

Activity Type

Grammar, Reading, and Writing Activity: identifying, error correction, writing short stories (group and pair work)

Focus

Past simple vs. past perfect

Aim

To practice using past simple and past perfect accurately when editing short narratives, so the sequence of past events is clear.

Preparation

Make one copy of the two worksheets for each pair of students.

Also, make one copy of the story sheets for each pair of students and cut as indicated.

Level

Intermediate (B1)

Time

40 minutes

Introduction

In this past simple vs. past perfect activity, students practice sequencing past events clearly by choosing between the past simple and the past perfect.

Procedure

Divide the students into two groups (A and B).

Give each student the corresponding worksheet.

Explain that the students are going to correct six verb forms in each short story on their worksheets by changing past simple verbs to the past perfect, and past perfect verbs to the past simple.

Students then read each story, underline six verbs that are in the wrong tense, and write the correct form of each verb in the boxes 1-6 below each story.

When the students have finished, they pair up with someone from the other group.

Give each student a copy of their partner's story sheet, so Student A gets Student B's stories and Student B receives Student A's stories.

Tell the students that the sheets contain the correct versions of the stories on their partner's worksheet.

Students then take turns reading the correct versions of the stories from their story sheets to their partner, who listens and puts a tick next to each verb form they got correct.

After that, students write a short story about a memorable first-time experience (e.g. first day of school, first time driving, first time cooking a big meal), deliberately including one past simple or past perfect verb form in the wrong tense that makes the order of events unclear.

Finally, students take turns reading their stories to the class, who have to identify the verb in the wrong tense and correct it.

Student A

A. Read each story and underline six verbs that are in the wrong tense. Then write the correct form of each verb in the boxes 1-6 below each story.

Lost Luggage

Right after I had landed in London, I went to collect my suitcase, but it wasn't there. By the time I decided to report it missing, I already waited for 30 minutes. I thought that someone took it by mistake, but the airline staff said they sent it to Glasgow due to a system error. I got very nervous because I didn't pack any clothes in my hand luggage, and I had an important meeting the next morning. The man at the lost baggage desk filled out a form and promised to help. Fortunately, they brought my suitcase late in the evening, so I managed to prepare for the meeting that my boss scheduled.



1.		2.		3.	
4.		5.		6.	

Birthday Party

Last Wednesday, I went to my friend's birthday party. When I arrived, I was so excited because I didn't see him for a long time. Earlier in the week, I already bought him a present, so before I had left home, I just wrapped it and wrote a short card. By the time I had entered the living room, everyone had already arrived. So, we sat down to have some cake. After my friend opened my present, he smiled and had thanked me. He said he wanted that book for a long time. We spent the rest of the evening chatting and playing board games.



1.		2.		3.	
4.		5.		6.	

B. Listen to your partner read the correct versions of the stories. Put a tick in boxes 1-6 for each verb form you got correct.

C. Write a short story about a memorable first-time experience, e.g. your first day at school. Include one verb in the wrong tense (past simple or past perfect).

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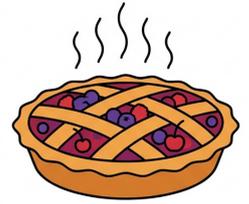
D. Now, read your story to the class, who have to identify the verb in the wrong tense and correct it.

Student B

A. Read each story and underline six verbs that are in the wrong tense. Then write the correct form of each verb in the boxes 1-6 below each story.

A Fruit Pie

On Sunday, I decided to bake an apple pie for my mum. I felt confident because I already tried some simple recipes earlier. When I had gone to the kitchen, I checked that I had everything I needed and started cooking. When I had put the pie in the oven, it looked perfect. However, when I took it out, I realised that I forgot to add sugar. Overall, the pie looked fine, but it tasted plain. When my mum tried a piece, she had smiled. She said we could fix it by adding some honey on top. I felt disappointed when I realised that I made a silly mistake. But in the end, we still enjoyed the pie together.



1.		2.		3.	
4.		5.		6.	

My Job Interview

I was really nervous, because I dreamed of a position like this for a long time. The night before, I prepared some answers to common questions, but I still felt anxious. At first, I felt scared when I had seen how big the office building was. But when I remembered how my friends encouraged me to try, I decided not to give up. When the interview finished, the manager said I made a good impression. I felt proud of myself, as I had never expected the interview to go so well. By the time I got home, I already received an email with the job offer.



1.		2.		3.	
4.		5.		6.	

B. Listen to your partner read the correct versions of the stories. Put a tick in boxes 1-6 for each verb form you got correct.

C. Write a short story about a memorable first-time experience, e.g. your first day at school. Include one verb in the wrong tense (past simple or past perfect).

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D. Now, read your story to the class, who have to identify the verb in the wrong tense and correct it.

Student A's story sheet**A Fruit Pie**

On Sunday, I decided to bake an apple pie for my mum. I felt confident because I (1) had already tried some simple recipes earlier. When I (2) went to the kitchen, I checked that I had everything I needed and started cooking. When I (3) put the pie in the oven, it looked perfect. However, when I took it out, I realised that I (4) had forgotten to add sugar. Overall, the pie looked fine, but it tasted plain. When my mum tried a piece, she (5) smiled. She said we could fix it by adding some honey on top. I felt disappointed when I realised that I (6) had made a silly mistake. But in the end, we still enjoyed the pie together.

My Job Interview

I was really nervous, because I (1) had dreamed of a position like this for a long time. The night before, I (2) had prepared some answers to common questions, but I still felt anxious. At first, I felt scared when I (3) saw how big the office building was. But when I remembered how my friends (4) had encouraged me to try, I decided not to give up. When the interview finished, the manager said I (5) had made a good impression. I felt proud of myself, as I had never expected the interview to go so well. By the time I got home, I (6) had already received an email with the job offer.

Student B's story sheet**Lost Luggage**

Right after I (1) landed in London, I went to collect my suitcase, but it wasn't there. By the time I decided to report it missing, I (2) had already waited for 30 minutes. I thought that someone (3) had taken it by mistake, but the airline staff said they (4) had sent it to Glasgow due to a system error. I got very nervous because I (5) hadn't packed any clothes in my hand luggage, and I had an important meeting the next morning. The man at the lost baggage desk filled out a form and promised to help. Fortunately, they brought my suitcase late in the evening, so I managed to prepare for the meeting that my boss (6) had scheduled.

Birthday Party

Last Wednesday, I went to my friend's birthday party. When I arrived, I was so excited because I (1) hadn't seen him for a long time. Earlier in the week, I (2) had already bought him a present, so before I (3) left home, I just wrapped it and wrote a short card. By the time I (4) entered the living room, everyone had already arrived. So, we sat down to have some cake. After my friend opened my present, he smiled and (5) thanked me. He said he (6) had wanted that book for a long time. We spent the rest of the evening chatting and playing board games.