

Cause and effect

Introduction to Cause and effect problems

The main aim of cause and effect questions is to derive the relationship between two given statements. The relationship that needs to be tested is whether the statement is causally related to each other. This means we need to find out whether one of the statements is a direct cause of the other or conversely whether one of the statements is a direct effect of the other.

The cause is an event that leads to another event, which in turn is called the effect of the triggering event.

If there is a sequence of events, the event which is an **effect** shall always be preceded by an event which was its triggering cause event.

Example:

1. The Australian Cricket Team worked hard for four years to rebuild itself after all the key senior players retired.
2. The Australian team won the Cricket World cup after their consistent efforts.
3. The Australian team reached number 1 ranking after the huge success.

If we consider statements 1 and 2, we can clearly see that statement 2 is the result of statement 1. Hence, statement 1 is the cause for the effect in statement 2.

Similarly, if statements 2 and 3 are analyzed in a pair, you will see that statement 2 was the cause for the effect in statement 3.

Hence, any particular statement may play the role of both cause and effect, depending on the other statements in whose respect this particular statement is being analyzed.

Sufficient & necessary conditions

In a cause and effect question, the cause is the sufficient condition. It is assumed that the sufficient condition of the occurrence of the events must include the different necessary conditions as well.

A **necessary** condition is one that must be satisfied for the occurrence of an event.

Example: You must adhere to the deadline to get your work appraised.

This means if you get your work appraised you have to adhere to the deadline. Or, if you do not adhere to the deadline, you do not get your appraised.

A condition is called a sufficient condition if in a certain event, you are satisfied with the results.

Example: Being human is sufficient for being a mammal.

The act of being a human is not possible unless one is also a mammal. But it is not necessary that being human is a necessary condition for being a mammal.

Types of causes

1. **Immediate cause:** It immediately precedes the effect. This cause shares the closest proximity with the effect with relation to time.
 2. **Principal cause:** The most important reason behind the effect. The immediate cause can be the principal cause and vice versa.
 3. **Independent cause:** there is no relationship between the cause and the given effect.
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Format of cause and effect questions

- (a) If statement I is the cause and statement II is its effect;
- (b) If statement II is the cause and statement I is its effect;
- (c) If both the statements I and II are independent causes;
- (d) If both the statements I and II are effects of independent causes; and
- (e) If both the statements I and II are effects of some common cause

Example 1 :

I – The committee appointed by the Government on the fee structure of the professional courses has drastically reduced the fees of various courses in comparison to those charged in the last year.

II – The parents of aspiring students seeking admission to professional courses had launched a severe agitation protesting against the high fees charged by the professional institutes and the admission process was delayed considerably.

- a. Statement I is the cause and statement II is its effect.
- b. Statement II is the cause and statement I is its effect.
- c. Both statements I and II are independent causes.
- d. Both statements I and II are effects of independent causes.
- e. Both statements I and II are effects of some common cause.

Answer: b) Statement II is the cause and statement I is its effect.

Explanation: Since the parents of aspiring students seeking admission to professional courses had launched a severe agitation protesting against the high fees charged by the professional institutes.

So, the committee was appointed by the Government on the fee structure of professional courses has drastically reduced the fees of the previous courses. Hence the correct answer is B.

Example 2:

I – Police authority has recently increased vigil during the evening hours in the locality.

II – There has been a considerable reduction in the incidents of petty crimes in the locality.

- a. Statement I is the cause and statement II is its effect.
- b. Statement II is the cause and statement I is its effect.
- c. Both statements I and II are independent causes.
- d. Both statements I and II are effects of independent causes.
- e. Both statements I and II are effects of some common cause.

Answer: a) Statement I is the cause and statement II is its effect.

Explanation: Since the police authority has recently increased vigil during the evening hours in the locality, therefore, the petty crimes have reduced considerably.
