is quite cool.
 It is not very hot today. *On the other hand*, it is not cool either.
- Jose: The Earth is the fifth planet from the Sun.
 Hong: The Earth is not the fifth planet from the Sun. *On the contrary*, it is the third.
 The Earth is not the closest planet to the Sun. *On the other hand*, it's not the farthest either.

Note that *on the contrary* really means "No, it isn't." Another transition that can sometimes be used in its place is *in fact*.

It is not very cold today; *in fact*, it's quite hot.

25 EXERCISE 8-11 Fill in the blanks with either *on the other hand* or *on the contrary*, whichever is appropriate.

1. New Orleans does not have a harsh winter. _____
 _____, it is quite mild.
2. New Orleans does not have a harsh winter. _____
 _____, its summers are terrible.
3. New Orleans does not have a large population. _____
 _____, it is not a village.
4. Many people think that New Orleans is a large city. _____
 _____, it has quite a small population.
5. New Orleans was not originally settled by the Spanish; _____
 _____, its first European settlers were French.
6. New Orleans is a big seaport. _____, its manufacturing industry is quite small.

EXERCISE 2 Read the following paragraph about the writer Jorge Luis Borges.

Jorge Luis Borges is one of the greatest modern writers in Spanish. Born in Argentina, he was educated in Europe, and in his early days he served as a municipal librarian in Buenos Aires. Borges has written a variety of works, including poetry, essays, film criticism, and short stories. He was at odds with the policies of the Peron government in Argentina in the 1940s and 1950s. After the Peron government was overthrown, Borges became a professor of literature at the University of Buenos Aires. Many of his works have been translated into English and other languages.

For each of the following items, write sentences, using the transitions given, comparing or contrasting Borges with the Japanese writer Yukio Mishima. The first one is done for you.

1. Yukio Mishima is considered one of the greatest modern Japanese writers.

like _____ *Like Borges, Mishima is considered one of the greatest modern writers.*

also _____ *Borges is a great modern writer. Mishima is also considered a great modern writer..*

similarly _____ *Borges is a great modern writer. Similarly, Mishima is considered by many people to be a great modern writer.*

2. Mishima was educated in his native country of Japan.

unlike _____

but _____

in contrast _____

3. In his early days, Mishima worked for the Finance Ministry.

in contrast to _____

whereas _____

however _____

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

4. Mishima was a prolific writer, authoring short stories, poems, plays, essays, and novels.

similar to _____

likewise _____

like _____

5. Mishima was critical of the Japanese military policies.

in the same way _____

similar to _____

similarly _____

6. Mishima performed as an actor.

unlike _____

but _____

in contrast _____

7. Many of Mishima's works have been translated into English and other languages.

like _____

similar to _____

likewise _____

EXERCISE 8-13 Writing Assignment. In the following essay, transitions have been omitted from the italicized parts. Rewrite the essay, using a variety of transitional devices.

When scientists first examined the human brain, they found it to be divided into two halves, or hemispheres, which are nearly identical in appearance, mirroring each other just as the two sides of the body do. When Roger Sperry examined patients whose connection between the two hemispheres—the corpus callosum—was severed, he found that the two sides of the brain seemed to have different functions. Many investigators have studied the differences between the functions of the two hemispheres and found their rela-

tionship to be quite complex. Unfortunately however, most people have tended to over-generalize. The left brain is supposed to be logical, rational, and analytical, whereas the right brain is supposed to be creative and emotional. The brain's hemispheres are not so simplistically split into two neat divisions. In fact, both halves of the brain participate in almost all our mental activity.

To begin with, both sides of the brain are in operation when we reason. The left brain seems to dominate in the kind of reasoning it takes to translate symbols, recognize abstract differences, and handle algebra and geometry problems. *The left hemisphere may be dominant in these types of reasoning. The right hemisphere also reasons.* The right half functions to integrate information and draw conclusions. *The left hemisphere is dominant in recognizing abstract differences. The right hemisphere tends to recognize sameness.* For example, the right side is where we mediate facial recognition and recognize shapes.

The two hemispheres act as partners in language and communication. It appears that the left hemisphere is dominant when it comes to understanding grammar and syntax, but when it comes to interpreting emotions in communication, the right brain excels. *The right brain can interpret tone of voice and facial expressions.* Whenever we use language, both sides of the brain process the information.

The brain is not totally divided about music. Many people assume that music is mediated solely in the right brain. That is not so. It is true that the right brain recognizes chords and melodies and seems to mediate pure and slow tones. *The left hemisphere is also involved in music.* Fast music, such as bluegrass, requires judgments about sequencing and rhythm, and for this the left hemisphere lends its services. When words are involved, again the left brain dominates.

Both halves of the brain are involved in our mental activities. The corpus callosum and other bridges between the two hemispheres obviously serve to integrate the functions of the two halves, which are in constant communication to make sense out of life.*



EXERCISE 8-14 Writing Assignment. Read the following paragraphs. Revise the paragraphs in two ways. First rewrite them using Pattern B. Be sure to divide them into shorter paragraphs. Then rewrite them using Pattern A. Use appropriate transitions. Use the following thesis sentence for your essay.

Thesis Sentence:

There are some interesting parallels between the Roman and Chinese empires, even though these empires ended differently.

* Information from Richard Thompson, *The Brain: An Introduction to Neuroscience* (New York: W. H. Freeman and Co., 1985), pp. 315-17, and Camille B. Wortman and Elizabeth F. Loftus, *Psychology* (New York: Alfred H. Knopf, 1985), pp. 84-89.

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

The Roman Empire ruled the Mediterranean world from about 500 B.C. to about 500 A.D. From a geographic base around Rome, it spread out to include North Africa, the Middle East, and Northern Europe. It developed a higher level of civilization than the areas surrounding it. It had a complex governmental structure and a bureaucracy, while the people surrounding it were barbarians and nomads. These barbarians were a constant threat to the Roman Empire. The leaders of the empire devised three ways to protect the empire. First, they conquered territory whose outer boundaries were natural barriers. Examples are the Rhine and Danube Rivers. They also built fortifications to keep out invaders. They built some, for example, between the Rhine and Danube and between Scotland and England. Third, they used precautionary buffer states, like colonies, which were midway between barbarism and civilization. These all helped to protect the base of the empire, Rome itself. However, toward the end of the empire's rule, some of the buffer states revolted. The final collapse occurred when the German and Slavic barbarians broke through the fortifications. In a short two hundred years, the Roman Empire fell to the power of the Germans.

The Chinese Empire grew and remained intact from 221 B.C. to 1911 A.D. From a geographic base around the Yellow River, it spread northward to Peking, west to the Central Plain, and south to Canton. It developed a higher level of civilization than the areas surrounding it. It became a center for art and philosophy, while the people surrounding it were nomads and barbarians. These barbarians, Huns and Mongols, were a constant threat to the empire. The leaders of the empire devised three ways to deal with them. First, they used natural boundaries like the Yellow and later the Yangtze Rivers. They built the incredible Great Wall of China, and they used buffer states that learned much from China, becoming civilized in the process. However, at times the barbarians broke through the fortifications and the buffer states. The barbarians did not destroy the Chinese Empire, however. Because the barbarians admired the superior culture of China, they set up dynasties imitating the Chinese way of life. Examples are the Chau, Yuan, and Manchu dynasties. In other words, the Chinese Empire absorbed its intruders and lived on. The one exception to this was a short rule by the Mongols, Genghis and Kublai Khan, from 1215 to 1279. The subjugated Chinese dynasty reasserted itself shortly, however. The Chinese Empire continued to decline slowly until the Manchu dynasty ended in 1911 and a republic was declared.*

* Information from C. Harold King, *A History of Civilization: Earliest Times to the Mid-Seventeenth Century* (New York: Scribner's, 1964).

the essay**EXERCISE 8-15**

Writing Assignment. Look again at the essays you wrote for Exercises 8-8 and 8-10. Can you make them more coherent by adding appropriate transitions? Revise your essays, trying to use a variety of coherence devices.

Grammar Review

If you want to review grammatical structures that will help you achieve coherence and grammatical accuracy in your writing, see the Grammar Review Unit. The following sections are designed to coordinate with the comparison/contrast essay:

Comparisons, pages 408–413

Adverbial Clauses of Comparison, Contrast, and Concession, pages 391–396

In addition to practice with these grammatical structures, you will find additional writing assignments focused on the comparison/contrast essay.

**EXERCISE 8-16**

Writing Assignment. Choose one of the following writing topics. Before you begin writing, prewrite using one of the techniques you studied in Chapter One. From the information you generate, decide on a controlling idea and thesis statement. Then choose the support. Decide whether to use organizational pattern A or B. Then write an essay.

1. In "Conversational Ballgames," Nancy Sakamoto shows the contrast between eastern- and western-style conversations. Can you find any differences between conversational styles in this country and in your home country?
2. In "Intimacy and Independence," Deborah Tannen shows that conflicts between men and women can result from different ideas about communication. Do men and women in your culture have different styles of communication?
3. Review the paragraphs about the Roman and Chinese empires in Exercise 8-14. Then write an essay comparing and/or contrasting two periods in your country's history.

Topic Comparison and Contrast Essay

4. Review the information about the writers Borges and Mishima in Exercise 8–12. Write an essay comparing and/or contrasting two famous people—two political leaders, two artists, two performers, and so on. Be sure to include a thesis expressing your attitude about the two people.
5. Write an essay comparing or contrasting two life-styles. You might choose a life-style in this country and compare/contrast it to one in your country. You might choose two in this country or two in your country.
6. Write an essay comparing or contrasting two different attitudes. For example, you might choose the attitude toward punctuality in the United States compared with the attitude toward punctuality in your country.
7. Write an essay comparing or contrasting your parents' attitude toward something with your attitude toward it.
8. Compare and contrast two teachers of the same subject.

REVISION***Peer Review Checklist***

When you have finished writing the first draft of your essay, give it to a classmate to read and review. Use the following questions to respond to each other's essays.

Writer _____

Reviewer _____

Date _____

1. What is the thesis of the essay? Write it here as a complete sentence:

2. What is the writer's *attitude* about the topic? Write it here:

The Essay

3. What are the points of comparison or contrast the writer has chosen? List them briefly:

4. Are the points chosen significant and insightful?

5. Are the points chosen sufficiently developed?

Has the writer given enough detail, example, and explanation?

Explain:

6. What pattern of organization has the writer used?

Do you have any suggestions about the organization?

The Comparison and Contrast Essay

7. Has the writer used transitions to give coherence?

Suggestions on coherence:

8. What is the most effective part of the essay? What has the writer done well?

9. What is the least effective part of the essay? Suggestions:

Revision Checklist for the Comparison and Contrast Essay

1. The purpose of the comparison and contrast essay is to persuade, explain, or inform, not just to list differences or similarities. Is your thesis sentence persuasive? Does it express an attitude?
2. The points chosen for comparison or contrast should be the most significant, interesting, and insightful points that support your thesis. Have you been selective in choosing your points of comparison?
3. Most essays emphasize either comparison or contrast. Which one have you emphasized?
4. There are two basic patterns for organizing a comparison-contrast essay. Have you chosen one of these patterns? Is the organization of your essay logical and consistent?
5. Is your essay coherent? That is, does it flow smoothly?

*The Process Analysis
Essay*

Prc ESSAY

← Readings: The World of Work →

Work is love made visible. And if you cannot work with love but only with distaste, it is better that you should leave your work and sit at the gate of the temple and take alms of those who work with joy.

—Kahlil Gibran

All work, even cotton spinning, is noble; work is alone noble. ...
A life of ease is not for any man, nor for any god.

—Thomas Carlyle

I don't like work—no man does—but I like what is in work—the chance to find yourself. Your own reality—for yourself, not for others—what no other man can ever know.

—Joseph Conrad

Whether we find work noble, enriching, or boring, for most of us work is a part of life. A major part of our lives is taken up with work—whether we are students, parents, engineers, farmers, or television personalities. Because we work throughout most of our lives, it is easy to see work as a process—something that starts and then continues through time.

In the following readings, the writers present descriptions of two different people at work. As you read the selections, ask yourself these questions:

1. What is the attitude of each worker toward his work?
2. What is the attitude of other people toward the worker and his work?
3. What do you like or dislike about work?

READING 1



From *The Dark Child*

Camara Laye

Camara Laye, originally from French Guinea in West Africa, was studying engineering in Paris when he wrote The Dark Child (1954), from which this reading is taken. In this book, Laye describes his early life, his family, and the village he lived in. In the excerpt that follows, Laye describes his father, a goldsmith and metal worker, making a piece of

jewelry for a customer. Note that while the reading describes the process of making the trinket, it also has a clearly stated thesis. As you read, try to answer those questions:

1. What kind of man was the writer's father? What was the attitude of other people toward him?
2. What are the steps in the process of making a piece of gold jewelry?
3. What is the writer's attitude, or thesis, about the process of making the gold jewelry?

1. Of all the different kinds of work my father engaged in, none fascinated me so much as his skill with gold. No other occupation was so noble, no other needed such a delicate touch. And then, every time he worked in gold it was like a festival—indeed it was a festival—that broke the monotony of ordinary working days.

2. So, if a woman, accompanied by a go-between, crossed the threshold of the workshop, I followed her in at once. I knew what she wanted: she had brought some gold, and had come to ask my father to transform it into a trinket. She had collected it in the placers^o of Sigiri where, crouching over the river for months on end, she had patiently extracted grains of gold from the mud.

3. These women never came alone. They knew my father had other things to do than make trinkets. And even when he had the time, they knew they were not the first to ask a favor of him, and that, consequently, they would not be served before others.

4. Generally they required the trinket for a certain date, for the festival of Ramadan or the Tabaski or some other family ceremony or dance.

5. Therefore, to enhance^o their chances of being served quickly and to more easily persuade my father to interrupt the work before him, they used to request the services of an official praise-singer, a go-between, arranging in advance the fee they were to pay him for his good offices.^o

6. The go-between installed^o himself in the workshop, tuned up his cora, which is our harp, and began to sing my father's praises. This was always a great event for me. I heard recalled the lofty deeds of my father's ancestors and their names from the earliest times. As the couplets^o were reeled off it was like watching the growth of a great genealogical tree^o that spread its branches far and wide and flourished its boughs and twigs before my mind's eye. The harp played an accompaniment to this vast utterance of names, expanding it with notes that were now soft, now shrill.

*make better,
improve*

*service
established,
set up*

*two successive
lines of poetry /
a diagram of
one's ancestors*

The Essay

*e.g., self-esteem /
excited,
increased*

7 I could sense my father's vanity⁶ being inflamed,⁷ and I already knew that after having sipped this milk-and-honey⁸ he would lend a favorable ear to the woman's request. But I was alone in my knowledge. The woman also had seen my father's eyes gleaming with contented pride. She held out her grains of gold as if the whole matter were settled. My father took up his scales and weighed the gold.

8 "What sort of trinket do you want?" he would ask.

9 "I want..."

10 And then the woman would not know any longer exactly what she wanted because desire kept making her change her mind, and because she would have liked all the trinkets at once. But it would have taken a pile of gold much larger than she had brought to satisfy her whim, and from then on her chief purpose in life was to get hold of it as soon as she could.

11 "When do you want it?"

12 Always the answer was that the trinket was needed for an occasion in the near future.

13 "So! You are in that much of a hurry? Where do you think I shall find the time?"

14 "I am in a great hurry, I assure you."

*beautify, get
dressed up*

15 "I have never seen a woman eager to deck herself out⁹ who wasn't in a great hurry! Good! I shall arrange my time to suit you. Are you satisfied?"

melting, refining

16 He would take the clay pot that was kept specially for smelting¹⁰ gold, and would pour the grains into it. He would then cover the gold with powdered charcoal, a charcoal he prepared by using plant juices of exceptional purity. Finally, he would place a large lump of the same kind of charcoal over the pot.

*without too
much delay*

17 As soon as she saw that the work had been duly¹¹ undertaken, the woman, now quite satisfied, would return to her household tasks, leaving her go-between to carry on with the praise-singing which had already proven so advantageous.

*people learning
the trade /
device for
blowing air /
place for the
fire, where the
smithy does his
work*

18 At a sign from my father the apprentices¹² began working two sheepskin bellows.¹³ The skins were on the floor, on opposite sides of the forge,¹⁴ connected to it by earthen pipes. While the work was in progress the apprentices sat in front of the bellows with crossed legs. That is, the younger of the two sat, for the elder was sometimes allowed to assist. But the younger—this time it was Sidafa—was only permitted to work the bellows and watch

* Been made agreeable by compliments and praise.

*supernatural
being, spirit /
unchangeable*

which could not be given up to the furnace. I took my father's two first ones and then the other worked hard at the bellows; the flame in the forge rose higher and became a living thing, a genie,² implacable³ and full of life.

19 Then my father lifted the clay pot with his long tongs and placed it on the flame.

20 Immediately all activity in the workshop almost came to a halt. During the whole time that the gold was being smelted, neither copper nor aluminum could be worked nearby; lest some particle of these base metals fall into the container which held the gold. Only steel could be worked on such occasions, but the men, whose task that was, hurried to finish what they were doing, or left it abruptly to join the apprentices gathered around the forge. There were so many, and they crowded so around my father, that I, the smallest person present, had to come near the forge in order not to lose track of what was going on.

21 If he felt he had inadequate working space, my father had the apprentices stand well away from him. He merely raised his hand in a simple gesture; at that particular moment he never uttered a word, and no one else would; no one was allowed to utter a word. Even the go-between's voice was no longer raised in song. The silence was broken only by the panting of the bellows and the faint hissing of the gold. But if my father never actually spoke, I know that he was forming words in his mind. I could tell from his lips, which kept moving, while, bending over the pot, he stirred the gold and charcoal with a bit of wood that kept bursting into flame and had constantly to be replaced by a fresh one.

22 What words did my father utter? I do not know. At least I am not certain what they were. No one ever told me. But could they have been anything but incantations?⁴ On these occasions was he not invoking the genies of fire and gold, of fire and wind, of wind blown by the blast-pipes of the forge, of fire born of wind, of gold married to fire? Was it not their assistance, their friendship, their espousal⁵ that he besought?⁶ Yes. Almost certainly he was invoking⁷ these genies, all of whom are equally indispensable⁸ for smelting gold.

23 The operation going on before my eyes was certainly the smelting of gold, yet something more than that: a magical operation that the guiding spirits could regard with favor or disfavor. That is why, all around my father, there was absolute silence and anxious expectancy. Though only a child, I knew there could be no craft greater than the goldsmith's. I expected a ceremony. I

*special words
and formulas in
magic spells and
rituals*

*bringing together;
marrying / was
looking for /
asking for help /
necessary*

The Craft

*drawn out, long
idea*

had come to be present as a ceremony, and it actually was one, though very protracted." I was still too young to understand why, but I had an inkling⁸ as I watched the almost religious concentration of those who followed the mixing process in the clay pot.

24 When finally the gold began to melt I could have shouted aloud—and perhaps we all would have if we had not been forbidden to make a sound. I trembled, and so did everyone else watching my father stir the mixture—it was still a heavy paste—in which the charcoal was gradually consumed. The next stage followed swiftly. The gold now had the fluidity of water. The genies had smiled on the operation!

25 "Bring me the brick!" my father would order; thus lifting the ban that until then had silenced us.

26 The brick, which an apprentice would place beside the fire, was hollowed out, generously greased with Galam butter. My father would take the pot off the fire and tilt it carefully, while I would watch the gold flow into the brick, flow like liquid fire. True, it was only a very sparse trickle of fire, but how vivid, how brilliant! As the gold flowed into the brick, the grease sputtered and flamed and emitted⁹ a thick smoke that caught in the throat and stung the eyes, leaving us all weeping and coughing.

*dispelling,
getting rid of*

27 But there were times when it seemed to me that my father ought to turn this task over to one of his assistants. They were experienced, had assisted him hundreds of times, and could certainly have performed the work well. But my father's lips moved and those inaudible, secret words, those incantations he addressed to one we could not see or hear, was the essential part. Calling on the genies of fire, of wind, of gold and exorcising¹⁰ the evil spirits—this was a knowledge he alone possessed.

28 By now the gold had been cooled in the hollow of the brick, and my father began to hammer and stretch it. This was the moment when his work as a goldsmith really began....

*eat up, look at
hungrily*

29 The woman for whom the trinket was being made, and who had come often to see how the work was progressing, would arrive for the final time, not wanting to miss a moment of this spectacle—as marvelous to her as to us—when the gold wire, which my father had succeeded in drawing out from the mass of molten gold and charcoal, was transformed into a trinket.

30 There she would be. Her eyes would devour¹¹ the fragile gold wire, following it in its tranquil and regular spiral around the little slab of metal which supported it. My father would catch a

The Ancient English Story

glimpse of her and I would see her slowly beginning to smile. Her avid attention delighted him.

ii. "Are you trembling?" he would ask.

iii. "Am I trembling?"

iv. And we would all burst out laughing at her. For she would be trembling! She would be trembling with covetousness^o for the spiral pyramid in which my father would be inserting among the convolutions, tiny grains of gold. When he had finally finished by crowning the pyramid with a heavier grain, she would dance in delight.

v. No one—no one at all—would be more enchanted than she as my father slowly turned the trinket back and forth between his fingers to display its perfection. Not even the praise-singer whose business it was to register excitement would be more excited than she. Throughout this metamorphosis^o he did not stop speaking faster and ever faster, increasing his tempo, accelerating his praises and flatteries as the trinket took shape, shouting to the skies my father's skill.

vi. For the praise-singer took a curious part—I should say rather that it was direct and effective—in the work. He was drunk with the joy of creation. He shouted aloud in joy. He plucked his corn like a man inspired. He sweated as if he were the trinket maker, as if he were my father; as if the trinket were his creation. He was no longer a hired censer-bearer; a man whose services anyone could rent. He was a man who created his song out of some deep inner necessity. And when my father, after having soldered^o the large grain of gold that crowned the summit, held out his work to be admired, the praise-singer would no longer be able to contain himself. He would begin to intone the dougo, the great chant which is sung only for celebrated men and which is danced for them alone....

vii. At the first notes of the dougo my father would arise and emit a cry in which happiness and triumph were equally mingled; and brandishing^o in his right hand the hammer that was the symbol of his profession and in his left a ram's horn filled with magic substances, he would dance the glorious dance.

viii. No sooner had he finished, than workmen and apprentices, friends and customers in their turn, not forgetting the woman for whom the trinket had been created, would flock around him, congratulating him, showering praises on him and complimenting the praise-singer at the same time. The latter found himself laden with gifts—almost his only means of support, for the praise-singer leads a wandering life after the fashion of the troubadours^o of old. Aglow

fused together

waving, shaking

wandering
singers

The Gold

with dancing and the praises he had received, my father would offer everyone cola nuts, that small change³ of Guinean courtesy.

Now all that remained to be done was to redder the gold
in a little water to which chlorine and sea salt had been
added. I was at liberty to leave. The festival was over!

EXERCISE 10-1 Comprehension/Discussion Questions

1. In the first part of the reading, Laye describes a typical woman who came to his father to have a piece of jewelry made. What are the woman's characteristics? Is she clever? In a hurry? Decisive?
2. Early in the selection, Laye gives an account of a particular process—a woman trying to get the goldsmith to make a piece of jewelry for her. What are the steps in this process?
3. Throughout most of the essay, Laye describes the process of making a piece of jewelry. What are the steps in the physical process of making the trinket?
4. In addition to the physical process of making the gold trinket, Laye describes a mystical or spiritual process that accompanies it. For each step in the physical process you described in question 3, give the accompanying mystical element or step (if there is one).
5. According to Laye, the praise-singer took a "direct and effective" part in the process. What part does the praise-singer play in the process of making the piece of jewelry?
6. What is the attitude of the people toward the goldsmith? Support your answer with examples from the text.
7. What is Laye's attitude toward the gold-working process? In which paragraph or paragraphs does he state his thesis?
8. Although the process of requesting a piece of jewelry to be made and the process of making it occur in all cultures, which elements of Laye's description of these processes are particular to the West African culture? Which are universal?
9. What is the attitude of people in your culture toward a skilled craftsperson? Support your answer with examples.
10. If you wanted to ask someone to make something for you—for example, a piece of jewelry, a suit, or a dress—what process would you go through in order to accomplish this?

The Prose Analysis Essay

 **EXERCISE 10-2** Vocabulary Development. The following are some idiomatic expressions used in the reading passage. Read the sentence containing the expression and write a word or short phrase that means approximately the same thing as the italicized words. Then write an original sentence using the idiomatic expression.

1. broke the monotony (par. 1)

And then, every time he worked in gold it was like a festival—indeed it was a festival—that *broke the monotony* of ordinary working days.

2. lend a favorable ear (par. 2)

I could sense my father's vanity being inflamed, and I already knew that after having sipped this milk-and-honey he would *lend a favorable ear* to the woman's request.

3. deck herself out (par. 15)

"I have never seen a woman eager to *deck herself out* who wasn't in a great hurry!"

4. in progress (par. 18)

While the work was *in progress* the apprentices sat in front of the bellows with crossed legs.

*

The Egg

5. to lose track of (par. 20)

There were so many, and they crowded so around my father, that I, the smallest person present, had to come near the forge in order not to *lose track of* what was going on.

6. shouting to the skies (par. 34)

Throughout this metamorphosis he did not stop speaking faster and ever faster, increasing his tempo, accelerating his praises and flatteries as the trinket took shape, *shouting to the skies* my father's skill.

READING 2**Portraits of a Cop**

N. R. Kleinfield

In this essay, the writer presents an account of an unusual but interesting occupation. As you read, try to answer these questions.

1. What is the meaning of the title of the essay?
2. What are the steps in the process described?
3. What makes this essay interesting?

moves nervously 1. A pencil poking out from behind his ear, Arthur Hagenlocher fidgets^o on his high-legged chair in his box-like office in the old Loft's candy factory at 400 Broome St in the New York City Hall area. Staring at him are an uncompleted sketch^o and all manner drawing of pencils and soft erasers. Tacked up on the walls are sketches he and his colleagues have drawn. Except for one of Richard Nixon and another of Alfred E. Newman ("What me worry?").

the sketches resemble no one recognizable, and Mr. Hagenlocher himself doesn't have any idea who they are supposed to be.

2 "They're just faces to me," he says. "I don't know what their names are, what their occupations are, where they live. To be frank, I haven't any notion⁶ who they are. With most of them, I never will."

3 Arthur Hagenlocher makes a career of sketching people he has never met. Told by other people what they look like, he sketches them plainly, without much fine detail or embellishment.⁷ When he sketches them well enough, they will look, at best, like any one of several thousand or several million people; at worst, they will look like no one. Every so often, however, his sketches lead to the apprehension⁸ of a criminal, which, in fact, is what they are intended to do. Arthur Hagenlocher is a police artist, and everyone he draws is a suspected criminal....

4 When a crime that is witnessed occurs and a detective wishes a sketch, he calls an artist as quickly as possible (one artist is always on call). Either the detective will bring witnesses to the artist's office, or else the artist will hustle⁹ to the scene of the crime and work there.

5 First off, Mr. Hagenlocher "buttonholes"¹⁰ all available witnesses, and weeds out¹¹ those who, by his judgment, are unreliable.

The Story

Almost always, Mr. Hagenlocher prefers to deal with just one reliable witness, rather than with many conflicting voices that simply befuddle⁶ him. All too often when he works with several witnesses, there is a clash of facts. "The more witnesses there are, the more confusing it gets," the artist says.

understanding / questioning

6 Determining who makes the most reliable witness involves perception,⁷ interrogation,⁸ and luck. "There's a lot of psychology involved," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "You can sort of feel a good witness. If someone hesitates, or changes his mind, he's no good. If you have to pull things out of someone, he's no good. If the person just starts telling you about mouths and ears right away, then he's good."

7 Usually, the younger the witness, the better. "Fourteen-year-old kids make great witnesses," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "They remember everything. Old ladies make terrible witnesses. They can't remember anything. You ask a child about a nose, and he'll tell you about a nose. You ask an adult about a nose, and he'll start telling you about the color of the person's socks."

Youngsters also tend to draw their own sketches to help out.

moving clumsy and crudely

8 Initially, Mr. Hagenlocher tries to put witnesses at ease so they trust him, rather than barging up⁹ and identifying himself as a police officer. When questioning someone, the artist tries to exact¹⁰ as much detail as possible about the suspect, though he can get by on remarkably few facts. As a rule, he looks for five features: shape of face, hair, eyes, ears, and mouth. Distinguishing scars,¹¹ birthmarks,¹² beards, and mustaches are an artist's dream for producing a useful sketch, but they don't often crop up.¹³

get

permanent marks left after wound or burn / skin blemishes present at birth / occur, come along / brings / pictures of the faces of suspects / slight, small

9 Mr. Hagenlocher always carts along¹⁴ 150 to 200 of the 900,000 mug shots¹⁵ the police force keeps. Witnesses are asked to leaf through these to try to find a similar face, and then subtle¹⁶ changes can be made in the sketch. "You could use just one photo and work from that," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "Using that as a base, you have the witness compare the hair—is it longer or shorter?—the mouth is it thinner or wider? and so forth. But that's harder and takes more time. It's usually much quicker to show him a lot of photos and have them pick one that's close."

a lot of bunch of

10 "But I remember one time," the artist goes on, "when a girl flipped through a mess¹⁷ of photos and finally picked one. 'That looks exactly like him,' she said, 'except the hair was longer, the mouth was wider, the eyes were further apart, the nose was smaller and the face was rounder.' She was a big help."

*The Sketching Room**characteristics*

11 Besides the five basic features, Mr. Hagenlocher also questions witnesses about a suspect's apparent nationality and the nature of the language he used. This can be of subtle assistance in sketching the suspect, but it can also sometimes link several sketches together. For instance, if over a short period of time three suspects are described as soft-spoken, in addition to having other similar traits,⁹ then chances are they are the same person. It is also a good idea to ask a witness if a suspect resembled a famous person. Suspects have been compared to Marlon Brando, Rod Steiger, Winston Churchill, Nelson Eddy, Jack Palance, Jackie Gleason, Mick Jagger and a Greek god.

12 After Mr. Hagenlocher completes a sketch, he shows it to the witness or witnesses for their reaction. Usually there will be lots of minor, and sometimes not too minor, changes to be made. When it's finished, the sketch isn't intended to approach the polished form of a portrait. "We're just trying to narrow down the possibilities," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "If you've just got a big nose and a thin mouth to go with, then at least you've ruled out all the people with small noses and thick mouths. There are still millions of people still in the running, but millions have also been eliminated."

13 From time to time, Mr. Hagenlocher produces no sketch at all. This happens when he receives too many conflicting reports from witnesses, or when a witness can't make up his mind or can't supply sufficient detail. "The whole point is to completely satisfy the witness," Mr. Hagenlocher says. "If the witness isn't satisfied, then I don't turn in a sketch. Some women have cried when they saw my sketch. Others have said, 'No way, no way. That's nothing like him.'"

*divisions**guilty people*

14 Once a sketch is completed, two photographs are taken of it. These go to the detective who requested the sketch, who can then order copies that can be distributed among police precincts¹⁰ and other forces and departments. The sketch itself, designated by an identification number, the case number, the date drawn and the artist's initials, is filed away in the sketching room. When a suspect is apprehended, the sketch is filed in a different place. Though they are supposed to, detectives don't always notify artists when culprits¹¹ are caught because they are tied down with new cases....

15 For the time being, Mr. Hagenlocher is content with turning out sketches of people he doesn't know. "There's a tremendous satisfaction," he says. "If you can take a picture of a person after he's apprehended and have it look like your sketch, you say, 'Wow, I can't believe I did that! But you did!'"

*This Essay***25 EXERCISE 10-3** Comprehension/Discussion Questions

1. What is the process described in this essay?
2. In which paragraph is the process made clear?
3. Why does Kleinfield wait until then to make the topic clear?
4. What are the steps that Hagenlocher goes through to sketch a particular suspect?
5. How does Hagenlocher determine which witness to use for his information?
6. What features of the human face does Hagenlocher look for?
7. What is Kleinfield's point in paragraph 10?
8. Besides the basic features of the face, what other information does Hagenlocher ask his witness for? Why?
9. What finally happens to Hagenlocher's sketches?
10. Do you think Hagenlocher likes his job? Support your answer with examples from the text.
11. Is there a clearly stated thesis? If so, what is it and where does it appear? If not, where and how is it implied?
12. What makes this essay interesting?

25 EXERCISE 10-4 Vocabulary Development. Kleinfield uses a number of colloquial, or informal, words and expressions in his essay. These words help give the essay an informal, conversational tone, as if the writer were actually talking with the reader. These informal words also help make the essay interesting, because they are specific. Although colloquial expressions are appropriate in informal writing, they are often inappropriate in formal academic writing.

Some of the informal words and expressions that Kleinfield uses in his essay are given here. For each one, write a short definition and then write an original sentence.

1. fidgets (par. 1)
-

2. hustle (par. 4)
-

The Process Analysis Essay

3. buttonholes (par. 5)

4. weeds out (par. 5)

5. befuddle (par. 5)

6. barging up (par. 8)

7. crop up (par. 8)

8. carts along (par. 9)

9. mess of (par. 10)

Writing

A process is a series of actions leading to an expected or planned outcome. There are two types of process essays: those that instruct or direct and those that explain or analyze. Directional process essays tell how to do something. For example, a directional process might explain how to find an apartment. The purpose of this type of essay is to clarify the steps in the procedure so that the reader can re-create the steps and the results. An informational process essay explains or analyzes a process—it tells how something works, how something happened, or how something is or was done. For example, you could explain how World War II began or how hurricanes form. The informational process essay has a purpose different from that of a directional process essay. Its main purpose is to inform, explain, or

The reader is gaining an understanding of the process; he or she does not necessarily expect to be able to recreate the process.

Although process essays that explain or instruct have different purposes, they can be developed by using the same pattern of development and organization. In this chapter, then, our concentration is on developing and organizing the process analysis essay.

PLANNING THE PROCESS ANALYSIS ESSAY

When you are planning your essay, you should bear in mind the following advice:

Be aware of the audience. When you are planning a process essay, your first question should be "What do my readers know about my topic?" Identifying the audience is important in deciding what to include and what to omit in the essay. For instance, suppose that you decided to explain how to paint a room to an inexperienced audience—people who have never before painted a room. You would have to be very specific and assume that the readers know little or nothing about the process. However, if your audience is made up of professional or experienced painters, you would have to approach the assignment differently. In this case, you would probably explain a special technique that your audience may not be aware of.

In general, though, you should assume that readers know little about the topic being explained but have the same general knowledge you do. For instance, it can be assumed that most people know what a paintbrush is, but it cannot be assumed that your readers know which kind of brush is best to use with a certain type of paint.

Order the steps chronologically. Since a process paper describes a sequence of steps leading to some preconceived end, it is important that the steps be discussed in the order that they occur; in other words, the steps should be arranged in chronological order. This principle of organization is the same as the one used for narration (see Chapter Three). In a process essay, ordering ideas chronologically is vital, especially if readers are to be able to re-create the process. The only time to break from chronological order is when you explain some unfamiliar term or give some word of advice or caution.

25 : EXERCISE 10-5 Think of a process that you are familiar with—for example, how to get a visa, how to develop a photograph, how to wait on a customer. Brainstorm a list of the steps in the process. When you have finished brainstorming, arrange the steps chronologically.

Make sure that the process is complete. Whether you are explaining how to do something or how something was done, make sure to include all the steps in the

The Process Analysis Essay

process. Obviously, if you are explaining how to do something and leave out one of the steps, your readers will not be able to re-create the process and get the same result. A good way to test the thoroughness of the steps of a process is to have someone follow each step exactly as explained.

Let us say, for example, that you wanted to write an essay for the campus International Student Association's newsletter about how to get a driver's license. You can assume that the audience is the international student who has probably recently arrived in this country and does not yet have a driver's license. You might list the steps as follows:

1. Go to the Motor Vehicle Department in your area.
2. At the Motor Vehicle Department, the first thing you will do is take a vision test.
3. After that, you will take a written test.
4. Then you will take a driving test.
5. Finally, you will pay the fee.

Is this list complete? Certainly, these are the major steps involved, but there are many other things that the reader will need to know to get a driver's license. The following is an example of the expanded list of steps:

1. First obtain a pamphlet with the driving rules from the Motor Vehicle Department. You can do this by telephoning them at 555-3333 and asking them to mail you the pamphlet.
2. Study the pamphlet carefully.
3. Before you go to the Motor Vehicle Department, be sure that your car is in proper working order.
4. Take your birth certificate or your passport with you.
5. Take \$30 in cash.
6. Have a friend drive you to the MVD on Main Street and Vine Avenue. You can park at the rear of the building.
7. Get in the line marked "Driver's License Exam."
8. Fill out the information on the card they give you.
9. Take the vision test.
10. Then take the written exam.
11. If you pass, then you will take the driving test.
12. If you pass that, you can pay the fee of \$30.

The Essay

This version is certainly more thorough than the original list, but it is still incomplete. For example, it would be a good idea to give the reader some more instructions about taking the written and the driving tests. Can you think of any other specific steps that should be included?

EXERCISE 10-6: Using the list of steps you made for Exercise 10-5, test its thoroughness by having someone follow the steps you have outlined. Now revise the list to make it more complete.

Be sure to define new or unfamiliar terms. This is especially true for process essays that give instructions. Sometimes a process description may introduce a word or phrase that the reader might not understand. Since it makes little sense to have the reader attempt to complete a process without understanding the particular terms involved, always define what he or she might not know. If you are explaining how to repair a flat tire, for example, you might have to describe or define what a lug wrench is; otherwise, the reader would not know which tool is being discussed and could not continue with the process. In the example of the process of getting a driver's license, it might be necessary to explain the meaning of a few terms that will be used during the test—for example, "oncoming traffic" or "Class A License":

When you are filling out the form, check the box that says "Class A." A Class A license is for those who want to drive automobiles, not trucks or motorcycles.

Warn your reader of difficulties in the process. When planning a process essay, try to anticipate what problems the reader might have in understanding or re-creating the process. If one step is particularly difficult, warn the reader of this. Be sure to warn the reader of what not to do as well. For example, if you are explaining how to get a driver's license, it is a good idea to warn the reader about some of the tricky things that might come up during the driving test. Perhaps you should warn your reader to practice parallel parking before going to take the driving test, or advise the reader to fill out the forms carefully and to ask questions if he or she is confused. You might also advise the reader what to do if the car stalls.

EXERCISE 10-7: Go back over the list you revised for Exercise 10-6. Add definitions of new or unfamiliar terms and warnings of difficulties in the process.

Explain the purpose of a step when necessary. A process essay is more than just a list of steps. Expect that the reader wants to understand the process, whether he or she will attempt to re-create it or merely to read it. Therefore, you should explain the rationale behind the steps when the rationale is not obvious. In other words, try to explain—if only briefly—the purpose of the step. This kind of explanation is especially useful when the reader might skip the step because he or she

Process Analysis Essay

think about it does not serve any real purpose. For example, in step 3 of the driver's license process (page 263), explain why the reader should see to it that the car is in proper working order (for example, the driver may get a citation for having a brake light out).

Try to make your thesis statement persuasive. A thesis statement for a process essay does not have to have a strong central idea; in fact, it can be as simple as "There are three major steps involved in changing a flat tire." However, since the essay has as its underlying purpose more than just a listing of steps (those steps should be explained and analyzed), it is a good idea to have a thesis that contains a strong central idea. The thesis statement might be "Changing a flat tire is really quite easy." This statement will require showing that the process is indeed easy. However, if the thesis is "Changing a flat tire is a horrible experience," it would be necessary to show how horrible the process is.

EXERCISE 10-8 Go back over the list of steps you have been working on in the three preceding exercises. Formulate a thesis statement that contains a central idea about the process you are describing.

ORGANIZING THE PROCESS ANALYSIS ESSAY

One of the more difficult aspects of writing a process essay is deciding where to divide the essay into paragraphs. Generally speaking, most processes break down into a beginning, a middle, and an end. Here are a few pointers for dividing process steps logically into paragraphs:

1. *Introduction.* The introductory paragraph should introduce the topic and establish the purpose for writing the process. The reader should understand why the process is being described and in what situations the process is used.
2. *Developmental paragraphs.* The actual description of the process usually begins in the first developmental paragraph. However, if you are describing how to do something and the process requires that the reader obtain some items first, then you may need to point out in the first developmental paragraph what items are needed.

The actual steps of the process usually can be divided into three or four major steps. For example, if you were explaining how to change a flat tire, the first section could deal with getting the car jacked up, the next section could deal with removing and replacing the tire, and the last section could deal with removing the jack. In most cases, each major section can be described in a separate paragraph. Note, too, that the topic sentence in a process essay is often implied rather than stated directly.

The Essay

3. Conclusion. How to conclude a process essay depends on the type of process being described. Often the conclusion discusses the results of the process. Take special note of the conclusions in the model process essays in this chapter.

EXERCISE 10-9 Think of a persuasive thesis for the driver's license process. Then break down the steps on page 263 into logical groups.

EXERCISE 10-10 Using the process you have been working on in the preceding exercises, break down the steps into logical groups.

Now that you are familiar with some of the major points concerning process essays, examine the following process essay. Observe the paragraphing, locate the thesis, and determine if there is a central idea and if that idea is carried out in the process. Also, try to find explanations, examples, warnings, and definitions in the essay. Finally, note if the process description is complete.

STUDYING MATH

Math is probably the most difficult course for most people. However, I think that what makes math difficult is the power that the term *mathematics* has upon people's minds. Most students are afraid of not passing because of the reputation the course has of being hard. The study of math needs lots of concentration and practice, but it isn't really hard; it just deals with the relationship and symbolism of numbers and magnitudes. What is the most difficult part of math? Working problems progressively probably. How should students study math in general? They should follow some guidelines, like the ones I have prepared, in order to feel less nervous about the subject.

Concentration is the first thing that a student should acquire before even trying to think about studying math. Full concentration is needed to study math as well as to be free of any thoughts outside the study of math. Preparing to study starts the concentration because at that moment the student starts to think about what he or she is going to cover or what he or she will need in order to solve some problems. Also, a student should be completely rested, because if a student is tired he or she may end up taking a lot longer to accomplish what he is supposed to.

In order for the student to understand the material involved, the student should read all sections completely. I think the most appropriate way of doing this is by reading a section completely first. Then, the student should analyze that section and he or she should take all the formulas and write them down on a separate sheet in order to memorize and analyze them completely. Right after this, the student should take a break of about ten minutes in order to be relaxed to work some of the problems given in the section. Most stu-

students do all the problems at once, but I don't think that is the appropriate way. A student should only do the problems he can figure out. If he can't do one of the problems in the section, he should leave it and go on to the next one. Then the student should take another short break. After that, he is ready to read the next section and follow the same procedure.

Right after a student has read all the sections, he or she should look at the problems that he or she couldn't do. The student should try again to work them out, but only to a limit. The student shouldn't have to think more than five or ten minutes to figure out what is going on. Instead a student should take those problems to the professor in order to get a complete understanding of the problems. If a student takes too much time to do a problem, he or she will get burned out and will end up hating the material.

Then right after the student has finished all sections, he should start doing the problems in the review section in order to have a better understanding and to increase his or her speed while working out a problem. At this stage, the student should find a partner to work with. Believe it or not, working with a partner helps a lot, because if a problem comes into action there are two minds that will solve the problem easily.

Math can be difficult if an individual thinks that it is difficult. But if a student follows some of my guidelines, I'm sure that he or she will do well and will like the material.

—Igor Gonzalez

25 EXERCISE 10-11 On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about "Studying Math."

1. What is the thesis? The central idea?
2. Does the author establish a need for this process? If so, where?
3. Look at the paragraph divisions. Why does the author divide up the steps as he does?
4. What is the controlling idea for the second paragraph?
5. Is there a topic sentence for each paragraph? If not, is it implied?
6. Why should you take frequent breaks?
7. Is this essay unified? Coherent?
8. Are the steps clearly explained? Is the process complete?
9. Who is the audience?
10. Is this essay a directional or an informational process explanation?

The Essay

11. What verb tenses are used in this essay? Underline them in the essay.
12. Outline this essay.

**EXERCISE 10-12** Writing Assignment. Using the brainstorming notes you started in Exercise 10-5, write the first draft of your process essay.

Now let us look at a different kind of process essay. As you read "Cognitive Development," try to determine whether it's an informational or a directional process explanation. Also, take note of the verb tenses used by the author. If you are not familiar with the meaning of the word *cognitive*, refer to your dictionary before reading the essay.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

When I was talking to my three-year-old niece on the telephone, I asked her if she liked preschool. I heard nothing. I asked her again but still there was no response. Then her mother took the telephone and told me that my niece had been nodding her head to indicate "yes." At age three, my niece was not able to understand that I could not see what she could see or do while she was on the phone talking to me. This kind of observation of children led the great Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget to conclude that children are not born with a cognitive structure. He argued that children's cognitive understanding of the world emerges with experience; in other words, it develops. Knowledge, then, is a process rather than a "state." A child knows or understands an object by interacting with it, and from this interaction he expands his ability to comprehend. According to Piaget, just as all children grow and mature physically in the same basic sequence, they also develop cognitively in a process that is the same for all children, regardless of cultural upbringing.

Piaget called the first stage that children go through the sensorimotor period, which extends from birth to around age two. The child develops a "sense" of the objects around her by her "motor," or physical, action on the objects. Her understanding of the world is limited to her physical actions on the objects in her world. For example, newborns have certain reflexes, such as sucking and grasping a finger that touches their hand. From these reflexes the infant begins to learn about and recognize objects, and she can generalize to other objects. At about eight to twelve months, the infant is able to act intentionally and even plan her actions. If she kicks hard enough the rattle in the crib will make the noise she wants to hear. An important developmental milestone during this stage is what Piaget terms object permanence. By the end of this stage, the infant recognizes that an object continues to

For Primary Authors Only

exist even when she cannot see it or touch it. For instance, a person who walks behind a screen is still there even though the infant cannot see her.

Object permanence is the beginning of the child's awareness that people and objects exist independent from him, but this is only the beginning. The achievements of the sensorimotor stage just prepare him for the next stage, called the preoperational period, lasting from about age two to seven. During this stage, a child perceives and interprets the world in terms of self. He cannot comprehend that another person sees objects differently. He thinks other people see and hear what he does. Thus, my three-year-old niece nodded her head to indicate "yes" because she assumed I could see her. During this stage, Piaget describes children as being rigid in thought. They base their conclusions on one obvious factor or feature of an object. For instance, if a bowl of water is poured into a tall jar, the child will conclude that the tall jar has more water because its level is higher. But toward the end of this period, the child is beginning to learn about objects in a new way. For instance, he begins to understand that water poured from the bowl into the tall jar is still the same water; that is, an object can change its shape but still be the same basic object. A good example is that a child now understands that if a person puts on a mask he or she is still the same person. The child is developing representational thought.

This increasing flexibility prepares the child for what Piaget called the concrete operational period. From about seven to eleven years old, a child makes great strides in her cognitive development. She develops the ability to make mental transformations with regard to concrete objects. A child begins to comprehend the concepts of reversibility, compensation, and addition and subtraction. Piaget uses the concept of conservation to illustrate this development. If you pour the water back from the tall jar to the bowl, during this stage the child can understand that the amount of water that was in the jar is the same as what's in the bowl, even though the water levels are different. She can understand that the width of the bowl makes up—or compensates for—its lack of height. The child also understands that no water has been removed or added.

In the next stage, called the formal operational period, from about eleven to fifteen years old, the child develops more sophisticated reasoning abilities. He can reason now; he can see more logical relationships between objects and can think more systematically before acting. In other words, he can think in more abstract terms; he can use information from the past to predict consequences. One game that requires such skills is chess. During this stage of development, a child can learn not only the rules and movements involved but also can use strategies.

The Essay

Refinement of cognitive skills continues on into adulthood, but Piaget felt that the development of structure of thought is achieved by about age fifteen. After that, the content and quality of thought may develop. Although not all researchers in cognitive development agree with Piaget's scheme and all of his conclusions, he can be credited for having a tremendous impact on our understanding of how children develop their understanding of the world around them. Children are not miniature adults who reason as adults do; they understand and interpret their environment in terms of their cognitive development. This is important to realize if we want to understand our children and ourselves better.*

25 EXERCISE 10-13 On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about "Cognitive Development."

1. What kind of process is being analyzed in this essay?
2. What is the central idea about the process of cognitive development?
3. What is the topic of the second paragraph?
4. What does Piaget mean by object permanence? Can you give another example?
5. During which stage does the child make a lot of progress?
6. What do you think is the writer's purpose for writing this essay?
7. Does the conclusion logically follow?
8. What verb tense is used frequently? Is it active or passive?
9. Make an outline of this essay.

* from Patricia H. Millet, *Theories of Developmental Psychology* (New York: W.H. Freeman, 1983), pp. 30-66.

The Process, English 103

Composition Skills

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPHS

The Dramatic Entrance

The two types of introductions that you have been writing, the Funnel and the Turnabout, are good approaches to beginning essays. However, as your writing skills improve, you should strive not only for sentence variety but also for variety in essay openings as well. A dramatic, humorous, or otherwise interesting opening will generate interest in the reader. It is important, after all, to capture the reader's attention. The type of introduction that serves this purpose can be called the "Dramatic Entrance."

There are various ways to make a Dramatic Entrance. One way is to describe a scene that introduces your reader to the subject of your essay. Note how this writer opens an article on carbohydrates and depression:

On May 16, 1898, the intrepid Arctic explorer Frederick A. Cook made the following notation in his journal: "The winter and the darkness have slowly but steadily settled over us.... It is not difficult to read on the faces of my companions their thoughts and their moody dispositions. The curtain of blackness which has fallen over the outer world of icy desolation has also descended upon the inner world of our souls. Around the tables...men are sitting about sad and dejected, lost in dreams of melancholy from which, now and then, one arouses with an empty attempt at enthusiasm. For brief moments some try to break the spell by jokes, told perhaps for the fiftieth time. Others grind out a cheerful philosophy, but all efforts to infuse bright hopes fail."

We now know that the members of the Cook expedition were suffering from classic symptoms of winter depression, a condition related to a recently described psychiatric disorder, known as seasonal affective disorder, or SAD.*

For process papers, it is often useful to begin with a description of a scene that establishes the need for a process explanation. Observe here how one student uses a description to set up a process paper:

* Richard J. Wurtman and Judith J. Wurtman, "Carbohydrates and Depression," *Scientific American* (Jan. 1989): p. 68. Copyright ©1989 by Scientific American, Inc. All rights reserved.

The Essay

The rain pours down as if running from a faucet, lightning streaks across the dark restless sky, and thunder pounds the roof and walls of the house. All of a sudden the wind kicks up. Trees sway madly back and forth; loose objects are picked up and thrown all around. The house creaks and moans with every gust of wind. Windows are broken by pieces of shingle from a neighbor's roof or by loose objects picked up by the wind. Power lines snap like thread. The unprepared house and its occupants are in grave danger as the awesome hurricane approaches. Had they prepared for the hurricane, they might not be in such danger. Indeed, careful preparation before a hurricane is essential to life and property.

—Donald Landry

 **EXERCISE 10-14** On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about Donald Landry's introductory paragraph.

1. How is this description organized? Is it organized chronologically, spatially, or both? Why has the writer selected this pattern of organization?
2. What is the process that will be explained?
3. Does the introduction establish a need for the process?

 **EXERCISE 10-15** Study the following process topics. Select one and brainstorm a list of steps for the process. When you begin drafting, try to write an introduction that is a Dramatic Entrance.

1. How to do a particular job
2. What to do in case of an accident
3. How to study for a particular course
4. How something is made (you choose)
5. How something works
6. The life cycle of an insect
7. How to repair something
8. How to prepare for a natural disaster (such as a flood, storm, or the like)

COHERENCE

Participial Phrases

Since process analysis essays are organized chronologically, like narrations, many of the transitional devices discussed in Chapter Three are used: sequence markers (*first, next, after that, and so forth*) and adverbial clauses of time. To achieve even more coherence in chronologically developed essays, participial phrases can be used to indicate the sequence of actions between clauses. Participial phrases not only make writing more *coherent*; they also add variety in sentence structure, thus improving the writing. Note the following examples:

After melting the gold, he began to shape the trinket.

Having finished the written test, you must wait to take the driving test.

Having been asked, the witness will describe the person.

Adverbial clauses of time are used to clarify the time relationship between the action in one clause and the action in another. Adverbial clauses of time are used when you combine two independent clauses, making one subordinate, or dependent. Adverbial clauses of time can be reduced to participial phrases when the subject of the adverbial clause is the same as the subject of the independent clause. Study the following examples:

First he melted the gold. Then he began to shape the trinket.
(two independent clauses)

After he melted the gold, he began to shape the trinket.
(adverbial clause + independent clause)

After melting the gold, he began to shape the trinket.
(participial phrase + independent clause)

Having melted the gold, he began to shape the trinket.
(participial phrase + independent clause)

Using participial phrases will give your writing coherence.

For Essay

Grammar Review

If you want to review grammatical structures that will help you achieve coherence and grammatical accuracy in your writing, see the Grammar Review Unit. The following sections are designed to coordinate with the process essay:

Adverbial Clauses of Time Reduced to Participial Phrases, pages 366-370

Adverbial Clauses of Purpose, pages 396-398

Conditionals, page 453

EXERCISE 10-16 Choose one of the following topics for a process analysis essay. First decide if you want to write a directional process or an informational process. Then generate ideas, using one of the prewriting techniques you learned in Chapter One. Then make a list in chronological order of the steps involved in the process. Make sure the process is complete. Define any unfamiliar terms and give the reader appropriate warnings. Be sure to use appropriate transitions.

1. Choose a simple process from one of the sciences. For example, explain how to make a slide, how to use a particular kind of microscope, or how to use a Bunsen burner.
2. Choose a simple process from one of the arts. For example, explain how to learn to read music, how to prepare a canvas for painting, or how to take or develop a photograph.
3. Choose a life cycle of a particular animal. Explain the stages.
4. Choose one of the topics suggested in Exercise 10-15.

REVISION

Peer Review Checklist

When you have finished writing the first draft of your essay, give it to a classmate to read and review. Use the following questions to respond to each other's essays.

The Process Analysis Essay

Writer _____

Reviewer _____

Date _____

1. What is the thesis of the essay? Write it here:

2. Is the thesis persuasive? If so, what is the controlling idea?

3. Does the rest of the essay support the controlling idea? Explain:

4. Are the steps in the essay arranged in chronological order?

5. Is the process complete? _____ Are there steps in the process that need more explanation? If so, explain.

6. Are there any terms you do not understand? List them here:

The Essay

7. Does the writer warn the reader of difficulties in the process? _____
Can you suggest places where warnings might be useful?

8. What kind of introduction has the writer used (Funnel, Turnabout, Dramatic Entrance)?

Is the introduction interesting? Suggestions on the introduction:

9. Is the essay coherent? Has the writer used topic sentences and transitions?
Explain:

10. What is the most effective part of the essay? What has the writer done well?

11. What is the least effective part of the essay?

Suggestions:

*The Process Analysis Essay**Revision Checklist for the Process Analysis Essay*

1. A process analysis essay either tells how to do something or explains how something happens. Have you chosen an appropriate subject—process—for your essay?
2. In writing a process analysis essay, you need to be aware of your audience, to order the steps of the process chronologically, to make sure your explanation of the process is complete, and to define any new or unfamiliar terms for your reader. Have you accomplished these tasks in your essay?
3. Your process analysis essay should warn your reader of difficulties in the process, explain the purpose of a step where necessary, and make a persuasive thesis statement. Does your essay perform these functions?
4. Does your essay have an interesting introduction?
5. Is your essay coherent?

P

*The Cause-and-Effect
Analysis Essay*

Pre-Character-and-Effect Analysis Essay

→ Readings: Parents, Children, and Society ←

The family is a basic unit of society. Our mother, father, siblings, and relatives help orient us to the world and to our place within it. Although each particular family may have its own unique characteristics, overall the family serves to familiarize us with the basic assumptions and values our society holds. These assumptions and values will have a strong hold on us for the rest of our lives; they will mold us, guide us, make us who we are.

The following essays investigate the role of the family in society. As you read them, ask yourself these questions:

1. What effect have the individual members of your family had on you?
2. What values in society do you see as important for your life?
3. Do you want to be different from your parents in your relationship to your family?

READING I



Lift Your Feet

Andrew Ward

Born in Chicago in 1946, Andrew Ward is the author of a number of books and articles and has been a contributing editor of *Atlantic Monthly*. In the following essay, taken from *Fits and Starts: The Premature Memoirs of Andrew Ward* (1970), Ward describes the effects of one of his mother's personal traits on the family. As you read, try to answer these questions:

1. What behavioral characteristic of Ward's mother causes the effect described in his essay?
2. What effect does this characteristic have on the members of his family?
3. What is Ward's attitude toward his subject? How does he feel about his mother?

All her life, my mother wanted busy children. Nothing irritated^o her more than the sight of one of her offspring lying^o around, staring into space. But she had a conflicting ambition^o which proved paramount^o that her house remain at all times tidy.
made her angry
of great importance

The Essay

*without germs,
clean* and hygienic,² that it exhibit, in effect, as little evidence of human activity as possible.

2 You could turn your back for a moment in my mother's house, leave a half-written letter on the dining room table, a magazine open on the chair, and turn around to find it had been "put back," as my mother phrased it, "where it belonged."

3 My wife, on one of her first visits to my mother's house, placed on an end table a napkined packet of cheese and crackers she had made for herself and went to the kitchen to fetch a drink. When she returned, she found the packet had been removed. Puzzled, she set down her drink and went back to the kitchen for more cheese and crackers, only to return to find that now her drink had disappeared. Up to then she had guessed that everyone in my family held onto their drinks, sometimes with both hands, so as not to make water rings on the end tables. Now she knows better...

*cause to lose
one's place,
confusing* 4 These disappearances had a disorienting³ effect on our family. We were all inclined to forgetfulness, and it was common for one of us, upon returning from the bathroom and finding that every evidence of his work-in-progress had vanished, to forget what he'd been up to. "Do you remember what I was doing?" was a question frequently asked, but rarely answered, for whoever turned to address himself to it ran the risk of having his own pen, paper, book, tatting,⁴ suddenly disappear into the order of my mother's universe...

5 My mother's cleaning seems to have come to a head while I was in college. She started to get terrible headaches and psychosomatic⁵ digestive problems. Pretty soon, she hired some cleaning women to come in every week. They were Teutonic,⁶ like her grandmother, and did a good job, and she was delighted to find that she didn't have to clean up after them half so much as she had cleaned up after her family. My sister has developed a second-hand passion for clean windows, and my brother does the vacuuming in his house, perhaps to avoid having to be the one to lift his feet. I try not to think about it too much, but I have lately⁷ taken to cleaning the baseboards once a week. I figure if you don't keep after them they'll just get filthy, and then where will we be?

*kind of
needlework*

*physical
disorder caused
or aggravated by
one's emotional
state / of
Germanic origin*

at this later time

*The Causes and Effects, Analyzed, Essay***EXERCISE II-1:** Comprehension/Discussion Questions

1. What behavioral characteristic of Ward's mother causes the effect described in the essay?
2. What is the effect of the mother's ambition on the writer's wife?
3. What is the effect of the mother's ambition on the family?
4. What have been the long-term effects on members of Ward's family?
5. What is Ward's attitude toward his subject? Is he serious, lighthearted, hurt, angry?
6. How does Ward feel about his mother? Is he criticizing her? Praising her?
7. What is the author's purpose in this essay? To inform? Analyze? Entertain? How do you know?
8. What reaction does Ward expect from his readers? Explain your answer.
9. Do you have a family member or friend with a peculiar habit that has an effect on the rest of the family? Be prepared to explain the peculiar habit and its effects.

**READING 2**

Why They Excel

Fox Butterfield

In this excerpt from an article written for Parade magazine, Fox Butterfield investigates the causes or reasons for the achievement of young Asians in the United States. She finds the causes rooted in the traditional values of their culture. Butterfield, who worked as a journalist in Asian countries for many years, is implicitly suggesting that Americans have something to learn from these immigrants. As you read this article, try to answer the following questions:

1. *What are the reasons Asian students succeed in school?*
2. *What values in your culture have helped you succeed in school?*
3. *What particular people have helped in your success?*

1 Kim-Chi Trinh was just 9 in Vietnam when her father used his savings to buy a passage for her on a fishing boat. It was a costly and risky sacrifice for the family, placing Kim-Chi on the small boat, among strangers, in hopes she would eventually reach the United States, where she would get a good education and enjoy a better life. Before the boat reached safety in Malaysia, the supply of food and water ran out.

2 Still alone, Kim-Chi made it to the United States, coping with a succession of three foster families. But when she graduated from San Diego's Patrick Henry High School in 1988, she had a straight-A average and scholarship offers from Stanford and Cornell Universities.

3 "I have to do well—it's not even a question," said the small diminutive 19-year-old, now a sophomore at Cornell. "I owe it to my parents in Vietnam."

4 Kim-Chi is part of a tidal wave of bright, highly motivated Asian-Americans who are suddenly surging into our best colleges. Although Asian-Americans make up only 2.4 percent of the nation's population, they constitute 17.1 percent of the undergraduates at Harvard, 18 percent at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and 27.3 percent at the University of California at Berkeley.

10. Cause-and-Effect Analysis Essay

people who do nothing but study / intelligence quotient; a test to measure intelligence

3 Why are the Asian-Americans doing so well? Are they grinds,⁸ as some stereotypes suggest? Do they have higher IQs?⁹ Or are they actually teaching the rest of us a lesson about values we have long treasured but may have misplaced—like hard work, the family and education?

the opposite of what is expected

6 Not all Asians are doing equally well. Poorly educated Cambodian and Hmong refugee youngsters need special help. And Asian-Americans resent being labeled a "model minority," feeling that is just another form of prejudice by white Americans, an ironic¹⁰ reversal of the discriminatory laws that excluded most Asian immigration to America until 1965.

*come together
develop
conclusion*

7 Fortunately, the young Asians' achievements have led to a series of intriguing studies. Perhaps the most disturbing [results] have come in a series of studies by a University of Michigan psychologist, Harold W. Stevenson, who has compared more than 7000 students in kindergarten, first grade, third grade and fifth grade in Chicago and Minneapolis with counterparts in Beijing, Sendai, Japan, and Taipei, Taiwan. On a battery of math tests, the Americans did worst at all grade levels.

8 Stevenson found no differences in IQ. But if the differences in performance are showing up in kindergarten, it suggests something is happening in the family, even before the children get to school.

fill, inspire

9 It is here that the various studies converge.¹¹ Asian parents are able to instill¹² more motivation in their children. "My bottom line" is, Asian kids work hard," said Professor Dombusch [Professor of Sociology at Stanford].

10 The real question, then, is how do Asian parents imbue¹³ their offspring with this kind of motivation? Stevenson's study suggests a critical answer: When the Asian parents were asked why they think their children do well, they most often said "hard work." By contrast, American parents said "talent."

11 "From what I can see," said Stevenson, "we've lost our belief in the Horatio Alger myth that anyone can get ahead in life through pluck and hard work. Instead, Americans now believe that some kids have it and some don't, so we begin dividing up classes into fast learners and slow learners, where the Chinese and Japanese believe all children can learn from the same curriculum."

12 The Asians' belief in hard work also springs from their common heritage of Confucianism, the philosophy of the 5th-century B.C. Chinese sage who taught that man can be perfected through practice. Confucius is not just some character of the past—he is

the family

an everyday reality to these people," said William Liu, a sociologist who directs the Pacific Asian-American Mental Health Research Center at the University of Illinois in Chicago.

*developing
inward towards
the center
value of hard
work*

13 Confucianism provides another important ingredient in the Asians' success. "In the Confucian ethic," Liu continued, "there is a centripetal⁹ family, an orientation that makes people work for the honor of the family, not just for themselves." Liu came to the United States from China in 1948. "You can never repay your parents, and there is a strong sense of guilt," he said. "It is a strong force, like the Protestant Ethic" in the West."

14 Liu has found this in his own family. When his son and two daughters were young, he told them to become doctors or lawyers—jobs with the best guaranteed income, he felt. Sure enough, his daughters have gone into law, and his son is a medical student at UCLA, though he really wanted to be an investment banker. Liu asked his son why he picked medicine. The reply: "Ever since I was a little kid, I always heard you tell your friends their kids were a success if they got into med school. So I felt guilty. I didn't have a choice."

*excessive, too
much*

*childish, simple-
minded*

15 Underlying this bond between Asian parents and their children is yet another factor I noticed during 15 years of living in China, Japan, Taiwan, and Vietnam. It is simply that Asian parents establish a closer physical tie to their infants than do most parents in the United States. When I let my baby son and daughter crawl on the floor, for example, my Chinese friends were horrified and rushed to pick them up. We think this constant attention is overindulgence¹⁰ and old-fashioned, but for Asians, who still live through the lives of their children, it is highly effective.

16 Can we learn anything from the Asians? "I'm not naive¹¹ enough to think everything in Asia can be transplanted," said Harold Stevenson, the University of Michigan psychologist. But he offered three recommendations.

17 "To start with," he said, "we need to set higher standards for our kids. We wouldn't expect them to become professional athletes without practicing hard."

18 Second, American parents need to become more committed to their children's education, he declared. "Being understanding when a child doesn't do well isn't enough." Stevenson found that Asian parents spend many more hours really helping their children with homework or writing to their teachers.

The Chinese School Attitude Survey

3. And third, schools could be reorganized to become more effective—without added costs, said Stevenson. Nearly 90 percent of Chinese youngsters said they actually enjoy school, and 60 percent can't wait for school vacations to end. These are vastly higher figures for such attitudes than are found in the United States. One reason may be that students in China and Japan typically have a recess after each class, helping them to relax and to increase their attention spans.

10 "I don't think Asians are any smarter," said Don Lee, a Korean-American at Berkeley. "There are brilliant Americans in my chemistry class. But the Asian students work harder. I see a lot of wasted potential among the Americans."

EXERCISE II-2 Comprehension/Discussion Questions

1. In paragraphs 1-3, how does the writer introduce the article? Is the introduction effective?
2. In paragraph 4, what is the general reputations of the three universities listed? How do you know from the paragraph?
3. What is the thesis of the article? Where is it first stated?
4. What is the point of paragraph 6? How does it relate to the thesis?
5. What do the scientific studies comparing American and Asian children show? According to researcher Stevenson, why is this so?
6. What is the first cause the writer gives for the Asian students' success?
7. What aspect of Asian culture gives rise to this first cause?
8. What is the second cause the writer gives for the success of Asian students? How is it related to Asian culture?
9. In paragraph 15, Butterfield suggests that methods of child-rearing are a factor in the relationships between parents and children. Explain the connection.
10. What difference does she note between American and Asian approaches to physical ties between parents and children?
11. What suggestions does Harold Stevenson give to improve American education?
12. Given the last paragraph, what do you think is Butterfield's purpose in writing this article?

Pre-essay

13. Summarize Butterfield's overall point. Do you agree with it? Support your answer.
14. What connection do you think exists between hard work and success? Between a strong family and success? Support your answer.
15. Do you think methods of child rearing affect children's success in school? Support your answer.
16. What are some values of your culture that contribute to students' success?
17. In paragraph 6, Asian-Americans are called a "model minority." Explain this term. According to the paragraph, how do some Asian-Americans feel about this term? Is this a stereotype?
18. In paragraph 14, William Liu's son says he didn't have a choice about his major. Do you think that parents push children too hard? Should children be urged to choose their own majors or not? Support your answer.

EXERCISE 11-3 Vocabulary Development. Below are listed some terms that relate to myths or philosophies that underlie cultures. Using the library, friends, or other sources, find out what each of these means and write a paragraph in explanation.

1. the Horatio Alger myth (paragraph 11)
2. Confucianism (paragraph 12)
3. the Protestant Ethic (paragraph 13)
4. an important myth or philosophy in your culture

Writing

When we classify and divide, we are attempting to impose order on—or perhaps find order in—the world around us, thereby hoping to understand the world. When we analyze a process, we are also seeking to understand something, in this case how a sequence of events leads to an expected outcome. Similarly, when we analyze causes, we are attempting to understand the relationship of events that brought about an outcome, but in this case one that was probably unexpected and not likely to be repeated in exactly the same way. When we analyze effects, we consider the results of some action. Unlike process analysis, the relationship among events in cause-and-effect analysis is not chronological; it is causal:

Something causes something else, or many things cause something—something results from something else or many things result from one thing.

Every day we try to figure out the causes for something. When a problem arises, we start to examine the cause for it. For example, if police cars burst into flames in a large metropolitan police department, officials would immediately investigate to establish the reasons for the incidents. When any significant change in our lives occurs, such as the success of someone or something, we try to look at the factors that contributed to that change. When we identify an emotional problem, psychologists and other concerned people attempt to understand the causes. Understanding causes is not an idle pastime. We need to know why the police cars burst into flames in order to prevent this from happening again. We would like to know what it takes to be successful so that we can try to be successful. We try to learn the causes of mental disorders so that we can cure the problem the person has. Therefore, understanding causes is an important analytical process.

Likewise, we try to analyze—or, if the situation warrants it, predict—results, or effects. When a legislative body considers a tax-cut proposal, for example, it must examine the probable results the tax cut will have. Also, as more tropical rain forests are destroyed, observers, scientists, and politicians are becoming increasingly concerned about the magnitude of the problems that the destruction is causing and will cause for the ecology of the world.

In short, cause-and-effect analysis is an important analytical skill to develop. Writing the essay that analyzes causes and effects will require examining the topic carefully in order to be complete and logical. In this chapter, then, our focus is the approaches to writing the cause-and-effect essay.

Since student essays are ordinarily between 300 and 500 words in length, these essays can deal effectively and thoroughly only with an analysis emphasizing one or the other—causes or effects. And since most topics have more than one cause or effect, our focus here is on cause-and-effect essays that analyze more than one cause or effect. We will discuss three types of cause-and-effect papers.

MULTIPLE CAUSES → EFFECT

When we analyze the causes of something, we usually find that there are numerous contributing factors, or multiple causes; just how many factors depends on the complexity of the problem. Each cause may or may not be sufficient to produce the effect. Usually, however, we find that it is a combination of the causes that produces the result. For example, take the problem of obesity. Obesity is a complex problem, for it does not mean simply overweight. A person is considered obese if he or she weighs 20 percent above the generally accepted desirable weight for his or her height and age, in addition to having a certain amount of excess body fat. A person can be overweight because he or she has large bones, for exam-

The Cause

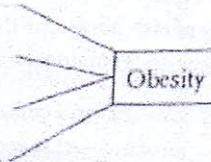
ple, but he or she is not considered obese. What causes obesity? Usually there is not a single cause; rather, a combination of factors leads to obesity.

Hereditary influences

Lack of exercise

Slow metabolic rate

Overeating



In this example we might find that for some people, only overeating and a lack of exercise lead to obesity; for others a slow metabolic rate might suffice; for still others hereditary influences might be the culprit. Of course, in the discussion of overeating, one might find that behind it lies a deeper cause: emotional problems. A person might overeat to satisfy emotional deprivation. Or perhaps some people overeat because they have a deficiency in a certain enzyme that researchers believe is a factor in signaling the body to stop eating when it has had enough. And true, a further examination of the topic might yield even more causes, such as social or environmental factors.

In writing your analysis of this topic, you could plan to spend about one paragraph on each of the causes; each paragraph would have to provide an explanation of the cause to show how it contributes to the effect. To illustrate, look at how a paragraph explaining the factor of lack of exercise might be developed:

A lack of exercise is one of the major factors contributing to obesity. When we eat, we consume energy (measured as calories). When we exercise, we expend energy or burn up calories. For example, when we run for an hour, we burn up approximately 450 calories, depending on our body size. When the number of calories we consume exceeds the number we burn up, the excess energy is stored in the body in the form of fat. If a person is inactive, it is more likely that he will not burn up all the calories consumed, so obesity can result. Moreover, studies have shown that inactivity can cause an obese person to expend less energy during a certain activity than a nonobese person. This is because inactivity lowers the basal energy rate (the basic minimum rate at which the body burns up energy). Therefore, if an obese person and a nonobese person try to run one mile, the obese person unused to activity will expend less energy because he has a lower basal energy rate.

25 EXERCISE 11-4 On a separate sheet of paper, answer these questions about the preceding paragraph.

1. What is the topic sentence? The controlling idea?
2. What kind of support does the writer use to explain the factor?

EXERCISE Study the paragraphs that follow. Each one attempts to explain a reason, but not all of the paragraphs are successful. Circle the number of each paragraph that does not adequately explain the reason given in the topic sentence. Explain your choices.

1. One reason I came to the United States was to learn English. English is the most important language in the world. It is the language spoken at the United Nations; it is also the official language of diplomacy. In addition, English is useful in many occupations. For example, air-traffic controllers all over the world must be able to speak English. Since English is so important, I decided to come to the United States.
2. Another reason I came to the United States was to go to college. In my country only a very small percentage of the applicants to the universities get accepted. Since I was unable to get accepted at a university at home, I had to go to a college outside of my country. I chose this university not only because I was able to get accepted at it, but also because it offers a program that I want to pursue: computer science.
3. One of the reasons for anxiety among American men is their changing role in society. In the past, it was simple. Men were strong, tough, and aloof. The models for these masculine qualities were movie stars like John Wayne, Humphrey Bogart, and Clint Eastwood. Today, however, most women want men to be more sensitive, more gentle, more understanding—more like Robert Redford, Dustin Hoffman, and Alan Alda. So men who grew up following the old role model are suddenly told that they are not right, not good enough. They should be different. They are being asked to change the way they think about themselves and their concept of manhood, and they are being asked to change in their relationships with women. This shift in expectations calls into question men's sense of who they are and how they relate to others, giving rise to self-doubts and problems of identity. Of course, this uncertainty about their role in society can cause men serious anxiety.
4. The major reason for anxiety among American men is their changing role in society. According to all accounts, this anxiety is pervasive. It is particularly so among men in their 30s and 40s, but it can also affect men in their 50s. One psychologist tells of a 56-year-old man who originally supported his wife's desire to go back to work and get a job. But when she was promoted to a managerial position and began to travel a lot, the husband began to have anxiety attacks. Many men respond to this anxiety by refusing to commit themselves in marriage or by taking refuge in the new "macho man," the man who thinks women really do want the strong silent type and he will be that man.

The Essay**EXERCISE J-6**

Writing Assignment. Select one of the paragraphs in Exercise 11-5 that does not explain the reason adequately. Rewrite the paragraph and explain the reason.

**EXERCISE J-7**

Writing Assignment. A. Choose one of the following topics and brainstorm about causes. Then, circle three or four of the main causes.

1. What causes people to emigrate to the United States?
 2. What caused you to come to the United States?
 3. What causes people to be successful in school?
 4. Select a bad habit that you have. Why do you have that bad habit?
 5. Select an idiosyncrasy of a family member or friend. Why does she or he have that peculiarity?
- B. Select one of the causes that you wrote about and write a topic sentence for a paragraph. Write the paragraph by explaining the cause. Give enough detail and support for your generalization. Use the paragraph on lack of exercise as a model (page 288).

Organizing the Causal Analysis Essay

When you are discussing multiple causes for an effect, you need to be aware of the types of causes you are analyzing. The causes may be unrelated to each other, but all are related to the effect. These types of causes are often called *factors*; they are not causally related to each other, but they do work to contribute to the effect. When discussing these kinds of causes, as in the case of the obesity example, arrange the paragraphs (causes) according to your own preference. However, the most common principles are *order of familiarity* (obvious to less obvious) and *order of interest* (less interesting to more interesting). These two principles are useful when the causes are of equal significance. When one cause is more significant, order the paragraphs according to importance, with the most important last. Remember to identify the most important cause as the most significant.

Causes are not always unrelated, however. Sometimes a cause could not have brought about an effect unless certain *conditions* existed. In this case, the causes are related to each other. For example, the incident that launched Europe into World War I was the assassination of the Austrian heir to the throne, Archduke Franz Ferdinand, on June 28, 1914, by a young Serb nationalist. However, it is generally felt that this incident alone would not have caused the war if certain other conditions had not existed in Europe at that time: economic rivalries, heightened nation-

The Cause and Effect Analysis

alism, imperialism, and so forth. In this kind of causal analysis the causes that directly precede the effect are called *immediate causes* (sometimes called *direct causes*), and those causes that are further removed in time from the effect are called *remote causes* (sometimes called *indirect causes*). In the case of World War I, the immediate cause was the assassination, but the remote causes were the conditions mentioned earlier, such as heightened nationalism.

Although remote causes are also often the most important ones (as in the case of the World War I example), they are not always the most important or the most reasonable ones. For instance, you might blame the overcrowded conditions in the public schools on overpopulation and blame overpopulation on the failure of the government to encourage birth control (remote), but a more reasonable explanation might be on the failure of the local officials to provide adequate educational facilities (immediate).

When you are analyzing causes that are not of equal importance or that are immediate and remote, it is generally a good idea to organize the paragraphs beginning with the immediate and proceeding to the remote, or from the less important to the most important.

EXERCISE 11-8 Following are two sets of causes that are given in no particular order. For each set, decide which of these causes are immediate and which are remote. Then organize them into an outline for an essay.

A. Causes for My Fear of the Water

1. I can't swim.
2. When I was a child, my mother wouldn't let me go near the water.
3. I don't like the feel of being immersed in water.
4. My mother had an unreasonable fear of the water.
5. My eyes are very bad. When I take off my glasses in the water, I can't see.
6. I don't trust the water. I don't think it will hold me.
7. I associate the water with being disciplined by my father.
8. When I was ten years old, I saw someone drown.

B. Causes for Air Pollution in Los Angeles

1. There are a lot of cars.
2. There are a lot of factories and oil refineries.
3. Weak legislation for antipollution devices in factories and refineries exists.

The Essay

4. People remove antipollution devices from their cars.
5. The life-style requires that people live in suburbs a long distance from their work and commute to work.
6. Air is trapped between the mountains, not allowing the winds to disperse it.
7. Los Angeles is built in and around hills, so the suburbs are very spread out.

The Thesis Statement for the Causal Analysis Essay ↗

In a causal analysis essay, the thesis statement does not have to be persuasive, since a topic is being analyzed and the central idea is found in that analysis. A thesis statement for a causal analysis can simply state briefly the causes to be discussed, or it may express the most significant cause. Consider this example:

Conflicts over money, interfering relatives, and career problems all contributed to the demise of their relationship.

The topic is *the demise of their relationship*, and the central idea is *reasons for its demise*.

Now study the following causal analysis essay. As you read, try to determine whether the author is discussing causes of equal significance, causes of unequal significance, or immediate and remote causation.

CAUSES OF MENTAL RETARDATION

A couple who is expecting a baby looks forward to the birth of their child with high hopes and expectations. Fortunately, most babies are born in good health, with their brains and bodies intact. Sometimes, of course, a baby is born with physical and/or mental defects. One such defect is mental retardation. There is no single cause of mental retardation, but researchers have uncovered several causes, some of which are preventable.

Brain damage due to genetic conditions is a well-known cause of mental retardation. Most people are familiar with Down's syndrome, which occurs more often in babies whose mothers are over 35 years old. Down's syndrome is caused by the formation of an additional chromosome. The normal number of chromosomes for people is 46; babies born with Down's syndrome have 47. Another chromosome-related cause of mental retardation is a malformation of the X-chromosome. Evidently, the X-chromosome breaks in two, thereby, altering the normal development of the fetus. There are also several recessive-gene diseases that result in mental retardation. For example, an infant born with the recessive-gene disease called phenylketonuria will end up with profound mental retardation because this disease affects the transmittal of information between the cells in the brain, particularly the neurons in the frontal lobes. Fortunately, blood tests can detect this problem at birth and

immediate measures can be taken to limit the damage. Another disorder caused by recessive genes is Tay-Sachs disease, which is found primarily among Jewish families of northeastern Europe ancestry. This disease also affects the nerve cells, though not in the same way as phenylketonuria. But there are blood tests that can detect carriers, so it can be prevented.

Not all brain damage resulting in mental retardation occurs because of problems in the genetic makeup of the infant. Certain infectious diseases that the mother may contract during pregnancy can adversely affect the developing brain of the baby, particularly if the mother catches these diseases during the first three months of her pregnancy. The most commonly known diseases include rubella (German measles), herpes simplex, and syphilis. Because these diseases are infectious, to a certain extent they are preventable.

Another preventable cause of mental retardation in newborns relates to what the pregnant woman ingests. Certain drugs are known to hinder the development of the baby's brain. In the early 1960s, for instance, some pregnant women suffering from pregnancy-related nausea were prescribed a drug called thalidomide. This drug interfered with the development of the embryo and resulted in physical deformations and mental deficits. These women had no way of knowing at the time what this drug could cause, but now we know that many drugs can adversely affect the development—both physical and mental—of the fetus. The most easily preventable cause of mental retardation is fetal alcohol syndrome. Drinking as little as one or two glasses of wine during the first three months of pregnancy can result in physical and intellectual impairments in the infant. The mother's diet is also important during her pregnancy. Researchers find mental retardation more common among babies whose mothers were malnourished during pregnancy.

Once the child is born other factors can cause mental retardation, such as head injuries and environmental pollutants, such as mercury and lead. But even before the child is born the damage may already have been done. Fortunately, much of this damage can be prevented by the pregnant woman. Genetic counseling caution to avoid infectious diseases, avoidance of drugs, including alcohol, and proper diet can increase the chances that a woman will bear a child whose intellectual functioning will be in the normal range.*

EXERCISE 11-9 On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about "Causes of Mental Retardation."

1. What is the thesis statement?

* from Gerald C. Davison and John M. Neale, *Abnormal Psychology: An Experimental Clinical Approach*, 4th ed. (New York: Wiley, 1986), pp. 407-15.

The Essay

2. What is the controlling idea of the second paragraph? In other words, what is the reason discussed in that paragraph?
3. What are the controlling ideas in the paragraphs that follow?
4. Is the writer discussing immediate and remote causes, or are the causes of equal significance?
5. Does the conclusion follow logically?
6. How does the role of the pregnant woman contribute to the prevention of mental retardation?
7. Make an outline of this essay.

A Problem in Reasoning 

When discussing causes and effects, be certain that your analysis is logical. One of the logical fallacies—errors in reasoning—to avoid is called *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, a Latin phrase meaning "after this, therefore because of this." This problem in logic occurs when the writer assumes that an incident that precedes another is the cause of that incident: "President X was elected in January. Three weeks later our nation suffered a severe depression. Therefore, President X caused that depression." This is an example of post-hoc reasoning. In this example, the illogic is clear, but be careful not to confuse chronological order with cause and effect; in addition, be certain to explain clearly the cause-and-effect relationship.

25 EXERCISE 11-10 Study the following groups of sentences. If the relationship is solely chronological, put "Time" in the space provided; if the relationship is also causal, put "C/E" (for cause/effect) in the blank.

1. _____ Every time I ride my moped to school, it rains. I am not going to ride it today, so it won't rain.
2. _____ Chemicals were dumped in the Love Canal area of New York. People who lived in Love Canal have a high rate of cancer.
3. _____ The sun came out. The dew on the grass dried.
4. _____ A meteor was seen in the sky over Los Angeles. An earthquake occurred the next morning.

The Cause-and-Effect Analysis Essay

5. _____ Last winter an unusually small amount of snow fell in the mountains. This summer the water supply in the plain below dried up.
6. _____ It rained last Tuesday. Now I have a cold.
7. _____ A strong hurricane formed in the Gulf of Mexico. Tidal waves hit the coast of Texas.
8. _____ There was a severe drop in car sales. Several workers were laid off.
9. _____ I touched a dead fish. The next day I developed pain in my fingers.
10. _____ Ten movies shown in movie theaters this year showed adultery. There is an increase in adultery in our society.

 **EXERCISE 11-11** The following are some topics for a causal analysis essay. After you choose a topic, brainstorm about causes. Are they multiple causes or factors? Can you distinguish immediate and remote causes? Using this information, decide on the organizational pattern. Be sure to support the causes with

1. Develop the topic that you wrote on in Exercise 11-6.
2. Choose another of the topics in Exercise 11-7.
3. Give the causes for your particular fear of something.
4. Give the causes for pollution in a particular area or city (either in this country or in your country).
5. Give the causes for a recent social condition or change (for example, a change in men's roles, women's roles, divorce rates, family size, number of smokers versus nonsmokers, amount of stress in children).

 **CAUSE → MULTIPLE EFFECTS**

Just as an effect can have multiple causes, so can a cause have *multiple effects*. For example, several years ago most people thought that processed sugar (such as granulated sugar) was a relatively harmless sweetener that produced a pleasant taste, provided a small burst of energy, and perhaps contributed to tooth decay. There

The Effect

was little concern about the seemingly minor effects of eating sugar. But in recent years our consumption of sugar has increased tremendously; in addition, we have begun to uncover some unpleasant and serious effects of eating so much sugar. Although sugar may not be the sole cause of some of the following more remote effects, research has shown it can contribute to them:



When an analysis is primarily of effects, as in this case, expect to devote a paragraph to each effect. The paragraph would have to explain the relationship between the cause and the effect. Note how the effect of tooth decay is explained in the following paragraph:

One of the major effects of eating too much sugar is a high incidence of tooth decay. When we eat something with sugar in it, particularly refined sugar, enzymes in the saliva in the mouth begin to work immediately to change that sugar into a type of carbohydrate. As one eats, particles of the sugary food get lodged between the teeth and around the gums. As the food changes its chemical composition, the resultant carbohydrate produces bacteria that begin to eat away at the enamel on the outside of our teeth. This is actually the decaying of the tooth. Now, if this process happens each time we eat sugar, we can see that eating excessive amounts of sugar causes more and more tooth decay. It is true that some tooth decay can be avoided with immediate brushing after eating, dislodging all the particles of food trapped in the teeth. However, sweets are often eaten as snacks between meals and during the day, times when people generally do not brush after eating. Therefore, the dangerous process of tooth decay is allowed to continue.

EXERCISE 11-12 On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about the preceding paragraph.

1. What is the topic sentence?
2. Does the paragraph show how eating too much sugar can result in tooth decay?
3. Is the paragraph unified? Coherent?

The Causal-Effect Analysis Essay

EXERCISES A. Select one of the following topics and brainstorm about three or four effects that might come from the cause.

1. What are some of the effects of drinking products that contain caffeine, such as cola and coffee?
2. What are some of the effects of smoking cigarettes?
3. Have you ever witnessed a disaster, such as an earthquake, a hurricane, or a severe storm? What were some of the effects of that disaster?
4. In what ways has coming to the United States affected you?

B. Using your brainstorming about effects, choose one effect, develop a topic sentence, and write a paragraph explaining that effect. Use the paragraph about tooth decay as a model.

Organizing the Effect Analysis Essay

The principles for organizing an effect paper are much the same as those for organizing a causal analysis. Like causes, effects can be unrelated (causally) to each other even though they all stem from the same cause. For instance, when a killer hurricane hits, several effects result: death, property damage, energy failures, and so on. These effects are not necessarily related causally; they were all just caused by the same thing—the killer hurricane. Although effects can be of equal value or importance, usually some are more important than others. In this case, as with causes, organize the paragraphs dealing with effects according to order of importance (although focus should be on the more important—or major—ones):

Effects, like causes, can be immediate or remote. In the example of excessive sugar consumption, an immediate effect of eating sugar is a boost in energy, but more remote are the blood sugar problems and tooth decay. In this case, the remote effects happen to be the most important. An immediate effect of the earthquake in Soviet Armenia in 1988 was the death of thousands of people; a more remote effect will be, perhaps, buildings constructed under a safer and more stringent building code. In this case, although the immediate effect is the most important, the remote effect is still worth discussing.

If an analysis is of effects that occur in the same time relationship with the cause—in other words, they are all either basically immediate or basically remote—it is a good idea to order the effects according to importance. However, if the discussion is of immediate and remote effects, it is a good idea to begin with the immediate and continue to the remote. Reminder: Identify the quality of the effect (immediate, major, and so on) to the reader to clarify the type of effect being discussed.

The Essay

 **EXERCISE 4** Below are two sets of effects that are given in no particular order. For each set, decide which of the effects are immediate and which are remote. Then organize them into an outline for an essay.

A. *The Effects of Watching Television*

1. More people get eyestrain.
2. There is more violent crime in our cities.
3. People get fat.
4. There are more divorces.
5. Husbands and wives do not talk to each other anymore.
6. People do not enjoy reading anymore.
7. People are more afraid of each other.
8. People are lonely.

B. *The Citizens of This City Have Passed Legislation to Lower Property Taxes. (First divide effects into negative and positive.)*

1. Many city employees will lose their jobs.
2. Police patrols in the suburbs and downtown area will be reduced.
3. Citizens will have more money to spend on consumer items.
4. There will not be money for street repair.
5. The school budget will be reduced.
6. New business will be attracted to the city.
7. The park service will not be able to plant new trees along the highways.
8. The garbage will be picked up only once a week instead of twice a week.
9. More jobs will open up.
10. The local high schools will no longer have football teams.

The Thesis Statement for the Effect Analysis Essay 

As with a causal analysis essay, the thesis statement for an effect analysis essay does not have to be persuasive. The thesis statement can have a more simply stated central idea:

The Cause and Effect Analysis Essay

The tax increase will bring benefits to our city.

Here, of course, the topic is *tax increase*, and the central idea is that it will bring *benefits* to the city.

Now read the following essay, which analyzes effects. As you read, locate the thesis and determine whether the writer has clarified the type of effects being discussed.

DO IT!

Some do it to music, some while watching television; others do it in the privacy of their own homes, others in gyms. For some, they do it in the morning, others at night. But no matter where or when, millions of people all over the world do it, and that is exercise. But, unfortunately millions of people do not get enough exercise. The benefits of regular aerobic exercise are so great that it's a wonder everybody doesn't start on a program today.

Probably the most well-known effect of aerobic exercise can be achieved in a relatively short period of time, and that is improved cardiovascular and pulmonary functions. When a person exercises long and hard enough, the heart pumps faster and blood is circulated throughout the body. Since the heart is a muscle, exercise serves to strengthen it. As the heart becomes stronger, a person's stamina improves as well as her energy level. The same is true of the lungs. It doesn't take long to reap these benefits. A person can get such results within a few weeks just by walking briskly for 30 minutes three or four times a week.

Another physical benefit of regular aerobic exercise takes longer to achieve, but it is well worth the effort, particularly for women. Exercise can help prevent the crippling bone degeneration called osteoporosis. Osteoporosis is a gradual process of bone loss that occurs naturally as people age, but it can be halted by regular aerobic exercise. Exercise actually helps increase bone mass and is said to be the best preventive measure to take to avoid osteoporosis.

Just as regular exercise can help people achieve cardiovascular and skeletal fitness, it can also help people improve their emotional fitness. One of the good things about exercise is that it reduces stress. It does this in different ways. By improving one's overall fitness, aerobic exercise makes a person more capable of handling stress because he is less tense. When exercising, blood circulation improves and people burn off the adrenalin that stress causes the body to produce. Another way that exercise helps people handle stress is that after sufficient aerobic exercise, the body produces beta-endorphins, which are natural stress-relieving chemicals. In addition to helping people cope with stress, exercise can also help to alleviate depression.

There are no doubt many other benefits of regular aerobic exercise. It doesn't require that much time or effort to become a healthier person within weeks. Instead of watching television so much, people would be better off cycling or walking.

EXERCISE II-15: On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about "Do It!"

1. What is the thesis?
2. Does the writer establish a need or purpose for writing this essay?
3. Which kind of effect does the writer begin with?
4. What is the controlling idea in the third paragraph?
5. Why did the writer discuss the emotional fitness last?
6. Make an outline of this essay.

EXERCISE II-16: Writing Assignment. Choose one of the following topics for an essay that analyzes effects. Begin by prewriting; use one of the techniques you learned in Chapter One to generate ideas. Then develop your thesis sentence and support. Be sure to distinguish between major and minor causes or between immediate and remote causes, whichever is appropriate.

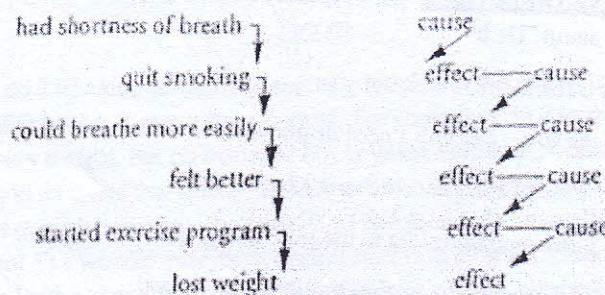
1. Choose one of the topics in Exercise II-13.
2. Analyze the effects of a change in your life. For instance, how has living away from home for the first time affected you?
3. Every family has problems. Perhaps a family member is unemployed, homesick, depressed, ill, angry, an alcoholic, or physically or mentally disabled. Problems like these affect the other family members. Discuss the effects of a family member's problem on your family.
4. Discuss the effects of a political or social change in your country.
5. Discuss the effects of your parents' values on you.

B THE CAUSAL CHAIN

Another type of cause-and-effect analysis is the *causal chain*. Unlike the multiple cause-and-effect analysis, the causes and effects in a causal chain are always directly related; in fact, they are linked. In the causal chain, one effect can become a cause of another effect, ... , n, can become a cause of another effect, and so on.

Cause-and-Effect Analysis... Essay

For example, suppose an overweight smoker is inactive because of shortness of breath. The doctor told her to quit smoking and she did. Soon she was able to breathe more easily; as a result, she felt better physically. She started an exercise program and as a result of this increased activity, she lost weight. This domino-like chain might be diagrammed as follows:



There are two major uses of the causal chain. First, it is sometimes useful for explaining one of the causes in a multiple-cause essay. For instance, in the example of obesity, the cause of overeating could be explained as follows:

The most obvious cause of obesity is overeating. But why do people overeat? One reason is emotional problems. For example, consider the case of Debbie. When Debbie was a child, her parents rewarded her for good behavior with candy and other sweet things. As she grew older, she began to reward herself quite regularly. As a result, she began to gain weight. By the time she was a teenager, Debbie had become rather heavy. Her weight then became a target for the other young people at school. They teased her unmercifully, as youngsters will do. She was teased so much that she started feeling sorry for herself and consoled herself by eating more and more. She gained more weight, and the vicious cycle continued until her self-image was so bad that she could not really perceive herself as anything but fat; therefore, diets were unsuccessful because she would inevitably get depressed during or after a diet and go on an eating binge to soothe her feelings.

EXERCISE 11-17. On a separate sheet of paper, make a causal chain diagram of the preceding paragraph.

The other major use of the causal chain is used in science to analyze various kinds of cycles, such as biological or chemical chains. Study the following essay, which analyzes a causal chain. Determine if the cause-effect relationship is clarified and explained.

The End

UPSETTING THE BALANCE OF NATURE

The members of a living community exist together in a particular balanced relationship, or ecosystem. One animal species eats another animal species which in turn eats another. Over years, a balance is worked out among the plants and animals in a community and it remains basically stable. It is like a huge puzzle with all of the pieces in their proper places. However, at times this balance in nature is disturbed, resulting in a number of possibly unforeseen effects. Perhaps a disease results in the near extinction of one species, leaving another species with no natural predator. The result can be a terrific increase in that one species' population. This could further result in the devastation of a shared food supply, which could in turn affect another species. It is possible for the disruption in the balance of nature to have natural causes: disease, drought, fire. Sometimes, however, human beings intervene in a natural environment, perhaps only slightly and with good intentions. The result is the same. The balance of nature becomes unbalanced and results in an entire chain reaction of unforeseen and unwanted effects.

A good example of this occurred in the Antilles in the 1870s. Sugar cane was a major crop there, but rats were eating and nesting in the cane, causing a great deal of damage. The mongoose, a one-and-a-half-foot-long mammal of the East Indies, was known to be an excellent rat hunter. Several males and females were imported in 1872, and laws were established that forbade the killing of them or their offspring. The mongoose flourished in the Antilles. After ten years it had multiplied abundantly and had significantly reduced the rat population. Consequently, damage to the cane fields was greatly reduced. It seemed that the scheme to add another piece to the ecological puzzle in the Antilles had been successful.

However, that is not the end of the story. The influence of the mongoose did not stop there. As the rat population decreased and the mongoose population increased, the mongoose needed to enlarge its menu. It attacked young pigs and goats, game, poultry, and began to destroy bananas, maize, and pineapples. Because the mongoose could not be hunted, its numbers increased rapidly, and it became a terrible pest. All of the indigenous animals suffered damage. The mongoose learned to enjoy the native birds, snakes, lizards, and turtles and their eggs. Now, it was specifically these animals that kept the local insect population in check. There were in the ecosystem of the Antilles a number of beetles, borers, and other insects that lived on and in the sugar cane. Until that time, they had not caused significant damage to the cane, because they were the natural food of so many local animals that kept their numbers down. However, as the birds, snakes, lizards, and turtles disappeared, the insect population began to increase. With no natural predators to keep them in check, the insects began to do more and more damage to the cane fields.

The Cause-and-Effect Analysis

Finally, the people of the Antilles realized that the introduction of the mongoose had caused a finely and delicately balanced system to go awry. The law against killing the mongoose was rescinded, and the mongoose population was reduced. Gradually, the different members of the plant and animal community came back into balance with each other and equilibrium was reestablished. However, the human members of the community would not soon forget that a single change in an ecosystem can cause a chain reaction that results in completely unforeseen and sometimes unwanted effects.*

EXERCISE 11-18. On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about "Upsetting the Balance of Nature."

1. What is the topic of the essay? What is the central idea?
2. What is the incident in the Antilles an example of?
3. Is this causal chain logical? That is, is the relationship among the causes and effects clearly and logically presented?
4. Does the conclusion logically follow?
5. Make an outline of this essay.

EXERCISE 11-19. Following are two sets of information, each giving the steps in a causal chain. What is the causal chain in each one? Devise a topic sentence for each set of information and write a paragraph explaining the causal chain. (You may need to add steps.)

A. *Disaster in Southern California*

1. Summers are hot and dry.
2. In fall, high winds come from the desert.
3. Forest fires begin and spread.
4. In spring, heavy rains fall.
5. In spring, mudslides and floods occur.

B. *Poverty*

1. People lack capital.
2. They buy items on credit.
3. They pay high interest on credit accounts.

* Adapted from Karl von Frisch, *Biology: The Science of Life* (New York: Harper & Row, 1964).

The Essay

4. This reduces their capital and puts them in debt.
5. They buy more items on credit.
6. This reduces their capital even more; it puts them further in debt.



EXERCISE 11-20 Writing Assignment. Choose one of the following topics for an essay that develops a causal chain. First, think through the chain carefully. Do not leave out any important steps. Develop a thesis sentence and outline. Then write an essay.

1. Choose a chain from one of the sciences—for example, a biological food chain.
2. Reread the essay on the balance of nature. Write an essay describing an upset in the balance of nature that you are familiar with.
3. Choose a chain from geography. What has happened to the land in a particular area?
4. Choose a social problem like alcoholism, poverty, divorce, overpopulation, teenage pregnancy, or teenage drug use.



Composition Skills

INTRODUCTORY PARAGRAPHS

The Dramatic Entrance

In Chapter Ten, we learned how a description of a scene can be used to open an essay. There are, of course, other approaches to use for a Dramatic Entrance. For instance, your essay can begin with a particularly interesting example that illustrates your thesis or is pertinent to your topic; it can open with an effect if your paper is analyzing causes or with a cause if it is analyzing effects. Note how the writer Anastasia Toufexis uses interesting examples in the following opening to her essay on mother-and-son relationships:

Industrialist Andrew Carnegie's mother begged him not to marry until after she died; he waited one year after her death and finally wed at fifty-two. Dwight Eisenhower interrupted planning of the Allied invasion of France in May 1944 to send a Mother's Day greeting to Ida Eisenhower in Kansas.

Effects and Effects of Effects

When Franklin Roosevelt was quarantined with scarlet fever at boarding school, his distraught mother Sara climbed a ladder each day to peer through the window of his room to check on his recovery. Actor James Dean explained his troubled life this way: "My mother died on me when I was nine years old. What does she expect me to do? Do it all alone?"

The bond that unites mother and son may be Western society's most powerful bond, yet attitudes toward the relationship are either murky or coated over with cliché. "We think we're comfortable with it, but culturally what we get are caricatures," argues Carole Klein, a longtime observer of the dynamics of family relationships....*

When you are writing an essay that analyzes causes, you might consider opening with an effect, or vice versa. Look at how student writer Carolyn Udell opens her essay in which she analyzes the causes and effects of her fear of cockroaches; she describes a dream—one of the effects of her fear.

ROACHES

1 Roaches crawling all over the walls, all over the floor pouring into the bedroom door, where can I run? I jump on top of the bed. They follow me up. Oh, my God, they're starting to fly all around me.... "Oh, it was just a dream." Vile and repugnant are two of the best words used to describe the most despicable creature on earth, the roach. The Bible portrays the devil as a serpent in the Garden of Eden. However, I am sure that God meant the roach to play the part. My feelings for these creatures are of spasmodic disgust, but especially fear.

2 I am not sure when this fear started, somewhere back in my early childhood. As far back as I can remember, I have never had the desire to touch a roach. The first thing I think of when a person says the word roach is its abhorrent looks. Their prehistoric appearance makes me cringe. The dark brown color reminds me of something dirty and gives me a feeling of disgust, which is exactly what a roach is—disgusting, with its long, skinny, black feelers protruding from its head, always moving and twitching in an erratic way no matter if it is squatting still or scurrying away beneath your feet. This is certainly an immediate cause of my fear.

3 Maybe the fear stems from the fact that they will eat anything, including the dead body of another animal, humans not excluded. This fact makes them seem disease-ridden. Every disease ever known to man or imagined by man can be caught from a roach, or so it seems.

* Anastasia Toufexis, "The Most Powerful Bond of All," *Time* 1 Oct. 1984 p. 86.

The Essay

4 Granted, some of the fear I have for these parasites might be learned from my mother. You would think you could call good ole Mom to the rescue when you spot a big two-inch roach on the wall and count on her to take care of it for you, but this is not so with my mother. Oh, she may come when you call her all right, but when she spots the two-incher on the wall, she hands me the can of Raid and runs for cover.

5 Another thing about roaches is that they are nocturnal insects. This may be an indirect cause of my fear of them, but maybe not. A psychiatrist might evaluate it this way. Roaches are nocturnal creatures. People are afraid of the night and associate it with evil things. Therefore, I, ultimately, am afraid of roaches. Now, I do not know how valid this is, because I am not afraid of roaches because of the night. It is more like I am afraid of the night because of roaches. I do not know why, but roaches seem to be scarier at night.

6 Anyway, it all comes down to this. This nightmare I recounted earlier is just an example of the many bad dreams I have had as a kid, and still do have, occasionally. These dreams are a direct result of my fear of roaches. I imagine them crawling on my bed and all over me. These dreams leave me wide awake, scared to death, and unable to go back to sleep.

7 I can't walk into a dark room without some trepidation. I could not stand to touch one of these things. This would leave me a mental case. The only way I can kill a roach is with Raid. This kind of apprehension makes life very difficult for me when I am roughing it or camping out. I'll lie there in my sleeping bag in my tent and I will not budge, with my can of Raid by my side and a light on, of course. An actual encounter with a roach, and I lose my sense of logic. I become unable to function in a controlled manner. I remember one time when I was down in the French Quarter in New Orleans, and if roaches are manufactured somewhere, that's the factory. Anyway, I was walking through a doorway when this big black roach crossed my path. He started flying—right from the floor into midair—at me! I almost died. I did not know whether to run backward or make a dive for the floor. This would have gone on, running backward contemplating a dive for the floor, until I was all the way to Baton Rouge, had not the roach decided to divert its course.

8 In a controlled situation, such as that of a classroom, I am mentally as well as physically agonized. I saw a roach in a class once, about a chair ahead of me. I did not want to make a scene and start screaming, especially since the roach was not that big. My mind was telling me to get up calmly and casually stroll away. However, my body was wanting to jump up and run. It was a terrible strain on me. I did manage to walk a far enough distance back without making a scene.

9 There is one way and only one way to overcome this fear. And that is to walk up boldly to the biggest, blackest roach I can find and grasp it with both hands, and hold it firmly. It would only take a minute. Then, all the bad

The Cause-and-Effect Analysis Essay

dreams would stop. I would have confidence when I entered a dark room.
And my mental and physical state of being would bear no strain. . . ."Oh,
not A roach! Quick! Raid!"

—Carolyn Udell

EXERCISE II-21: On a separate sheet of paper, answer the following questions about the essay "Roaches."

1. What is the writer's purpose in analyzing this topic?
2. What is the thesis statement? Is it stated directly, or is it implied?
3. Is the essay primarily a causal analysis, an effect analysis, or both?
4. Why is "Oh, it was just a dream" in quotation marks (paragraph 1)?
5. Is the introduction inviting? That is, does it make you want to read the rest of the essay? Explain.
6. What is the topic of paragraph 2? The controlling idea?
7. Does the writer focus on immediate or remote causes?
8. What purpose or function does paragraph 6 serve?
9. What is the topic of paragraph 7?
10. What does the example of the incident in New Orleans illustrate?
11. Does the writer primarily discuss immediate or remote effects?
12. Does there seem to be any hope that the writer will overcome her fear of roaches?
13. Does the writer seem to be serious about this topic? What clues do we get that she has a sense of humor about her fear?
14. What does "Granted" at the beginning of paragraph 4 refer to?
15. Make an outline of this essay.

The Relevant Quotation

Another frequently used approach to opening essays is the Relevant Quotation. An essay with this type of introduction opens with a quotation by an authority on the topic or by someone who says something relevant to what is discussed in the essay. Sometimes writers begin with a famous quotation and then work it into their topic. Observe how this writer uses a quotation to introduce an article about the harvesting of saffron in Spain:

"The saffron is an arrogant flower," begins an old Spanish zarzuela named for this lush, purple blossom. "It is born with the sunrise and dies at sunset." For a couple of weeks in October of every year, in Spain's La Mancha region, the arrogant crocus is harvested frenetically as fast as it flowers.

For saffron is the world's most precious spice, often rivaling, ounce for ounce, the cost of gold. A pound of its tiny threads—the stigmas, or female organs, of *Crocus sativus*, an autumn crocus—currently costs well over \$2,000. There is such a demand for these little fibers the Spanish call "red gold" that virtually all that is grown will be sold.*

In the following introduction, the author uses a quotation by a famous Englishman to introduce an article about the United States Constitution:

It took an Englishman, William Gladstone, to say what Americans have always thought: "The American Constitution is, so far as I can see, the most wonderful work ever struck off at a given time by the brain and purpose of man." From this side of the water, however, the marvel has not been so much the unique system of government that emerged from the secret conclave of 1787 as the array of ordered and guaranteed freedoms that the document presented. "Every word of [the Constitution]," said James Madison, the quintessential Founding Parent, "decides a question between power and liberty."^t

EXERCISE 11-22 Writing Assignment. Select one of the following topics and use a Dramatic Entrance or a Relevant Quotation for your introduction. Assume that your essay will discuss causes.

1. An unreasonable fear you have (such as a fear of roaches, flying, heights)
2. A particular like or dislike you have (such as a passion for a certain sport)
3. The causes of something tragic (such as a hotel fire, a bomb explosion, or an accident)

* Diane Raines Ward, "Flowers Are a Mine for a Spice More Precious Than Gold," *Smithsonian*, Aug. 1988; p. 105.

t H. B. Zobel, "How History Made the Constitution," *American Heritage*, Mar. 1988; p. 54.

The Chapter on Cause and Effect

COHERENCE

Transitions and Expressions for Cause and Effect

Transitions are important for coherence. In writing cause-and-effect essays, transitions are necessary to introduce causes and effects. In addition to the transitions you studied in earlier chapters, there are other transitions that are particularly useful in cause-and-effect essays. Pay close attention to the punctuation required for each type of transition.

Transitions in Phrases. Each transition in this group must be followed by a noun. If the phrase containing the transition comes at the beginning of the sentence, it is usually followed by a comma. The following transitions indicate cause: *because of* and *as a result of*. Study these examples:

Because of the possibility of fetal brain damage, pregnant women should not consume alcohol.

As a result of exercising regularly, a person can handle stress better.

Expressions in Sentences. The transitions in this group are verbs that express cause or effect. The following transitional verbs indicate cause: *caused by* and *results from*. Study these examples:

Premature aging of the skin *results from* too much exposure to the sun.

Her fear of roaches was *caused by* an early childhood trauma.

The following transitional verbs indicate effect: *cause and result in*. Study these examples:

Lack of exercise can *cause* obesity.

Walking regularly can *result in* improved health.

Special Note: *the reason is that...*

The expression *the reason is that* is often used to introduce a cause. It must be followed by a complete sentence. Note this example:

Why do people exercise? *The reason is that* they are tryin' to stay healthy.

Transitions

Coordinating Conjunctions as Transitions. The coordinating conjunctions *so* and *for* are often used as transitions. *So* indicates a result. However, it is somewhat colloquial and is usually avoided in formal writing. *For* indicates a cause and is quite formal. Study these examples and note the punctuation for coordinating conjunctions:

The mongoose was protected by law, *so* it increased in number rapidly.

We stopped at a restaurant, *for* we had not eaten since early morning.

Transitional Expressions Between Sentences. The transitions in this group usually occur between two complete sentences. They must be preceded by either a period or a semicolon. They cannot be preceded by a comma, but a comma often follows them. The following transitions indicate an effect or result: *thus, therefore, consequently, as a result, for this reason*.

Mathematics and science teachers do not encourage young girls to study science; *thus*, there are not many female scientists.

She perceived herself as fit; *therefore*, diets were unsuccessful.

It significantly reduced the rat population. *Consequently*, damage to the cane fields was reduced.

Debbie ate constantly. *As a result*, she became rather heavy.

The students were protesting against the food served in the cafeteria. *For this reason*, the president canceled classes and closed the university.

Note: These transitions can also occur within an independent clause. When they do, they are set off by commas:

He had exceeded the speed limit. He was, *therefore*, charged a fine.

EXERCISE 11-23 Fill in the blanks with the appropriate transitions and expressions of cause and effect. Pay careful attention to the punctuation given.**CAUSES OF TEENAGE SMOKING**

A 13-year-old boy standing in the doorway of his school, puffs on a cigarette.

He holds it carelessly, like an adult, yet in plain view. He looks around to make sure that the other guys are watching. If you ask how long he has smoked, you will find out that he started when he was eleven. By now, he is an

The Good-and-Efficient Argument Essay

addicted smoker. If you ask him why he smokes, he will probably say that he enjoys it. _____ you wonder if that is really the reason. It seems to me that the causes for teenage smoking are more complex. More specifically, they have more to do with the ambiguous role of teenagers in society. Teenage smoking is _____ by personal insecurity, a desire to be like adults, and peer pressure.

The _____ cause of teenage smoking is the personal insecurity young people often feel. They are at a difficult age. They are no longer children, _____ the ways in which they have behaved in the past are inappropriate. On the other hand, they are not yet adults; _____, they do not know the ways of the adult world. This conflict can _____ feelings of insecurity. _____, if children want attention from their parents or a toy or sweet, they can cry to draw attention to their desires. For teenagers, _____, crying will be labeled childish and they will be told to "act their age." Often, _____, the teenager does not know how to act his or her age. _____ teenagers do not know what to do, they often turn to smoking as a way to hide their nervousness and insecurities.

As we have just seen, teenagers need to learn how to behave as adults. They of course realize this and spend time emulating adults. _____ they try to adopt more adult attitudes and manners. They pay attention to their dress and the opposite sex. One thing that young

The Essay

teenagers perceive as "very adult" is smoking cigarettes. Perhaps a boy sees his father or older brother smoke. He thinks of his father as a man and _____ he wants to be "a man" like his father; he starts to smoke, _____ beginning a habit that most adults know is unhealthy.

While it is true that teenagers are attempting to become adults, this effort is often not fully conscious. _____ they often see the adults closest to them, their parents and teachers, as enemies. _____ they turn to their peer group for support. We are all familiar with the teenagers who want to look, act, and dress exactly like all of the other teenagers in their peer group. This peer group can exert _____ pressure. _____ often teenagers do things in the group that they would not normally do. One of these things is smoking cigarettes. Imagine a group of guys playing pool together after school. One says to the others, "I'm going to buy a pack of cigarettes. Do you want to smoke one with me?" The peer pressure here is _____ great. _____ most normal boys will succumb.

We can see that personal insecurity, desire to be like adults, and peer pressure can cause many teenagers to start something that they will later regret.

The Cause-and-Effect Review Unit

Grammar Review

If you want further review of grammatical structures that will help you achieve coherence and grammatical accuracy in your writing, see the Grammar Review Unit. The following sections are designed to coordinate with the cause-and-effect analysis essay:

- Adverbial Clauses of Cause and Result, pages 398–401
- Unreal Conditions, pages 455–458
- Articles, pages 370–381

In addition to practice with these grammatical structures, you will find additional writing assignments focused on the use of cause and effect.

EXERCISE 11-24 Writing Assignment. Choose one of the following topics for a cause-effect essay. Begin by generating ideas. Then look at your notes to determine the best support. Be sure to think through the causes and effects carefully. Write a thesis sentence and an outline. Use transitions and specific detail in the essay.

1. Complete the essay you started in Exercise 11-22.
2. Choose another topic from Exercise 11-13, 11-16, 11-20, or 11-22.
3. Discuss the effects of watching television often.
4. Discuss the effects your parents have had on you.
5. Discuss the specific values you hold that have caused you to do something.

REVISION

Peer Review Checklist

When you have finished writing the first draft of your essay, give it to a classmate to read and review. Use the following questions to read and respond to each other's essays.

Writer _____

Reader _____

Date _____

The Essay

1. What is the topic or subject of the essay?

2. Does the essay focus mostly on causes or mostly on effects?

For questions 3-6 below, answer focusing either on causes or effects.

3. What is the first cause/effect given? Write it here:

4. What support does the writer give for this cause/effect? Write it here:

5. Is this analysis clear and sufficient?

Give suggestions on the development of the first cause/effect:

6. Now look at the remaining causes/effects and accompanying support the writer gives. List each cause/effect and its support.

Analyze the support. Is it clear, sufficient, insightful?

Give suggestions on the support:

The Cause-and-effect Strategy Form

7. Does the essay use a causal chain? _____ If yes, are the links in the chain clear? _____

Explain: _____

8. What is the principle of organization for the essay?

Is it effective? _____ Suggestions on organization:

9. Is the introduction interesting? _____

Suggestions on the introduction:

10. Is the essay coherent? _____ List a place in the essay where the coherence is effective: _____

List a place in the essay that lacks coherence:

Suggestions on coherence:

11. What is the most effective part of the essay? What has the writer done well?

12. What is the least effective part of the essay? Suggestions:

316 *The Essay*

Revision Checklist for the Cause-and-Effect Analysis Essay

1. A cause-and-effect essay most often focuses on either the causes or the effects of some event or situation. Does your essay focus on either causes or effects?
2. If your essay focuses on causes, have you analyzed the causes sufficiently and in enough detail? If your essay focuses on effects, is your analysis insightful and sufficient? If your essay focuses on a causal chain, are the links in the chain clear?
3. Some common principles of organization for the cause-and-effect essay are order of familiarity, order of interest, and order of importance. Does your essay follow a logical pattern of organization?
4. The thesis statement for a cause-and-effect essay should contain the central idea of the essay. Does your essay have an effective thesis statement that expresses your central idea?
5. Does your essay have an interesting introduction?
6. Is your essay coherent?