How Is a Cause-Effect Essay Organized?

There are two basic ways to organize a cause-effect essay: **focus-on-effects** or **focus-on-causes**. If your assignment is to write a cause-effect essay on the topic of global warming, you could write two kinds of essays:

- In a **focus-on-effects essay**, you would write about the threatened habitat of polar bears as a result of global warming and the melting of large parts of the Arctic Circle. Your essay might include five paragraphs and look like this:

INTRODUCTION	Paragraph 1	Hook Connecting information Thesis
BODY	Paragraph 2	Effect 1: dangerous swimming conditions • sea ice platforms farther apart
	Paragraph 3	Effect 2: scarcity of food • fewer hunting opportunities
	Paragraph 4	Effect 3: reduced population • Females with less body weight have lower reproduction rates.
CONCLUSION	Paragraph 5	Restated thesis Suggestion/opinion/prediction

- In a **focus-on-causes essay**, you would write about the causes of global warming, such as excessive carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. In this case, the organization for this essay could have five paragraphs and look like this:

INTRODUCTION	Paragraph 1	Hook Connecting information Thesis
BODY	Paragraph 2	Cause 1: human activities • carbon dioxide from vehicles • not recycling (requires creating more products from scratch)
	Paragraph 3	Cause 2: increased industrial activity • greater carbon dioxide from burning fuels to run factories
	Paragraph 4	Cause 3: deforestation • Increased human population requires more space, so trees are cut down. • Fewer trees mean less oxygen, which causes a higher percentage of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere.
CONCLUSION	Paragraph 5	Restated thesis Suggestion/opinion/prediction