

Cause and Effect Essay

Definition of Cause and Effect Essay

Human beings often try to find root causes of things, happenings and phenomena. This research leads to the discovery of effects, too. It is because human beings always desire to understand reasons for things, and why they happen. A composition written to find out reasons and results is called a cause and effect [essay](#). It makes discovery of the causes of something and resultantly finds out effects.

Signal Words for Cause and Effect Essays

Cause and effect uses special words for causes, effects, and predictions, such as *led to*, *because*, *cause*, *reason*, *explanation*, *so* etc. However, for effects, the words most commonly used are *therefore*, *as a result*, *consequently*, *thus*, *then*, and *thanks to*. For predictions, the most commonly used words are *if*, *when*, *after*, *as soon as*, *may*, *might*, or *possible*.

Examples of Cause and Effect Essay in Literature

Example #1: *Why We Crave Horror Movies* (by Stephen King)

“I think that we’re all mentally ill: those of us outside the asylums only hide it a little better—and maybe not all that much better, after all. We’ve all known people who talk to themselves, people who sometimes squinch their faces into horrible grimaces when they believe no one is watching, people who have some hysterical fear—of snakes, the dark, the tight place, the long drop ... and, of course, those final worms and grubs that are waiting so patiently underground.

When we pay our four or five bucks and seat ourselves at tenth-row center in a theater showing a horror movie, we are daring the nightmare.

Why? Some of the reasons are simple and obvious. To show that we can, that we are not afraid, that we can ride this roller coaster. Which is not to say that a really good horror movie may not surprise a scream out of us at some point, the way we may scream when the roller coaster twists through a complete 360 or plows through a lake at the bottom of the drop. And horror movies, like roller coasters, have always been the special province of the young; by the time one turns 40 or 50, one's appetite for double twists or 360-degree loops may be considerably depleted."

Stephen King tells the reasons people like to watch something horrible or terrible. This passage sheds light on those reasons.

Example #2: *Innocents Afield* (by Buzz Bissinger)

"We are clinging to the supposed virtues of high school athletics with particular zeal. Everybody knows that pro sports is too far gone (take your pick of recent scandals). Everybody knows that college sports is too far gone (take your pick of recent scandals). But still there's high school sports, still the classic battle of one rival against the other in shaggy glory, what James Jones described in *From Here to Eternity* as "the magnificent foolishness of youth as if the whole of life depended on this game." A half-century later, the depiction of noble sacrifice at the high school level still forms our baseline, gives us hope that something in sports is still unsullied, restores our faith in the family values fad that has overtaken the low-carb diet."

This passage sheds light on the reasons that school sports are necessary. The whole essay revolves around the games, reasons for the games, and their effects.

Example #3: *Black Men and Public Space* (by Brent Staples)

“My first victim was a woman—white, well dressed, probably in her early twenties. I came upon her late one evening on a deserted street in Hyde Park, a relatively affluent neighborhood in an otherwise mean, impoverished section of Chicago. As I swung onto the avenue behind her, there seemed to be a discreet, uninflamatory distance between us. Not so. She cast back a worried glance. To her, the youngish black man—a broad six feet two inches with a beard and billowing hair, both hands shoved into the pockets of a bulky military jacket—seemed menacingly close. After a few more quick glimpses, she picked up her pace and was soon running in earnest. Within seconds she disappeared into a cross street.”

This passage describes the cause of a woman’s fear in a [narrative](#), as well as the effect of her fear. As it is part of a long essay, the next passage sheds light on the effects on women.

Function of Cause and Effect Essay

A cause and effect essay explains the real situation to readers. Readers understand what lies behind a happening, and how it effects, or how it will impact, human beings. Mostly, such essays are used for scientific topics. It is because these essays explore the nature of things, and their likely effects on us, or the things around us.