

## **Cause and Effect Essays Topics**

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Cause and effect essay topic development, if not pre-assigned, can be a difficult task. You are not merely looking to describe a phenomenon. You need to determine how it fits within a body of professional literature or a scholarly debate. The cause and effect approach is an effective method of organizing and discussing ideas. It is rooted in the creation of explanatory hypotheses about a phenomenon. Begin your topic search with a handful of concepts.

### **Selecting the Topic**

Think about all of the things that affect you every day. Choose one that is somewhat familiar to you and you care about. Make a list of possible topics and brainstorm a list of phenomena related to each category. Choose a topic that satisfies the assignment and is narrow in scope. Narrow your list and select a topic that seems reasonable. If you are having difficulty selecting a topic to write about, then consider one of these subjects for your essay: What are the effects of college life on you? Does listening to music increase learning? What are the effects of poverty? What were the effects of the Civil War on black Americans? What are the effects of television cameras in the courtroom?

### **Approaching the Topic**

Once you have selected a topic, think about your readers. Consider what they know about your subject. Consider whether they are aware of the cause and effect connection associated with it. Next, think logically. Linking cause and effect requires clear, logical thinking supported by strong evidence. Check your evidence for accuracy. Examine your supporting points. Insure they are relevant and check your overall thesis for logic. Eliminate any fallacies that come up in opposing arguments.

### **Narrow and Research the Topic**

Write your topic on paper. Below the topic, brainstorm a list or related causes and effects in two columns. Think about what you already know about the subject. Next, do preliminary research to expand the list and distinguish primary causes and effects from secondary ones. Revise your topic as needed to address only primary causes and effects that your research can link to a specific fact, occurrence or circumstance.

### **Developing your Essay**

The opening paragraph sets the tone of the cause and effect essay. The reader should be able to figure out your approach and findings within the first paragraphs. The body of the essay must contain convincing arguments supported by the adequate source material. This is the heart of the report. Use the final paragraph to state your conclusions and restate the points made. Maintain a professional voice within the entire cause and effect essay. Such phrases as, "it is obvious" or "it is common knowledge" should be avoided.

### **References**

*Manual for Writers of Term Papers, 6th Ed.*; Kate L. Turabian; 1996

*The College Writer: A Guide to Thinking, Writing, and Researching*; Randall VanderMey, Verne Meyer, John Van Rys, Dave Kemper, Pat Sebranek; 2004

*The Elements of Style, 4th Ed.*; William Strunk, Jr., E. B. White; 1999