

In Section 1 on page 80 you saw how the writer of the Student Model reflected on her topic. In this section you will analyze the final draft of her cause and effect essay. You will learn how to structure your ideas for your own essay.

A Student Model

Read the writing prompt again and answer the questions.

WRITING PROMPT: Why have so many people moved out of rural communities in recent years? Give at least three reasons.

- 1 What cause and effect relationship will the writer focus on?
- 2 Will the essay be about the causes of something or the effects of something? Which organization from Section 1 will fit this essay best?

Read the essay twice. The first time, think about your answers to the questions above. The second time, answer the questions in the Analyze Writing Skills boxes. This will help you notice key features of cause and effect essays.



Rural Communities Left Behind

- 1 While many news reports focus on struggling cities like Detroit, there have been few reports about the crisis in many rural communities, which are steadily declining and struggling, too, because of a trend called “outmigration.” Outmigration is when people leave one area and move to another. This problem interests me because I have lived in a rural community for three years and have personally experienced seeing friends move away and businesses close. According to William H. Frey of the Brookings Institution, a 2014 Census report showed that as of July 2013 almost two-thirds of rural counties had become smaller. Outmigration happens for many reasons, but some common factors are fewer good job opportunities, lack of amenities,¹ and inaccessible health care.
- 2 One reason for outmigration is a limited number of decent employment opportunities. There are fewer good jobs and more competition in smaller towns, so it is harder to find a job. Young people are the largest group who are most likely to leave to seek job opportunities (McGranahan, Cromartie, and Wojan). For example, in my town there are not many opportunities for jobs in accounting. Many college students graduate with accounting degrees; **subsequently**, if they want to have a career in accounting, they have to move to a city. In addition, jobs in larger cities usually have a higher salary. In the small town of Macon, Georgia, a paralegal makes around \$20,000, but in Savannah the amount is almost double. A lack of economic opportunities is clearly a key factor in outmigration.

¹amenities: the desirable or useful features of a place

1 Analyze Writing Skills
Does this essay focus on multiple causes or multiple effects?

2 Analyze Writing Skills
In paragraph 2, identify all the transition words or phrases that show reasons or causes.

3 Another reason people leave rural areas is that they often do not have a lot of conveniences, such as entertainment and shops. Young people usually leave areas that do not exhibit attractive qualities, such as exciting social and cultural events (McGranahan, Cromartie, and Wojan). In my opinion, this is true because when you are young, you want to learn and know about life, and larger cities have many more things to do and experience. In addition, data in a 2013 USDA report also shows that when people retire they will leave for better services and entertainment ("Population"), which enhance their quality of life. These quality of life concerns have played a major role in outmigration from many rural areas.

3 Analyze Writing Skills

In paragraph 3, the writer uses two sources to support her topic sentence. Circle them.

4 A lack of access to health care makes people leave. According to the National Council of State Legislatures (NCSL), 90 percent of physicians work in cities, and over three-quarters of rural counties do not have enough health care professionals to serve the population. This means that families with children will have to travel far to get basic health care and older adults will not get the attention that they need. It seems logical that with fewer health care services, both families and older adults would choose to leave for metropolitan areas.

5 In sum, a shortage of job opportunities, lack of amenities, and difficulty getting health care are compelling causes of outmigration. More attention should be paid to this phenomenon since 20 percent of the population live in these areas and their quality of life is important, too. I will probably move to the city, but I would like one day to return to my town. However, my town may not be able to sustain itself until then.

4 Analyze Writing Skills

Look at paragraph 5. What kind of comment does the writer make in the last sentence? Circle your answer.

- a a prediction
- b a recommendation

Works Cited

- Frey, William H. "A Population Slowdown for Small Town America." *Brookings.edu*. Brookings Institution, 31 Mar. 2014. Web. 2 Aug. 2014.
- McGranahan, David, John Cromartie, and Timothy Wojan. *Nonmetropolitan Outmigration Counties: Some Are Poor, Many Are Prosperous*. ERR 107. U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, Nov. 2010. Web. 11 July 2014.
- "Rural Health." NCSL. National Conference of State Legislatures, n.d. Web. 2 Aug. 2014.
- United States. Dept. of Agriculture. *Population and Migration: Overview*, 3 Apr. 2014. Web. 11 July 2014.

ACTIVITY

3.1 Check Your Understanding

Answer the questions.

- 1 What is the main idea of this essay?
- 2 Which paragraphs deal with reasons people leave rural communities?
- 3 What ideas presented here about rural or urban communities have you experienced?

