

Name: _____

Date: _____

Identifying Cause and Effect in a Passage

Cause and effect is a way to describe the relationship between events. An **effect** is what happens as a result of a **cause**.

Example: Jessica had to get a new phone because she dropped hers in a muddy puddle.

Cause: She dropped the phone in the puddle. Effect: She had to get a new phone.

Read the passage and answer the questions about cause and effect that follow.

On April 20, 2010, an oil rig exploded and sank in the Gulf of Mexico. This event caused a huge oil spill in the gulf, and oil was spewing into the water from the ocean floor for 87 days. Nearly 5 million barrels of oil spilled into the Gulf of Mexico.

This was the largest oil spill in history. There were many negative effects of the oil spill. First, the states along the Gulf of Mexico had to worry about the polluted water, as oil washed up onto their beaches. These states lost money because no one wanted to visit their beaches. Second, the fishing industry was affected. Many fishermen could not fish in the waters of the gulf due to the oil spill, and this meant that they were out of a job for many months. But the worst effects were to the marine life and other wildlife near the Gulf of Mexico. Because of the pollution in the water, many animals died. Even after efforts were made to clean up the waters of the gulf, animals exposed to the oil spill continued to have health issues.

The United States government investigated the causes of the explosion on the oil rig that caused this huge oil spill. They found that the company that owned the oil rig had not done enough to keep the rig in good condition. The company has had to pay over 42 billion dollars to help with clean up, and as payments to the families of people who were affected by the explosion and spill.

1. What caused the huge oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010?

2. List three negative effects of the oil spill.

3. What caused the explosion of the oil rig?

4. What effect has the oil spill had on the company that owned the oil rig?

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1. What caused the huge oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico in 2010?

The explosion and sinking of an oil rig.

2. List three negative effects of the oil spill.

Death of fish and other wildlife

Dirty beaches and lack of visitors to the beaches

Lack of fish for the fishermen in the gulf

3. What caused the explosion of the oil rig?

The company did not do enough to keep the oil rig safe.

4. What effect has the oil spill had on the company that owned the oil rig?

They have had to pay over 42 billion dollars.