**Cause-and-Effect Essay Assignment**

ENGL 1301

**Length:**

* **At least 3 full pages (no more than 3 ½) + Works Cited page**

**Format:**

* **MLA (typed, double-spaced, proper heading and header)**

**Sources:**

* You must include *at least* 2 and *no more than 4* outside sources, properly referenced and cited in your paper
* Include an accurate Works Cited page that includes all your sources
* At least 2 sources must come from VC library databases; any other(s) must be also be credible (.org, .edu, .gov, published news articles)

**Prompt:**

**Create a cause-and-effect essay in which you discuss one of the topics below. Thoroughly analyze the causes and/or effects for your topic.**

* “Who Killed Benny Paret?” addresses some of the problems with the entertainment side of the boxing industry. Extend this to another sports or entertainment aspect of American culture. Using this essay as a starting point, write a cause-and-effect essay **that explores *either* the possible causes or effects of an aspect of the American sports or entertainment industry today (think: bloodthirsty fans, glorification of athletes, brand consumerism, etc.).**
* Explore ***the causes*** of one of these problems: **voter apathy, school shootings, or academic cheating.** What do you see as **the major and contributing *causes* for your selected topic?**
* Write an essay considering **the likely *effects***of a severe, protracted shortage of one of the following commodities: **clean water, flu vaccine, or gasoline.**  You may consider a community, city-, or statewide shortage, or a nation or worldwide crisis.
* To write on another cause and/or effect topic, be sure to ask approval.

**Tips for Writing:**

* **Formulating a thesis:**
  + Your thesis should include the issue you plan to consider, the position you will take, and whether your emphasis will be on causes, effects, or both.
  + *Example:* Although genetics, society’s wide availability of poor food choices, and children’s lack of physical activity all contribute to childhood obesity, the most influential cause of this continuous health dilemma is parents’ involvement and attitude towards the issue.
* Remember to use Chapter 10 of your textbook as a helpful resource
* Be sure to include short, embedded quotations from your multiple sources
* The first time you introduce your sources, include a signal phrase to explain the credibility of that source
* Remember you receive extra credit for taking/submitting your paper to the Tutoring Center. Be sure to revise based on the tutor’s feedback.

**Suggested Format:**

* Introduction
  + Start with a hook or an attention-getter – find a way to interest your audience
  + Introduce the context of your topic
  + End with your thesis, which declares your issue and causes and/or effects
* Body Paragraphs – each about a cause or effect **(in order of increasing significance)**
  + Include a clear topic sentence with each body paragraph
  + Include multiple sources in each body paragraph
  + Include **embedded** quotes and citations, then connect each quote back to your point
  + Include a concluding sentence for each body paragraph
* Conclusion
  + Extend this topic – why is this important?
  + What can the audience do? Is there a solution or compromise to consider?

**Essay Proposal—Due in Canvas>Discussions *by* 11:59PM on Sunday 3/15.**

Once you have chosen your topic, identified a few potential sources, and brainstormed a framing for your cause/effect essay, you are set to complete your Essay Proposal.

**Your essay proposal should state—in a few sentences—the topic you are examining, whether you are looking at causes or effects, what you believe those to be, and the research you anticipate will support your reasoning. Include *at least one* properly formatted citation from a source you will use. Here’s an example:**

I am going to write about the causes of childhood obesity. I believe that parents are primarily responsible, although I also think genetics and lack of exercise contribute to the problem. I have found research that supports these ideas from health.gov and a database article from a pediatrician who also discusses the poor nutritional content of food today. More research will further define my topic, but I do believe there is enough support for my position.

Larery, Trina, MD. “The True Weight of Childhood Obesity in America.” *The Midwest Quarterly*, no. 3, 2019, p. 329. *EBSCOhost*, search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?

direct=true&AuthType =ip,uid&db=edsglr &AN=edsgcl.583693217&site=eds-live.

Use the following as a rough guide to formatting your Works Cited page. Double check all of citations with your *AWR,* pp.425-465.

Works Cited

**Website:**

Anderson, Monica. “Who Relies on Public Transit in the U.S?” *Pew Research Center*, 7 Apr. 2016, www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2016/04/07/who-relies-on-public-transit-in-the-u-s/.

**Article from *Patterns:***

Cousins, Norman. “Who Killed Benny Paret?” *Patterns for College Writing: A Rhetorical*

*Reader and Guide,* 13th ed., edited by Laurie G. Kirszner and Stephen R. Mandell, Bedford/St. Martin’s, 2015, pp. 337-9.

**Library Database Article:**

Zimmerman, Joseph F. “Public Transportation.” *Proceedings of the Academy of Political Science*, vol. 31, no. 3, 1974, pp. 214–224. *JSTOR*, JSTOR, [www.jstor.org/stable/1173221](http://www.jstor.org/stable/1173221).

WHO KILLED BENNY PARET? by *Norman Cousins*

**Background**

Cousin’s classic 1962 essay “Who Killed Benny Paret?” focuses on a brutal boxing match at Madison Square Garden between Emile Griffith and Benny (Kid) Paret – a fight that led to Paret’s death after nine days in a coma. The event, witnessed by millions of shocked television viewers, is the subject of a 2004 documentary, *Ring of Fire*. The fight went twelve rounds and ended with Griffith driving Paret onto the ropes and relentlessly beating him. Some newspapers reported that Griffith was angry because Paret called him, in Spanish (Paret was Cuban), a maricon (a derogatory name for a gay man). In the aftermath of the fight, many demanded that boxing be banned altogether. As a result of Paret’s death, a number of rules for professional boxing were changed, but boxing remains an inherently dangerous sport. More than 500 ring deaths have occurred in the past century; as recently as 2005, a professional boxer died following a knockout in the ring.

Sometime about 1935 or 1936 I had an interview with Mike Jacobs, the prize- fight promoter. I was a fledgling reporter at that time; my beat was education but during the vacation season I found myself on varied assignments, all the way from ship news to sports reporting. In this way I found myself sitting opposite the most powerful figure in the boxing world.

There was nothing spectacular in Mr. Jacobs’ manner or appearance; but when he spoke about prize fights, he was no longer a bland little man but a colossus who sounded the way Napoleon must have sounded when he reviewed a battle. You knew you were listening to Number One. His saying something made it true.

We discussed what to him was the only important element in successful promoting- how to please the crowd. So far as he was concerned, there was no mystery to it. You put killers in the ring and the people filled your arena. You hire boxing artists- men who are adroit at feinting, parrying, weaving, jabbing, and dancing, but who don’t pack dynamite in their fists- and you wind up counting your empty seats. So you searched for the killers and sluggers and maulers- fellows who could hit with the force of a baseball bat.

I asked Mr. Jacobs if he was speaking literally when he said people came out to see the killer.

“They don’t come out to see a tea party,” he said evenly. “They come out to see the knockout. They come out to see a man hurt. If they think anything else, they’re kidding themselves.”

Recently, a young man by the name of Benny Paret was killed in the ring. The killing was seen by millions; it was on television. In the twelfth round, he was hit hard in the head several times, went down, was counted out, and never came out of the coma.

The Paret fight produced a flurry of investigations. Governor Rockefeller was shocked by what happened and appointed a committee to assess the responsibility. The New York State Boxing Commission decided to find out what was wrong. The District Attorney’s office expressed its concern. One question that was solemnly studied in all three probes concerned the action of the referee. Did he act in time to stop the fight? Another question had to do with the role of the examining doctors who certified the physical fitness of the fighters before the bout. Still another question involved Mr. Paret’s manager; did he rush his boy into the fight without adequate time to recuperate from the previous one?

In short, the investigators looked into every possible cause except the real one. Benny Paret was killed because the human fist delivers enough impact, when directed against the head, to produce a massive hemorrhage in the brain. The human brain is the most delicate and complex mechanism in all creation. It has a lacework of millions of highly fragile nerve connections. Nature attempts to protect this exquisitely intricate machinery by encasing it in a hard shell. Fortunately, the shell is thick enough to withstand a great deal of pounding. Nature, however, can protect man against everything except man himself. Not every blow to the head will kill a man- but there is always the risk of concussion and damage to the brain. A prize fighter may be able to survive even repeated brain concussions and go on fighting, but the damage to his brain may be permanent.

In any event, it is futile to investigate the referee’s role and seek to determine whether he should have intervened to stop the fight earlier. That is not where the primary responsibility lies with the people who pay to see a man hurt. The referee who stops a fight too soon from the crowd’s viewpoint can expect to be booed. The crowd wants the knockout; it wants to see a man stretched out on the canvas. This is the supreme moment in boxing. It is nonsense to talk about prize fighting as a test of boxing skills. No crowd was ever brought to its feet screaming and cheering at the sight of two men beautifully dodging and weaving out of each other’s jabs. The time the crowd comes alive is when a man is hit hard over the heart or the head, when his mouthpiece flies out, when the blood squirts out of his nose or eyes, when he wobbles under the attack and his pursuer continues to smash at him with pole- axe impact.

Don’t blame it on the referee. Don’t even blame it on the fight managers. Put the blame where it belongs- on the prevailing mores that regard prize fighting as a perfectly proper enterprise and vehicle of entertainment. No one doubts that many people enjoy prize fighting and will miss it if it should be thrown out. And that is precisely the point.