

# WRITING DEVELOPMENT

**RULE #1: If anything I say on this page conflicts with what your teachers have told you, I am wrong, and they are right.**

## The October Revolution

### 11. Explaining I – simple explanations

EVERY answer you write should include an element of explanation – explaining HOW what you are writing is actually answering the question.

When you addressed the conjunctions ('because', 'so', 'so that', 'which caused', 'which led', 'as a result') you found it easy to identify the effect of a cause, or a cause for an effect. But what makes explanation in an exam answer so difficult is that you have to link a *specific* cause to a *specified* effect, and that is cognitively harder, and many students struggle to do so effectively.

**NOTE: the sections that follow say nothing about providing facts or examples in your answer; we will deal with that in the Writing Development exercise #13.**

Let's take the question:

"Explain one reason why the Bolshevik Revolution of November 1917 succeeded."

And let's say you choose 'Slogans and support'. Now you need to **explain how** they helped the Bolshevik Revolution to succeed, thus:

CAUSE	EXPLANATION	CONSEQUENCE
SLOGANS →	EXPLANATION OF → <b>HOW</b> → THE SLOGANS HELPED THEM SUCCEED	THE BOLSHEVIK → REVOLUTION SUCCEEDED

I am going to call this sequence of explaining **how**, from the cause to the effect, an 'explanation pathway'.

1. Consider this answer:

"One reason the Bolsheviks succeeded was their slogans. They were simple and powerful, where the other Parties' arguments were too complicated for people to understand. This meant that the Bolsheviks got the public's support."

Identify the sentence which gives the explanation of **how** slogans helped the Bolsheviks succeed, and underline the conjunction which signals the effect.

2. Use the following sentence stems to write good 'as a result' paragraphs explaining **how** each of these other reasons helped the Bolsheviks succeed:

- Another reason the Bolsheviks succeeded was Pravda. <Explain **HOW**>. As a result \_\_\_\_\_.
- Another reason the Bolsheviks succeeded was German money. \_\_\_\_\_. As a result \_\_\_\_\_.
- Another reason the Bolsheviks succeeded was Lenin. \_\_\_\_\_. As a result \_\_\_\_\_.
- Another reason the Bolsheviks succeeded were the Red Guards. \_\_\_\_\_. As a result \_\_\_\_\_.
- Another reason the Bolsheviks succeeded was their organisation. \_\_\_\_\_. As a result \_\_\_\_\_.
- Another reason the Bolsheviks succeeded was the weakness of the Provisional Government. \_\_\_\_\_. As a result \_\_\_\_\_.