Cause and Effect Essay

What is a cause and effect essay?
The goal of this type of essay is to explain the reasons for and the results of an event or situation.

What makes a good cause and effect essay?

- **Clear Causation:** One of the things that can make cause and effect essays difficult is the ease with which a writer can fall into mistaken thinking when discussing causation. Chief among these mistakes is the idea that, just because A happened before B, that does not mean that A caused B. This is obvious when we consider that the rooster’s crow is not responsible for the sun rise. But it may be trickier when considering more difficult subjects. For example, many who use drugs report that they experience depression but which one causes the other, the drug use or the depression? Sometimes research may be required in order to obtain a reliable answer.

- **Organization:** Cause and effect essays can have one of two kinds of organization. They can either begin with the cause and then investigate all the effects that stem from it, or they can begin with an effect and consider the various causes that created it. For example, one could discuss the various effects of the rising popularity of fast food chains (e.g. obesity, diabetes, poor eating habits), or one could talk about what caused this rise in popularity (e.g. convenience, cost, marketing). Either way the topic of the paper ought to be identified in the introduction and then one cause or effect ought to be covered in each of the body paragraphs.

- **Transitions:** Some transitions are especially suited to help clarify causational relationships. These include the following:
  - As a result
  - Consequently
  - So
  - Since
  - Thus
  - Therefore
  - Because
  - One reason why
  - Another reason