

Recognizing Cause and Effect

What is Cause and Effect?

Cause and Effect tells what happens and why it happens.

Why something happens is the cause.
The cause is the reason that the effect happens.

How do you find Cause and Effect?

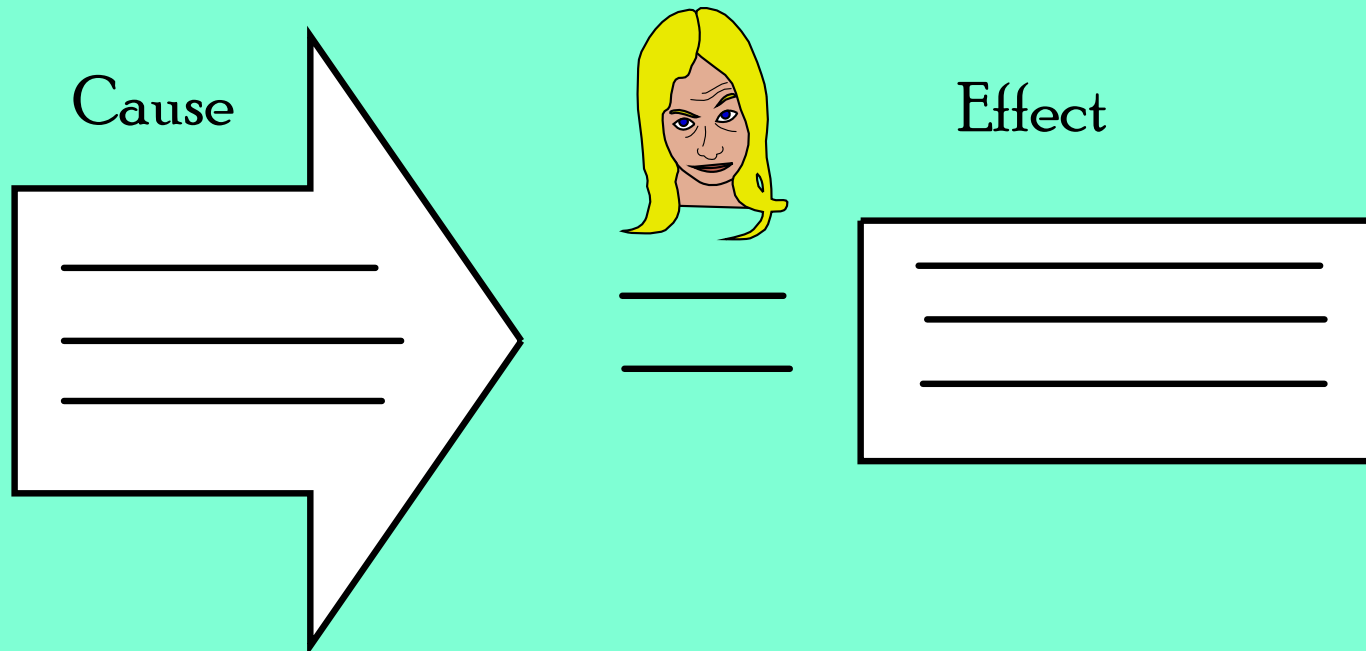
To find the cause, ask why the effect happens?

The effect is what happens as a result to the cause.

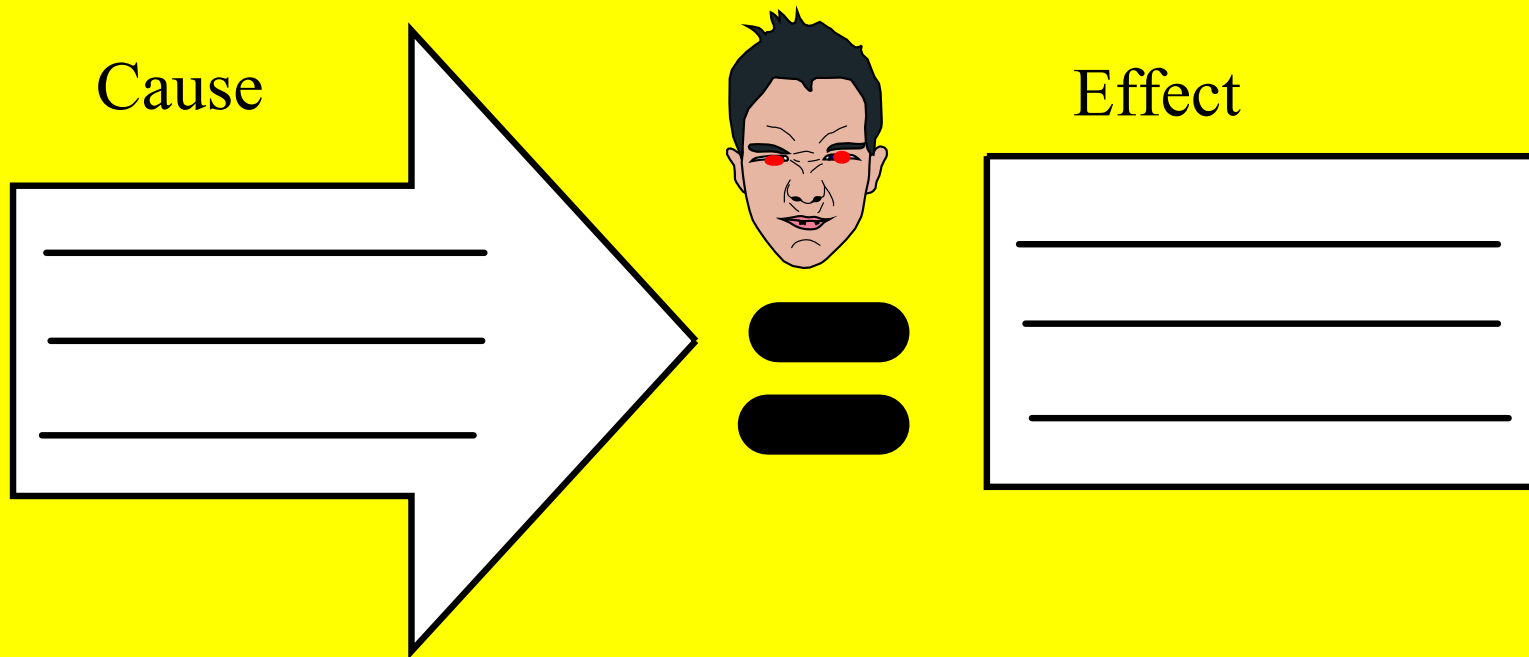
The effect happens because of the cause.

To find an effect, ask what
happened as a result of the cause.
Clue words often signal cause and
effect.

Some cause-and-effect clue words
are
so, so that, since, because, if,
reason,
reason that, and as a result.



Jack was fourteen minutes late for dinner. His mother was upset.

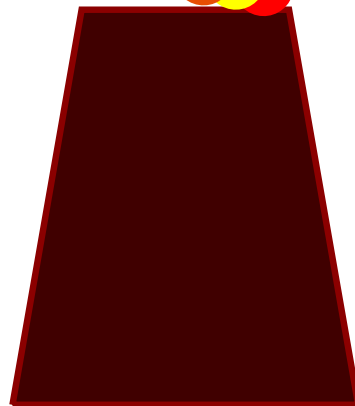
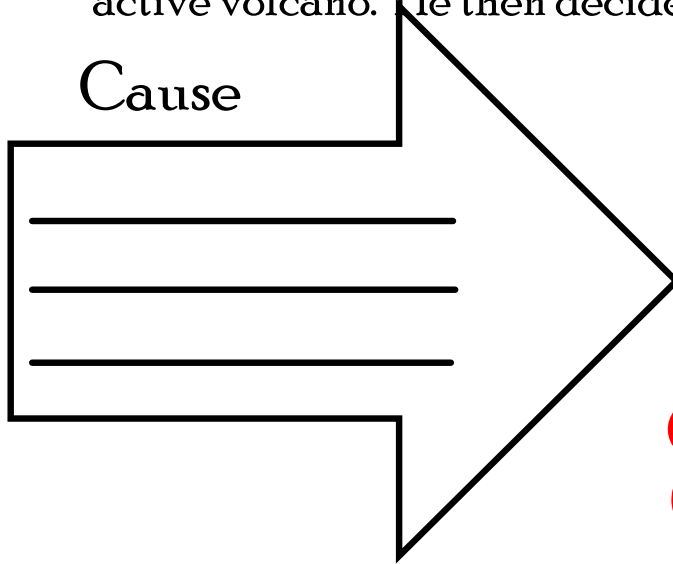


The Hendersons took in a lost cat.

Jim Henderson had an allergic reaction that resulted in swollen, itchy eyes.

While hiking in Hawaii, Ed saw lava flowing from an active volcano. He then decided to take a different trail.

Cause



Effect

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The Winter Street bridge is closed for repairs. Now lots of cars take a short cut through our neighborhood streets. Many people complain about the traffic. They are worried that someone will get hurt.

Think about what the passage tells you.
Let's find two examples of cause and effect.

What happens?

People complain about traffic
in our neighborhood.

Why does it happen?

People are worried someone
will get hurt.

The first question tells what happened. This is the effect.
The second question tells why it happened. This is the cause.

Let's do another example. Fill in the missing information.

Cause

The Winter Street Bridge
is closed for repairs.

_____.

Effect

Lots of cars_____

Cause and Effect

Write the cause and effect for each sentence.

1. Wearing sunscreen will prevent sunburn.

cause: _____

effect: _____

2. The mother duck led the ducklings to the pond so they could swim.

cause: _____

effect: _____

3. We are trying to sell our home after fifteen years, so we are hosting several Open Houses.

cause: _____

effect: _____

4. The dog was thirsty and drank all the water in the ball.

cause: _____

effect: _____

5. The boy lost a tooth, and the fairy left him a dollar.

cause: _____

effect: _____

Not all reading passages tell about cause and effect. You can find examples of cause and effect by thinking about what happens in a passage and why it happens. Read the passage below.

Cause and Effect

Match the Cause with the Effect

Cause

1._____ Mom laundered the dirty clothes.

2._____ Erick picked at the casserole Mom
lemonade.
made for dinner.

3._____ I love horses of all kinds and collect
horse items.

4._____ My friend Millie and I went to a picnic
today.

5._____ The boy woke up with a sore throat.

a. His mother let him stay home from

b. She hunged the outside on the
clothesline to dry.
mouth.

c. We brought a cooler full of food

d. He doesn't like marcaroni and cheese

e. My room looks like a stable.

Cause and Effect

Match the Cause with the Effect

Cause

6._____Dizzy Dora forgot to add sugar to the lemonade.

7._____The rollercoaster cars rolled down the steep hill quickly.

8._____The eagle's sharp eyes located the prey on the ground.

9._____The temperature is above 90 degrees today.

10._____Kara is allergic to mosquito bites. friend's mouth.

f. She was outside last evening, and her eye is sore.

g. He folded his wings and dove at the ground.

h. The people on board screamed in terror.

i. It feels very hot, stuffy, and uncomfortable.

j. The sour drink puckered her mouth.

Cause and Effect

Read the paragraph and answer the questions.

1. Daniel is eating cereal. He is always very hungry when he first gets up. So, he eats three bowls of cereal even before he gets dressed.

Why is Daniel eating cereal? _____

Why does Daniel eat before he gets dressed? _____

2. My head is full of ideas. Mom says I am creative. My brother says I am crazy! I am always dreaming of new things, and I tire him out. My ideas keep things interesting around here!

Why does the mom say the writer is creative? _____

Why are things interesting around the writer? _____

Check for Understanding

Remember: A cause is the reason that something happens. An effect is the result, or what happens because of the cause.

To find a cause, look for a reason that something happened. Ask yourself, "Why did it happen?"

To find an effect, look for a result, or something that happened after the cause. Ask yourself, "What happened?"

Look for clue words that signal cause and effect, such as so, so that, since, because, if reason, and as a result.

Cause and Effect

Sometimes there are no clue words to signal cause and effect in a reading passage. When there are no clue words, do the following:

To find an effect, think about what happened.

To find a cause, think about how or why it happened.

Think about how one thing might cause another thing to happen.

Read the following article about why zebras have stripes. Then answer the questions.