

Lesson Plan: Cause and effect linkers

Level	Intermediate (B1–B2)
Time	60–75 minutes
Skills	Grammar, writing
Focus	Because / because of / due to / owing to / therefore / consequently / since / as

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Distinguish clause-based (because, since) from phrase-based (due to, owing to) linkers
- Use therefore and consequently correctly as sentence-level connectors
- Understand register differences between these linkers
- Produce complex sentences with varied cause-and-effect language

TARGET LANGUAGE & EXAMPLES

Because + full clause

- She was late because the traffic was terrible.
- He left early because he had an appointment.
- Key: 'because' must be followed by a full clause (subject + verb).

Because of / due to / owing to + noun phrase

- She was late because of the traffic.
- He left early due to a prior appointment.
- The match was cancelled owing to bad weather.
- Key: these MUST be followed by a noun phrase — NOT a full clause.

As a result / therefore / consequently — sentence connectors

- The roads were icy. As a result, many accidents occurred.
- The report was incomplete; consequently, the decision was delayed.
- Sales dropped significantly. Therefore, the company cut its budget.

Since / as — more formal

- Since/as = because (formal/academic usage)
- Since she had the most experience, she was chosen.
- As the data was unavailable, no conclusion could be drawn.

Meaning & Nuance

Linker	Followed by	Register	Example
because	full clause	neutral	She missed the bus because she woke up late.
because of	noun phrase	neutral	She missed the bus because of the delay.

due to	noun phrase	formal	The delay was due to technical issues.
owing to	noun phrase	formal/written	Owing to the weather, the event was cancelled.
as a result (of)	noun phrase / new sentence	formal	As a result of the merger, 200 jobs were lost.
therefore	new sentence / after semicolon	formal	The deadline passed; therefore, the contract was void.
since / as	full clause	formal/academic	Since no evidence was found, the case was dropped.

LESSON PROCEDURE

1. Warm-up: Cause or effect? (5 min)

Task: Students identify which part of each sentence is the cause and which is the effect.

- 'Prices rose sharply because of high demand.' — which is cause? Effect?

→ Reinforces understanding of the relationship before focusing on the language.

2. Presentation (15 min)

Task: Three groups: clause-based, phrase-based, sentence-level.

- Critical grammar: due to / because of + NOUN PHRASE only — not a full clause.
- Register: due to / owing to are more formal than because of.

3. Transformation practice (15 min)

Task: Rewrite sentences using a different linker while keeping the same meaning.

- 'She failed because she didn't study.' → '...because of a lack of study.' → 'She didn't study. As a result...'

→ Shows how the same idea can be expressed in multiple grammatical ways.

4. Cause-and-effect essay paragraph (20 min)

Task: Write a paragraph using at least 4 different linkers.

- Topics: traffic in cities, the rise of remote work, social media use, fast food.
- Peer review: are the linkers used correctly? Is the vocabulary varied?

TEACHER NOTES

- Due to vs. because of: due to = noun phrase. Because of = noun phrase. Because = clause. This is a classic exam question.
- Therefore and consequently are essential for formal writing — surprisingly underused by intermediate learners.

EXTENSION / HOMEWORK

Choose one or more:

1. Rewrite 6 sentences using a different but equivalent cause-and-effect linker.
2. Write a short cause-and-effect essay paragraph using at least 5 different linkers.
3. Find 5 cause-and-effect linkers in a news article and identify what they connect.