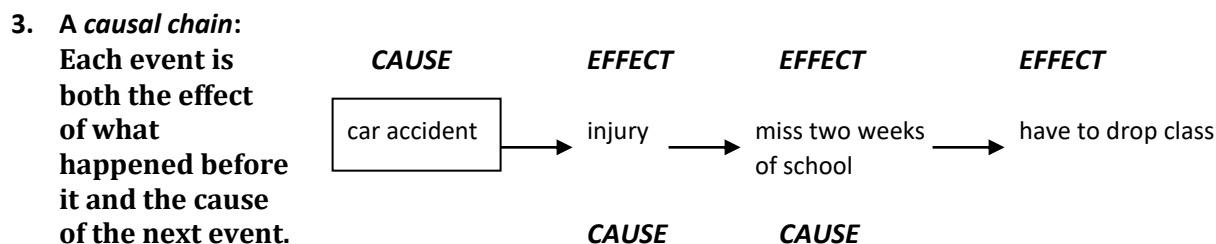
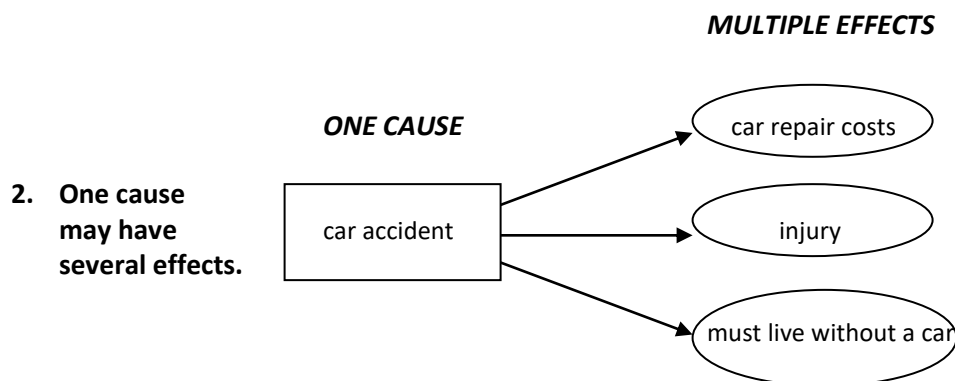
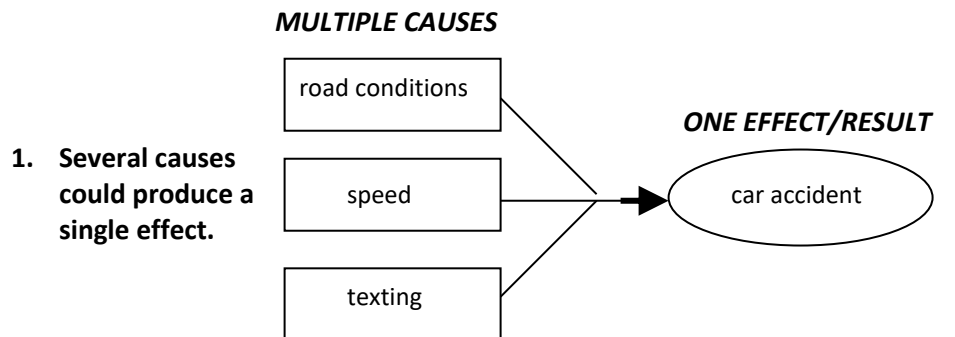


Cause & Effect

The Writing & Learning Studio Room 4301 Shoreline Community College

In a cause-and-effect essay (also called a *causal analysis*), you analyze **causes** (why something happens), **effects** (the results or consequences of an event), or both causes and effects. Causal analysis can be complex when there are multiple causes and multiple effects. Study the examples below.



CAUTION

When doing cause-effect analysis, you must be careful not to confuse causes with effects and effects with causes, which can be easy to do. Also, causes aren't always clearly separable from effects. For example, if you wanted to explain the reasons why people go on diets, you might say (1) because they want to lose weight and (2) because they want to feel better about themselves. But couldn't both those reasons also be the effects (results) of dieting?

To keep your focus clear between cause and effect, consider these distinctions:

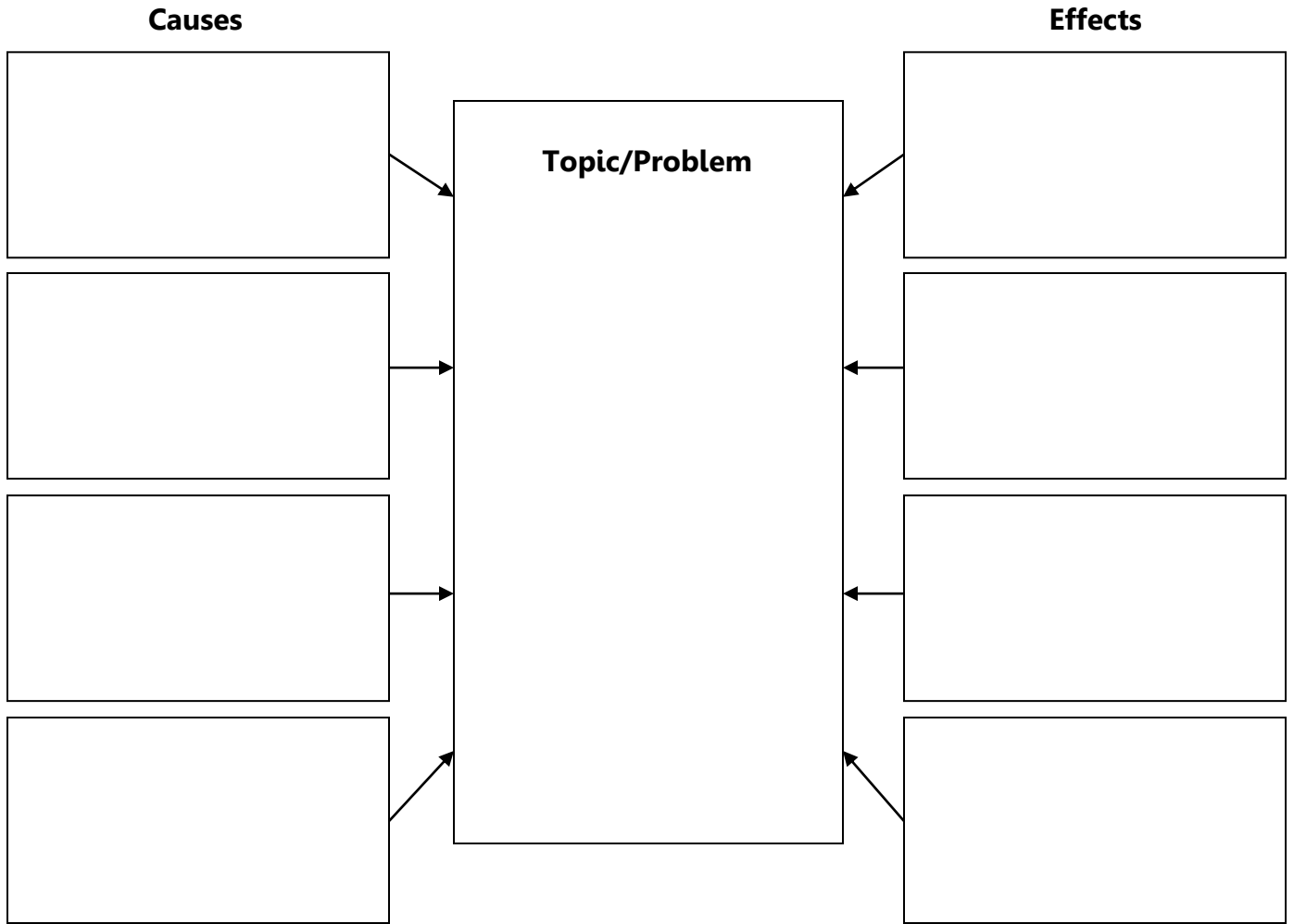
- causes:** the reason(s) why something happened (e.g., What caused the accident?)
- effects:** the results of the thing that happened (What happened as a result of the accident?)

➡ Use the Graphic Organizers on the back to help distinguish causes and effects. ➡

Cause and Effect Graphic Organizers

You can use the graphic below to prepare for writing an essay that explains why something happens (causes), the results of a particular situation or event (effects), or both the causes and effects of a situation/event/problem. In the center of the organizer, write the topic or problem you're exploring.

In the "Causes" column, write what you think leads to the problem or makes it happen. In the "Effects" column, write what happens as a result of the problem. (**NOTE:** The **number** of causes and/or effects you write about will be determined by your instructor's assignment requirements or by your own choice.)



Chain of Events

