**Worksheet: The Difference between Effect & Affect**

**1) 'Affect' is a Verb**

Verbs are words the describe an **action**, like *kick, go, feel, think*. The meaning of the verb *affect* is to make a difference or cause a change. For example,

* *The weather****affects****my mood.*(= it makes a difference to my mood; it changes it)
* *What you eat****affects****your health.*
* *His comment****didn't affect****me.*
* *I****wasn't affected****by his comment.* (Passive voice)

**2) 'Effect' is a Noun**

Nouns are **things**, like a *pencil, car, idea*, or *person*. Nouns are used as subjects and objects of sentences. The noun *effect* means a change that is the result of an action. For example,

* *The****effect****of the medicine was noticeable.*(= He noticed the change from taking medicine)
* *He argued but it didn't have any****effect****.*

In summary, if need to use a **verb**, use affect. If you need to use a **noun**, use effect.

**Exercise #1 – Effect or Affect?**

1. The students were greatly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ when school closed down. Of course, the closure \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the teachers too.
2. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of climate change are more obvious every year. It will \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ everyone’s lives.
3. Drugs \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ how people think. The \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ of some drugs can last a long time.
4. The company’s new policy had a negative \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ on the staff. The people who were most \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ were the employees who worked in customer service.
5. The child’s effort to wake his father didn’t have any \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ .

## **The Advanced Explanation: Effect Can Be a Verb**

The word effect can also be used as a **verb**, but it is less common. To effect something means to bring about something; to cause something to happen. The verb is a transitive verb (it always has an object that comes after it), so it is always followed by a noun. The noun is the thing that was created or brought about. For example,

* The joke***effected***laughter from his wife. (= the joke caused laughter (a noun) to happen).
* His ideas***effected***politicalchange. (= his ideas brought about change (a noun); they caused it to happen)
* The politicalchange***was effected***by his ideas. (Passive voice)
* The new government plans***to effect***reformsto education and healthcare.

To effect change is a common phrase. When politicians say they want to effect change, they are saying that they want to make change happen, they want to bring it into existence; they want to make a difference.

**Compare**:

to affect something = to make something change, to influence something (this thing already exists)

* The rain affected my mood. (It caused my mood to change).

to effect something = to cause something to happen, to bring something about or into existence.

* The rain effected several puddles on the beach. (It caused the puddles to happen; they didn't exist before)

**Exercise #2 – Effect or Affect as Verbs**

1. The new law \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ positive change in several communities.
2. Of course, the war greatly \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ tourism in the region.
3. Repeated failure can \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ people’s confidence.
4. Obama \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ a transformation among the voters.
5. Student loan debt will likely \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ the lifestyle choices a person makes after graduation.
6. To \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ his escape, the man dug a tunnel from his cell to the outside of the prison.
7. The management of the company were not \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by the salary cuts.
8. The rebels were hoping a revolution would be \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ by their actions.

-- answers available online at http://www.englishcurrent.com/grammar/difference-effect-affect/