

Causative Verbs

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Grammar Notes cont.

D. Similar Verbs

There are other verbs in English that also mean one person is *causing* another person to do something. They are not true causative verbs, so they take an infinitive verb (*to + base verb*) instead of a base verb. From strongest to weakest, common verbs are: **force**, **cause**, **get**, and **allow**.

Examples

- My mother **forces** me **to practice** the piano every day.
- The test **is causing** them **to panic**. It's really difficult.
- He **got** his friend **to help** him move.
- Our teacher **is going to allow** us **to go** home early today.

E. Notes

Note #1

The subject and object of causative sentences are usually people, but things are also possible.

- **The heavy rain** made **the paint** peel off the building.
- **The phone message** made him feel nervous.
- We let **the dogs** run wild at the beach.

Note #2

The imperative verb form (no subject) is common with causative verbs, since both causatives and imperatives are used for giving orders.

- **Have** Mr. Smith **call** me.
- **Let** the dogs **go** outside after dinner.
- **Make** your staff **read** the report.

Note #3

Can causative sentences be passive? Yes! The passive causative is quite common for services. *Get* is more casual/informal than *have*.

Subject + Have / Get + Object + Past Participle
(person) (any tense) (thing)

- She **got** her hair **cut** (by a hairdresser).
- He **is getting** his car **fixed**.
- My sister **has** her nails **done** every weekend.

Exercise 1

FILL IN THE BLANKS

Write the correct form of the verbs in parentheses.

Ex. The teacher had her students hand in their homework.
(hand in)

1. My coworker let me _____ her pen.
(borrow)
2. He got his friend _____ him fix his car.
(help)
3. Are you making your kids _____ their rooms?
(clean)
4. The police forced the thief _____ into the police car.
(get)
5. The storm caused many trees _____ .
(fall down)
6. Will you allow your roommate _____ your food?
(eat)
7. His piano teacher makes him _____ two hours a day.
(practice)
8. Your sister doesn't let her kids _____ very often.
(go out)
9. The tour guide got the tourists _____ taking pictures.
(stop)
10. The bus driver had the troublemakers _____ the bus.
(get off)

Exercise 2

REWRITE THE SENTENCES

Rewrite the sentences using a causative verb.

Ex. The coach forced the players to do 50 pushups.

The coach made the players do 50 pushups.

1. My friend's parents allowed her to stay over at my house last night.

2. My brother forced me to do his homework for him.

3. Her neighbor got her to move her car.

4. The earthquake forced the rescue volunteers to work day and night.

5. This flood has caused people to evacuate to higher ground.

6. Did you get your boyfriend to call you?

7. The hotel manager won't allow us to bring our dog to the hotel.

8. The judge forced the clerk to retype the entire document.

9. The lack of communication caused the workers to feel unappreciated.

10. Does your boss allow you to take long lunch breaks?

Exercise 3 (Student A)

PAIR WORK

Part 1

Imagine you and your partner are parents who are discussing your children. You are Student A. Your partner is Student B. Write out your set of questions using causative verbs. Do this part by yourself.

Ex. stay up late

Did you let the kids stay up late?

1. watch TV

2. do their homework

3. take out the garbage

4. do the dishes

5. talk on the phone

Part 2

Now take turns asking each other questions. It's your choice whether to answer your partner's questions positively or negatively. Try to use causative verbs in your answers as well.

Example

A: Did you let the kids stay up late?

B: Yes, I did, but I made them do the dishes first.

Exercise 3 (Student B)

PAIR WORK

Part 1

Imagine you and your partner are parents who are discussing your children. You are Student B. Your partner is Student A. Write out your set of questions using causative verbs. Do this part by yourself.

Ex. stay up late

Did you let the kids stay up late?

1. do the laundry

2. vacuum the living room

3. go to a friend's house

4. walk the dog

5. play video games

Part 2

Now take turns asking each other questions. It's your choice whether to answer your partner's questions positively or negatively. Try to use causative verbs in your answers as well.

Example

A: Did you let the kids stay up late?

B: Yes, I did, but I made them do the dishes first.

Exercise 4

GROUP WORK

Get into groups of three or four. Imagine you are all executives on the board of a large company. It's your job to come up with ten guidelines for managers to give to new employees. Start each sentence with the imperative form of **have**, **let**, **make**, or **allow**.

Ex. *Have all new staff fill out a New Employee form for HR.*

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

Exercise 5

CLASS SURVEY

Ask your classmates the following questions.
If a classmate answers "yes," write his or her answer on the right.
Use causative verbs in your answers.

#	Have you ever...	Answer
Ex	made someone laugh?	<i>John made his roommate laugh this morning.</i>
1	let someone borrow your clothes?	
2	made someone do your homework for you?	
3	let a friend use your car?	
4	made someone cry?	
5	had a doctor check your blood pressure?	
6	made someone take the blame for you?	
7	let someone help you out?	
8	had someone lend you money?	
9	let someone walk all over you?	
10	made someone help you move?	

Exercise 6

FIND THE ERROR

Find one error in each sentence below. Rewrite the sentences correctly.

Ex. The teacher didn't let the students handed in their homework late.

The teacher didn't let the students hand in their homework late.

1. Do you make your son does chores?

2. She is getting the volunteers are making the food.

3. The power outage caused him is late.

4. My coach make me run around the track every day.

5. The boss didn't allowed his workers to take a lunch break.

6. My friend had me to call her after class.

7. Our parents letted us stay out late last night.

8. My manager force me to work overtime yesterday.

9. Do you let your cat to go outside?

10. They got their neighbors help them move.

Exercise 8

QUIZ

Circle the correct answer.

1. My mother makes me _____ my shoes when I come inside.
 - a) take off
 - b) took off
 - c) taking off
 - d) to take off
2. Will you let me _____ your car tomorrow?
 - a) borrow
 - b) borrowed
 - c) borrowing
 - d) to borrow
3. They got their landlord _____ the dishwasher.
 - a) fix
 - b) fixed
 - c) fixing
 - d) to fix
4. Our teacher doesn't allow us _____ our phones in class.
 - a) used
 - b) to use
 - c) use
 - d) using
5. Will you let me _____ dinner tonight? I have a new recipe I want to try.
 - a) cooking
 - b) to cook
 - c) be going to cook
 - d) cook
6. The movie was so sad that it _____ me cry.
 - a) is going to make
 - b) made
 - c) make
 - d) makes
7. The little boy refused to allow the nurse _____ his temperature.
 - a) took
 - b) taking
 - c) to take
 - d) take
8. The overwhelming evidence _____ the jury member to change her mind.
 - a) to force
 - b) make
 - c) forced
 - d) made
9. The bad odor caused Vanna _____.
 - a) faint
 - b) fainted
 - c) to faint
 - d) fainting
10. Santiago is really funny. He always makes me _____.
 - a) laughed
 - b) laughing
 - c) to laugh
 - d) laugh

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, students learn about the causative verbs *have*, *let*, and *make*. Students will also learn the different sentence patterns for causative verbs and similar verbs such as *force*, *cause*, *get*, and *allow*.

LEVEL: Int – High Int

TIME: 2–3 hours

TAGS: causative, causative verbs, have, let, make, force, cause, get, allow, grammar

Exercise 1

- | | | |
|------------|-----------------|-------------|
| 1. borrow | 5. to fall down | 9. to stop |
| 2. to help | 6. to eat | 10. get off |
| 3. clean | 7. practice | |
| 4. to get | 8. go out | |

Exercise 2

Answers may vary slightly. Make sure your students are using a verb with a similar strength to the verb in the original sentence.

1. My friend's parents let her stay over at my house last night.
2. My brother made me do his homework for him.
3. Her neighbor had her move her car.
4. The earthquake made the rescue volunteers work day and night.
5. This flood has made people evacuate to higher ground.
6. Did you have your boyfriend call you?
7. The hotel manager won't let us bring our dog to the hotel.
8. The judge made the clerk retype the entire document.
9. The lack of communication made the workers feel unappreciated.
10. Does your boss let you take long lunch breaks?

Exercise 3

Answers will vary.

Exercise 4

Answers will vary.

Exercise 5

Answers will vary.

Exercise 6

1. Do you make your son **do** chores?
2. She is getting the volunteers **to make** the food.
3. The power outage caused him **to be** late.
4. My coach **makes** me run around the track every day.
5. The boss **didn't allow** his workers to take a lunch break.
6. My friend had me **call** her after class.
7. Our parents **let** us stay out late last night.
8. My manager **forced** me to work overtime yesterday.
9. Do you let your cat **go** outside?
10. They got their neighbors **to help** them move.

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Exercise 7

Answers will vary.

Exercise 8

- | | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|-------|
| 1. a | 3. d | 5. d | 7. c | 9. c |
| 2. a | 4. b | 6. b | 8. c | 10. d |

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Neighbor* and *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Neighbour* and *Practise* (as a verb; *Practice* as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.

EDITOR'S NOTE:

For more examples and practice with Causative Verbs and related resources, visit:

- Causative Verbs
<https://ellii.com/blog/causative-verbs>
- Causative Verbs: Have, Let & Make
<https://ellii.com/resources/grammar-usage/2314-causative-verbs-have-let-make>
- The Passive Causative
<https://ellii.com/blog/the-passive-causative>
- The Passive Causative: Have & Get
<https://ellii.com/resources/grammar-usage/2324-the-passive-causative-have-get>