

7 **Causative constructions** are special sentence patterns with two verbs. They explain that one person causes another person to do something. The three verbs which are used in this way are *have*, *make*, and *get*. The pattern for *have* and *make* is just slightly different from the one for *get*.

a. Note the difference in the following examples.

| CAUSER | CAUSATIVE VERB | ACTOR | ACTION VERB | OBJECT |
|-----------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|-----------------|
| Professor Allen | makes | the students | repeat | his sentences. |
| He | has | them | prepare | questions. |
| He | gets | them | to write | paragraphs. |
| They | get | him | to correct | their mistakes. |

- b. Note the forms of words in the examples above. The causative verb is the one which is inflected; i.e., it changes form. The action verb slot is filled with a **SIMPLE** verb form when the causative is *make* or *have* but with an **INFINITIVE** when the causative is *get*. When the actor word is a pronoun, it is an object form.
- c. Meanings of *have*, *make*, and *get* do not vary greatly, but they do suggest something about the relationship between the causer and the actor.

Have is often used for someone we engage or employ.

Mrs. Allen has the butcher slice her meat thin.

Make suggests the use of force or pressure, either physical or psychological.

Professor Miller makes his students write in ink.

Get usually suggests persuasion.

Sometimes they get their friends to translate for them.