

# Cause-and-Effect Essay

In this unit, you learned the effects that some early experiences had on Gary Soto, Barack Obama, and other writers. Check out the **Writer's Road Map** and begin writing about a cause-and-effect relationship that is important to you.

## WRITER'S ROAD MAP

### Cause-and-Effect Essay

#### WRITING PROMPT 1

**Writing from the Real World** Write an essay about a cause-and-effect relationship that you think is important or interesting. Make sure you can show clearly how one event caused another event to happen.

**Topics to Consider**

- a natural event, such as a hurricane or a storm
- a historical event, such as the California gold rush
- a community event, such as building a skate park

#### WRITING PROMPT 2

**Writing from Literature** Literature can be full of cause-and-effect relationships. Write an essay that traces a cause-and-effect relationship in a literary work.

**Literature to Consider**

- experiencing how others live ("Out of Bounds")
- the effects of political protest ("Sit-Ins")
- the power of dreams ("Out of Many, One")



**WRITING TOOLS**

For prewriting, revision, and editing tools, visit the Writing Center at [ClassZone.com](http://ClassZone.com).



#### KEY TRAITS

**1. IDEAS**

- Identifies a true **cause-and-effect relationship**
- Presents a **thesis statement** that explains the connection between causes and effects
- Uses facts, examples, and other **details to support** each cause and effect

**2. ORGANIZATION**

- Presents causes and effects in a **sensible order**
- Uses **transitions** to show the relationship between effects and causes
- Has an attention-getting **introduction** and a **conclusion** that summarizes the cause-and-effect relationship

**3. VOICE**

- Uses a **tone** that is appropriate for the audience and purpose

**4. WORD CHOICE**

- Uses **precise language** to explain each cause and effect

**5. SENTENCE FLUENCY**

- Uses a variety of **sentence types** (statements, questions, and exclamations)

**6. CONVENTIONS**

- Uses **correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation**

## Part 1: Analyze a Student Model



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### Why Is It So Noisy?

One afternoon last week, I was sitting in the park, trying to relax. I had gone there because I thought the sound of the wind in the trees and the waves on the shore of the lake would help get my mind off a problem that was bothering me. What I heard instead wasn't soothing natural  
5 sounds, but noise, noise, and more noise. The blaring car horns, beeping trucks, squealing bus brakes, shrieking ambulance sirens, and barking dogs made me even more nervous than I was before. "I can't even hear myself think!" I shouted. This kind of noise pollution is everywhere, and it's not just annoying—it's harmful because it may lead to hearing loss.

10 Traffic sounds like the ones I heard in the park are the major cause of noise pollution. Just think how much noise a passing car, truck, bus, train, or motorcycle makes. Can you imagine hearing dozens of them at once? It doesn't take much imagination, because we actually experience that racket every time we go outside. Don't look up for relief, either. According to the  
15 Council on the Environment of New York City, an airplane 2,000 feet away makes a noise as loud as a car blowing its horn just a step away. The sound of a jet taking off can actually cause buildings near an airport to vibrate, so just imagine what it does to our bodies.

Another cause of noise pollution is machinery like jackhammers,  
20 bulldozers, leaf blowers, and lawnmowers. As anyone who lives in the city or suburbs knows, the annoying vibrations from these machines can have immediate and dramatic effects. The noise interrupts our thoughts, makes conversations difficult, and can even be painful to our ears.

#### KEY TRAITS IN ACTION

Introduction includes an anecdote that gets the reader interested.

Thesis states a cause-and-effect relationship: excessive noise leads to harm.

Specific details and a fact support the idea that noise pollution is a serious issue. The writer varies sentence types by including a question.

Entire essay follows a logical order. The writer has already discussed the major cause of noise pollution and moves on to other sources in this paragraph. Use of the words *cause* and *effect* help to make the ideas clear.

### DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

FOR ALL STUDENTS

FOR ENGLISH LEARNERS

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When it's loud, music becomes noise, too. The noise level at concerts,  
25 arcades, parties, and other events can be almost deafening. We have  
actually gotten so used to blaring music that it doesn't even seem loud  
to us. As a result, when we listen to music at home, or even through  
headphones, we turn the volume way up.

The effects of all this noise pollution are frightening. According to an  
30 article I read in the *Danvers Ledger*, "Loud noises can actually destroy the  
cells inside our ears." The longer we're exposed to the noise and the louder  
it is, the worse the damage will be. If these cells are destroyed, there is no  
way to restore them or our hearing. The House Ear Institute estimates  
that almost 10 million Americans suffer from hearing loss caused by noise.

35 Living in the world means dealing with noise. However, since we  
understand the causes of noise pollution, we can try to prevent its harmful  
effects. We can avoid noisy environments as much as possible and wear  
earplugs or earmuffs when we're in construction zones or at the airport. We  
can turn down our TVs, DVD and CD players, computers, and personal  
40 music players. Finally, we need to tell other people about the dangers of  
noise pollution and start doing what we can to prevent it—now.

Highlighted precise  
language makes the  
causes and effects clear.

Highlighted transition  
brings attention to one  
effect that loud music  
has on people.

The word we helps  
to create a tone that  
makes the reader feel  
comfortable. Conclusion  
summarizes the causes  
of noise pollution  
and suggests ways to  
minimize its harmful  
effects.