

# Writing Project

## Text Structures—Cause and Effect

### Common Core Standards

**Writing—Text Types and Purposes, W.3.2–W.12.2; Production and Distribution of Writing, W.3.4–W.6.4; W.3.5–W.6.5; W.3.6–W.6.6**

**Reading: Informational Text—Key Ideas and Details, RI.3.3; Craft and Structure, RI.4.5**

**Speaking & Listening—Comprehension and Collaboration, SL.3.1–12.1**

**NOTE:** *The examples in this activity are about Oklahoma state history, but you can adapt them to use with other topics and lessons.*

Students are familiar with cause and effect in real life. You can review the concept with a simple example: hold up a pen or pencil and ask what will happen if you drop it. After students predict the obvious, drop the pen or pencil. Have students explain how this is an example of cause and effect. Then ask them if they can tell you the difference between cause and effect.

Put the following chart on the board and have students help you fill in probable causes and effects:



*Ask: What happened because of this?*

My uncle dropped a glass. \_\_\_\_\_

My best friend moved away. \_\_\_\_\_

There was a tornado today. \_\_\_\_\_



*Ask: What made this happen?*

\_\_\_\_\_ The door slammed.

\_\_\_\_\_ Someone screamed.

\_\_\_\_\_ The students were happy.

Point out that some actions are effects and then they become causes, too. This can happen in a cause-and-effect chain, e.g., “My mom tripped, which caused her to stub her toe, which caused her to yell, which caused the baby to cry, which caused Grandma to wake up. . . . etc.” Each effect can turn into a new cause. Also note that there can be just one cause or one effect or many causes or many effects.

Share the following cause-and-effect model with your students. How does the writer make the relationship between cause and effect clear?

### MODEL



Congress passed the Dawes Act.

Reservations were broken into allotments.

Tribal governments lost power.

Tribes lost more land.

More land runs were held.

Non-Indians settled the land.

Oklahoma became a territory.

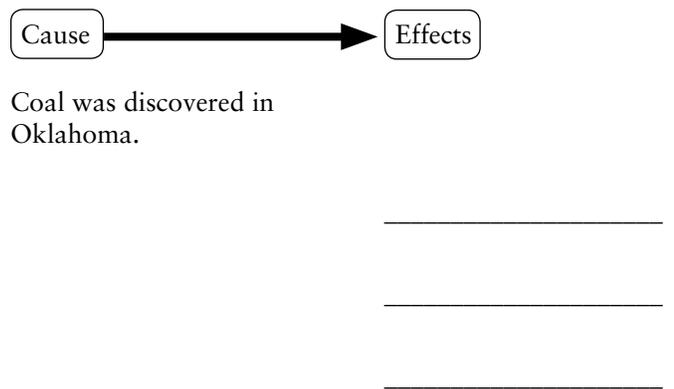
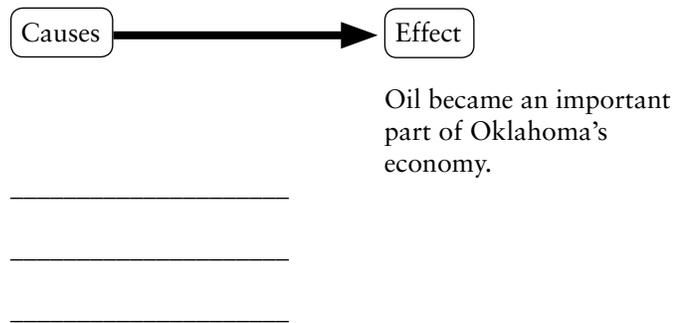
*The Dawes Act was a new law that broke Indian reservations into allotments, or small pieces. Because of the Dawes Act, tribal governments lost power. Now they were ruled by the US government. The tribes also lost land that wasn't allotted. The government held more land runs to bring settlers to the extra land. Many non-Indians settled in the new area, building farms and towns. Soon they asked the United States to create a territory for them. The government created Oklahoma Territory from the western half of Indian Territory. The Dawes Act brought many changes to Oklahoma.*

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Your students will be writing about cause and effect in the current lesson. Have them use the graphic organizer format on the board to prewrite, listing first an important cause and adding effects, then listing an important effect and adding causes. You may wish to provide the important cause and the important effect. Here is an example of cause and effect from a lesson about the discovery of oil in Oklahoma:



When students have filled in the organizers, assign them to write two paragraphs about cause and effect, one for each topic. Give them time to get feedback from a partner or small group before revising. Make sure students focus on content development, adding details and clarification rather than simply proofreading (correcting a few spelling and grammatical errors). After students have revised and you have checked their work, they should type up their writing on the computer.

Then ask students to share some of their paragraphs with the class. Discuss the connections between cause and effect. Why is cause and effect so important in history and in our daily lives?