English Vocabulary – “why” & “because”

The word “why” in English can be used as a question or can refer to a reason. The word “because” can be used to respond to the question “why”, or to describe a reason or to describe an effect from a cause (“because of”). Here are some examples:

1) “why” as a question (PT: por que/por quê)

Why are you here?	***Por que*** *você está aqui?*
Why have you changed your clothes?	***Por que*** *você trocou de roupa?*
Why not?	***Por que*** *não?*

The structure “*Você trocou de roupa* ***por quê***?” is not commonly used in English, but could be translated as:

What have you changed your clothes **for**?

In this case, the question “**what for**” is similar to the question “**why**”.

2) “why” as a reason (PT: o porquê)

I don’t know **why** he is late.	*Eu não sei* ***o porquê*** *ele está atrasado.*
Please tell me **why** I can’t go in.	*Por favor, diga-me* ***o porquê*** *não posso entrar.*

3) “because” as a response to “why” (PT: porque)

A: **Why** are you here?	B: **Because** I have an English class.
A: **Why** have you changed your clothes?	B: **Because** I’m going out.

4) “because” as a reason

I’m here **because** I have an English class.
I’ve changed my clothes **because** I’m going out.

5) “because of” as an effect from a cause (PT: por causa de)

I’m nervous **because of** the English test today.
I’m changing my clothes **because of** the party tonight.
I’m late **because of** the traffic.

Exercise. Translate to English:

1. Eu sei o porquê ele não está aqui. _____
2. Por que você chegou cedo? _____
3. Ele saiu por quê? _____
4. Por favor me diga o porquê. _____

5a. Por que você fez isso? _____

b. Você fez isso por quê? _____

6. Eu fiz porque eu quis! _____
7. Por causa de você, eu não posso ir. _____