cause

1 Verb + cause

Underline the verbs which mean 'find':

1. The cause of the fire may never be discovered.
2. The police never actually determined the cause of death.
3. Investigators have been called in to establish the cause of the plane crash.
4. Engineers are trying to isolate the cause of the problem.

2 Common adjective collocations

Complete the sentences below with the following:

common *exact* *likely*
real *main* *underlying*

1. Although they can't be certain, the investigators think that the most ..... cause of the crash was that the driver of the train had a heart attack.
2. The most ..... cause of air accidents is pilot error – not mechanical failure.
3. Although the link is not clear, many politicians believe that unemployment is the ..... cause of a lot of urban crime.
4. We don't know why my aunt died. The post mortem will determine the ..... cause.
5. Speeding is the ..... cause of road accidents.
6. We all know what the inquiry said, but do you think that was the ..... cause of John's death?

3 Cause + for

Use these words in the sentences below:

alarm *celebration* *complaint*
concern *optimism*

1. My grandmother's failing health is giving us cause for ..... . She might have to go into hospital.
2. We have run into some severe turbulence, but there is no cause for ..... . Please fasten your seatbelts and remain seated till the 'fasten seatbelts' sign has been switched off.
3. I have no cause for ..... . The flights, the hotel, the food have all been excellent.
4. Following the breakdown of talks, the present political climate gives little cause for ..... .
5. Arsenal's victory in the competition was cause for ..... and the fans partied till about 3am.

4 Common expressions

Match the two halves to make common expressions with *cause:*

1. What do you think is	a. without good cause.
2. It's all a matter of	b. cause to complain.
3. I've never had any	c. the cause of death.
4. She's never had a day off	e. the cause of the pain?
5. We don't yet know	d. cause and effect.

5 Cause (something people believe in)

A common meaning of *cause* is 'reason', but it can also mean something important that people believe in. For example:

A lot of people leave money in their will to good causes such as the NSPCC (the National Society for the prevention of cruelty to children).

Use a suitable preposition in these sentences:

1. Most people want independence and many young men are willing to fight ..... the cause.
2. These violent demonstrations will do little to further the cause ..... animal rights.
3. Anti-smoking campaigners hope the public will be sympathetic ..... their cause.
4. I don't mind giving money if it is ..... a good cause.

Notes

1. Note the following:
   I've tried everything to get my money back from the company. I'm beginning to think it's a lost cause.
2. In 2-3 you can also say 'root cause' – the basic, underlying cause.
3. In 5-4 *deserving* is also possible.
   Both in a good cause and for a good cause are equally correct.
4. We use the French phrase – a cause célèbre – to talk about a very controversial issue.
5. If you die 'of natural causes', you die of old age – not illness or accident.
6. Notice in exercise 4 you say 'without good cause' and not 'without a good cause'.
7. You can 'champion' a cause. For example:
   Germaine Greer has championed the cause of feminism.

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