PARAGRAPH DEVELOPMENT EXERCISE: CAUSE TO EFFECT

This type of paragraph develops a logical sequence of events which feel “right” to the reader because the paragraph shows how causes (certain specific events) lead to a particular effect (also a certain specific event). A typical way to structure this paragraph is to present the effect (the outcome) and then set forth the causes which lead to the effect, coming full circle back to the effect.

EXAMPLE:

College students inevitably develop a certain amount of skepticism. They are often placed in new situations, meeting new people and breaking former ties to family or friends. Each class they take contains new ideas which come at them fast and furious. The concepts in history don’t agree with the ones in sociology, the reading material in English classes differs from the essays in philosophy. All these new ideas conflict with things the students previously believed were true. Worst of all, the authors of books and the professors who lecture differ among themselves. All of these experiences lead college students to become skeptical of any absolute truth.

WRITING EXERCISE:

Now you try a paragraph in which you present the causes for a particular effect. Set forth a topic sentence which is an effect (result). Then show why the result occurred by stating a number of causes. Make the causes as specific as possible. End the paragraph by restating that these causes led to the effect.