

Cause and Effect Example

Tick. . . Tick. . . Tick

It's 6 a.m. On this winter day, sunrise is not scheduled for another twenty minutes. Inside, the house is dark and still. Suddenly, a sharp, shrill noise pierces the stillness. In the bed, a sleepy figure rouses, sticks a hand out from under the covers, and slams down the "Off" button. The clock—None of history's great inventions—strikes again.

Throughout history, people have used sand, sun, water, pendulums, gears, springs, and even atoms to operate clocks. Without the clock, modern civilization would not be the same. The clock affects our daily lives in many ways. For example, Susan is a middle school student. In some way, every moment of her school day is affected by the clock.

In the morning, the clock affects what Susan eats and how she dresses. Susan's alarm goes off at 6 a.m. Her bus comes at 7:05, leaving Susan sixty-five minutes to dress, eat, and collect her books. This morning, however, Susan is tired and oversleeps by thirty minutes. Instead of eating her favorite pancakes, she has to settle for cold cereal. Her favorite outfit needs ironing, and Susan doesn't have time. She's forced to choose a different outfit that's ready to wear. At the last minute, she adds an accessory to her outfit. She straps on the portable clock known as a watch.

At school, the clock shapes Susan's entire day. Susan's school allots twenty minutes for homeroom, ten minutes between each class, and fifty minutes for the class itself. The teacher and the students must adapt themselves to the clock. In homeroom, the students want to discuss plans for the upcoming class dance, but the principal breaks in with announcements. Minutes go by, and the bell rings for class change. Between classes, Susan would like to discuss her math assignment with a friend, but she doesn't have time. In her last class, there is an interesting discussion about the mythical lost continent of Atlantis. Susan is fascinated and would like to know more, but it's 3:15, and the final bell rings.

At home after school, the clock allows Susan to write her social studies paper quickly and efficiently. She uses the word processing program of her computer. The computer saves Susan time by letting her make changes and corrections to her paper before she prints the final copy.

It's 10:29, and the house is still. Susan is looking at a book about the lost continent of Atlantis. She dreams about joining a team to search for the world's lost civilizations. Then she hears her mother's voice. "Susan, it's 10:30. Lights out!" Susan sighs and closes her book. Even her dreams are controlled by the clock.