



Phrasal Verbs: Cause & Effect

Part 1 – Matching

Match the phrasal verbs (1–8) with their meanings (A–H).

Phrasal verbs

1. bring about
2. set off
3. take its toll (on)
4. bring down
5. backfire
6. give rise to
7. blow up
8. wear down

Meanings

- A. to gradually weaken someone physically or mentally
- B. to reduce something such as numbers, levels, or prices
- C. to cause something unexpected or negative to happen
- D. to trigger a sudden reaction or event
- E. to cause something new to develop
- F. to cause something to happen, often a change
- G. to become very popular or cause strong reactions very quickly
- H. to have the opposite effect to what was intended

Part 2 – Gap-fill

Complete each sentence with the correct phrasal verb. Use the correct form.

1. Poor leadership can _____ serious problems within a team.
2. One careless email _____ a long and unnecessary conflict.
3. Years of stress finally _____ his confidence.
4. The government introduced new measures to _____ inflation.
5. Her attempt to calm the situation _____ and made people angrier.
6. Long working hours are starting to _____ on her health.



Part 3 – Sentence Transformation

Rewrite each sentence using the word given. Do NOT change the meaning.

1. The new policy caused major changes in the company.

(bring about)

→ The new policy _____.

2. Stress caused him to develop sleep problems.

(bring on)

→ Stress _____.

3. The argument started suddenly after his comment.

(set off)

→ His comment _____.

4. Long-term pressure weakened her mentally.

(wear down)

→ Long-term pressure _____.

5. The plan had the opposite effect to what was intended.

(backfired)

→ The plan _____.

Part 4 – Short Writing Task

Write 90–120 words.

Many people believe that modern life creates unnecessary stress.

Explain what causes this stress and what effects it can have on people's health and relationships.

Use at least THREE phrasal verbs related to cause and effect
(e.g. lead to, bring about, set off, take its toll on, bring down).



Answer Key

Part 1 – Matching

1–F

2–D

3–C

4–B

5–H

6–E

7–G

8–A

Part 2 – Gap-fill

1. bring about
2. set off
3. wore down
4. bring down
5. backfired
6. take their toll

Part 3 – Sentence Transformation

1. The new policy brought about major changes in the company.
2. Stress brought on his sleep problems.
3. His comment set off the argument.
4. Long-term pressure wore her down mentally.
5. The plan backfired.