



Explaining Causes and Effects of Hot, Flat, and Crowded

1. After reading Parts I and II of *Hot, Flat and Crowded* on global warming, rapidly growing populations, and the expansion of the world's middle class through globalization, choose **ONE** of the following to focus on a cause and effect essay.

- Friedman asserts that the global economic meltdown of 2008 and the meltdown of the ice sheets in Antarctica were rooted in the same causes. You mentioned this assertion to your economics teacher who was very skeptical. Write an essay to this economics teacher in which you explain the common causes Friedman discusses for both of these meltdowns, being sure to elaborate both on how these similar factors played out in the economy and the environment.
- You have had a conversation with your best friend about the book by Friedman that you are reading for your Freshman Composition course. In an essay, directed to this friend clarify the factors that have shaped what Friedman calls the Energy-Climate Era: overcrowding due to population growth and longevity, the flattening of the world due to the rise of personal computers and the Internet, and the global environmental crisis. As you explain these causes of the Energy-Climate Era, include information about how these factors have affected America economically and/or politically.
- You are a research assistant for a college professor in the political science department who needs to include content from Friedman's book into a presentation for his colleagues in an upcoming conference. In particular, the professor will be discussing Friedman's First Law of Petropolitics that states as the price of oil goes up, the pace of freedom goes down. In an essay, explain the cause and effect dynamics at work in this First Law and why it is so often true, according to Friedman.
- You are a reporter for the *New City Times* writing a series of articles about sustainability. You've decided to write separate articles about each of the five key problems of a hot, flat, and crowded world that Friedman introduces on page 64 and details in subsequent chapters. Write the first of your five articles on one of these five problems. Write this article as an essay addressed to the "Re-generation" with the goal of explaining how the cause of this problem is rooted (at least in part) by issues of sustainability (or unsustainability).

2. Compose a 1,000 word essay in which you incorporate specific facts and details from Friedman's book by quoting and citing according to MLA guidelines. Include a Work Cited page that lists **ONLY** the Friedman book. Do no outside research for this essay.

3. Create an appropriate title for your essay that previews your purpose, an engaging introduction paragraph and a clear conclusion paragraph.

Exploration of the Writing Task

The writing you will do for this essay depends upon two things:

- 1) Your understanding of the writing task.
- 2) Your close, critical reading of the text so that you understand the subject matter you are writing on.

Understanding the Writing Task

Your role or stance as a writer:

This essay asks you to EXPLAIN causes and/or effects. Notice the word is not persuade or argue or express. We certainly could say “all writing is an argument,” but it is important for you to see that you are explaining ideas communicated in Friedman’s book. In a sense, we are explaining *what he says* and thinks; we are not explaining *what we think*. Strictly speaking, we are explaining what we think he says. The distinction is crucial for your success on this essay. That means that you are seeking to understand what Friedman is saying in his book, and in this essay you are explaining to someone else your understanding of what he is saying. You are not criticizing his views, presenting your personal opinions or experiences, and you are not arguing on issues (we get to do that in Essay #4). Rather than explaining *what I think about this* __, you are explaining *what I think Friedman says about this* __.

Cause and Effect

This essay asks you to explain causes and effects and the cause-effect relationships Friedman writes about in his paper. Each topic asks you to explore different cause-effect dynamics in his book. It will be very important for you to identify the primary cause-effect relationships at work in your topic and structure your paper around these relationships. Identifying these primary cause-effect relationships will also help enormously as you read for understanding in Friedman’s book—you will know better what you are reading to look for.

Close, Critical Reading: The Importance of Gathering Data

Trimble talks about how important it is to “gather data” in the writing process. Donald Murray also believes every writer writes from a surplus of information. That means you will need to read Friedman and re-read him closely, critically, and interactively.

Please refer to the guide I presented you with on Close Reading and use it to guide you. Basically, you need to annotate closely as you read (and re-read) and then take notes on the book extracting information relevant to your topic. You will then need to sort and select this information to present in your paper. You will need to present textual evidence in your paper, so your reading process is a matter of understanding the text and finding the evidence to use in your essay.

Close Reading Guide: <http://www.lirvin.net/WGuides/closereading.html>

Handling Source Material Responsibly and Academic Honesty

Since we will be presenting other people’s ideas inside our own essay, a big focus for this essay will be to learn to responsibly handle this source material in our writing. We will learn both some basics for using quotes, but also principles for Academic Honesty in college writing. These topics are covered well in SFH chpts. 47 and 48.

