



Tell Your Story in English: Reading and Writing Skills for Language Learners

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PREFACE

In this packet you will find stories, vocabulary lessons, grammar lessons, and writing assignments. We suggest that you work on one unit at a time. First, read the example stories. If possible, talk about the stories with someone else who is doing this packet. What did you like in the story? What was hard to understand? Then read the language lessons and do the practice exercises (NOTE: An Answer Key for all practice exercises is at the end of the packet). If you are confused, find someone who knows English and ask them about it. Finally, work on writing your own story in English. The stories you read can be examples for your writing. You will learn more if you write a story yourself!

This material was developed for a Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) created by the University of Oregon in 2016. It is designed for intermediate-level English language learners to improve their reading and writing skills. Students can use the materials independently, or teachers can use this packet in their classes.

We have included the stories we wrote for the MOOC, as well as some excellent stories written by MOOC participants. The grammar lessons focus on the use of past tense forms and correct sentence structure. The vocabulary lessons focus on skills and important words for storytelling. The writing lessons help language learners through the steps of creating a story in English. We hope you will enjoy telling your story in English.

ORIENTATION UNIT

ORIENTATION UNIT READINGS

A glossary at the end of each story provides meanings and parts of speech for words that are numbered and in bold.

Story 1: **Cock a Doodle Don't** by Char Heitman

In this story, no roosters are allowed in the city, but one of the chickens might be a rooster! Read it to find out what the family will do.

There was a family with a mom, a dad, and a son named Leo. This family had chickens in their backyard. They lived in the city, and most of their neighbors didn't have chickens, but Leo's family liked their chickens for a few reasons. For one, they enjoyed watching the chickens play. They also enjoyed eating the eggs the chickens gave them. One day, they decided to get more chicks because some of their chickens were too old to lay eggs.

They went to the farm store, and the son picked out two chicks. He wanted to name them "Calvin" and "Hobbes" because in his favorite book, the characters' names were Calvin and Hobbes. The mom said, "I like those names, too, Leo, but Calvin is a boy's name, and these chicks are hens, which are girls." Leo replied, "Okay, instead of Calvin, we can call her Callie, which is a girl's name." The mom and dad agreed.

Little by little, the chicks grew. Leo loved watching and playing with them every day. He noticed lots of little things about all the new chickens, such as who ran out of the chicken **coop**¹ first, who liked to play together, how their feathers and colors were changing, and so on. As the chicks grew bigger, Leo noticed that Callie was growing to be much bigger than Hobbes. He also noticed that Callie was developing a big comb on her head. Leo told his family what he noticed. They worried that Callie might be a rooster instead of a hen. Hens were allowed in the city because they are not too loud, but roosters were **forbidden**² because they **crow**³ loudly and can disturb many people. If someone **complained**⁴ about the family having a rooster, they might get into trouble and have to **pay a fine**.⁵

Sure enough, one day while the family was eating breakfast, they heard a loud "Cock a doodle do," the sound that roosters make in the morning. Callie was a rooster! Unfortunately, they could not keep him. Some friends and neighbors suggested they kill and eat Callie, but this made Leo sad because Callie was his pet, and he did not want to see him killed.

So, the family put a notice on the Internet to ask if any farmers wanted Callie on their farm. They got a few calls, but everyone wanted a hen, not a rooster. Leo was worried. Every day, Callie crowed very loudly. Leo was afraid the neighbors would complain about the rooster and his family would have to pay a fine. A few weeks later, a farm called, and they wanted a rooster. Leo and his family took Callie out to the farm. The family looked around at the many animals on the farm – cows, pigs, chickens, goats, cats, dogs, and other animals. Callie immediately began to make friends and run around with the other chickens. Leo was sad to say goodbye to Callie, but he was pleased that his rooster could live happily on a big farm.

Glossary

1. **coop** (noun) – a very small building or structure used to keep chickens
2. **forbidden** (adjective) – not allowed; not permitted
3. **crow** (verb) – to make the loud, high sound that a rooster makes
4. **complain** (verb) – to say negative or bad things about something
5. **pay a fine** (verb) – to pay money as punishment for breaking a rule

Story 2: Swamp Sneakers by Marty Wilder

In this story, a boy runs through a swamp to protect his brothers and sisters. He can't protect his shoes, though. What will his mother say?

I had really **cheap**¹ sneakers. Whenever I got new shoes, soon the shoelaces would break or the canvas would tear. Of course, I used my shoes badly. I climbed trees and jumped in the ocean and got dirty in the **swamp**.²

“Mom, why do you always get these cheap shoes?” I asked as I tied the laces carefully.

“Because you kids ruin a new pair of shoes every month,” she snapped. I wondered if better shoes would last longer. At the same time, I could understand. With five kids, my mom didn't have any extra money.

“Now, take John and your sisters, and don't get those shoes near the swamp,” she said.

The swamp was the best place to play. The mossy trees and **vines**³ made it quiet and dark. The **roots**⁴ of tall trees formed small islands in the muddy water. Everything was peaceful. But there was danger, too. Kids said there was an **alligator**⁵ there.

Today, I had my younger **siblings**⁶ with me. My mom liked all the kids to stay outside while she was cleaning. She had forbidden the swamp, but **the next best thing**⁷ was the water spill. It was just a broken concrete wall at the end of a small lake. But to us, it was wonderful. An old pipe formed a bridge over broken concrete, and the lake spilled out into the swamp.

When we got to the water spill, I told everyone to take off their shoes and socks. We tucked the socks into the shoes and put them all carefully next to a log. Barefoot, we played on the vines and climbed up to the pipe. I walked carefully across the top of the spillway and held John's hand while he went across.

We'd been playing over there for a while when Aimee noticed some boys back on the other side of the water spill. These boys were older, and we were scared. We huddled together and watched them, hoping they would get bored and go away. They were bending over the log and laughing. Then we saw a flash of white, and we knew what they were up to.

“They've got our shoes!” Monica cried. We watched as they went down toward the swamp.

“Let's go!” I commanded, “Quick!” Aimee and Monica used the bridge as I carried John over the wet rocks back to the other side. Our shoes were gone. We stood there barefoot, facing the boys who were coming back up from the swamp. There were three of them, and one of them held a long stick. I stood in front of my siblings.

“You took our shoes,” I said firmly. “Give them back.”

The boy with the stick planted it firmly on the ground between us and smiled in a mean way. “You can get them if you want them,” he said. The other two laughed. The stick was coated in swamp goop as far as I was tall. We realized that they had pushed the shoes down into the swamp. We would never get them back.

I turned around to Aimee. “Take them home,” I told her.

“But what about our shoes?” she pleaded.

“Just go home now,” I said, “and run.” She took Monica and John by the hand and ran down the trail toward our house.

I wasn’t sure the older boys would let them get away, so I ran straight for the swamp, hoping they would chase me instead. I jumped onto the root of the first tree. Without stopping, I jumped from that tree to the next. Like a monkey, I jumped from tree to tree farther and farther out into the swamp. I could hear the three big boys chasing after me, but I couldn’t turn around and look. The trees were fewer and farther now. I saw that the next closest tree ahead of me was going to be a big jump. Heart pounding, I pushed off as hard as I could. I made it! I hugged the tree and went around to the other side. There was another tree close to it. I hopped across and then stopped. I turned to look.

The stick boy had stopped at the wide gap. The other two were one tree behind him. They were yelling at him to jump.

“I don’t want to go into the swamp,” he replied.

“Come on, if that little kid can do it, you can do it,” they said. “Just jump!”

He looked at me and frowned. Then he jumped. He almost landed on the tree, but he lost his balance and fell into the muddy water.

“Help!” he yelled, splashing back to the tree he had jumped from. The other two just laughed. “There’s an alligator!” he yelled at them. “Get me out of here!” But they turned and went back to the shore. Finally, he swam to the tree and pulled himself out.

“You jerks!” he shouted at them. “I’ll get you for this.” He disappeared after them.

I smiled and leaned against the trunk of the tree. I still had to explain to my mom about the shoes. But for the moment, I felt proud. I’d never been out this far into the swamp. As far as I knew, no other kid had either.

Glossary

1. **cheap** (adjective) – low quality, not worth a lot of money
2. **swamp** (noun) – land that is partly covered with water
3. **vines** (noun) – plants with long thin stems that climb on other plants
4. **roots** (noun) – the part of a plant that grows underground
5. **alligator** (noun) – a large reptile with a long body, a big mouth, and sharp teeth
6. **siblings** (noun) – brothers and sisters
7. **the next best thing** (noun) – something that is almost as good, second in order of preference

ORIENTATION UNIT VOCABULARY / GRAMMAR LESSONS

Vocabulary Lesson: Important Words

In this **orientation** week, we'd like to teach you some important words. These words can help you understand the **instructions** and **activities** in this class.

Glossary

- **orientation** (noun) – teaching someone all about something new
- **instructions** (noun) – telling someone how to do something, or saying what they should do or what to do
- **activities** (noun) – things that someone does

In this class, some activities are **required**, and some are **optional**. You should do all the required activities. The optional activities will also help you learn English.

Glossary

- **required** (adjective) – necessary; someone must do it
- **optional** (adjective) – not necessary; someone can choose to do it

The class has four units. In these four units, you will write a story. In the first unit, you will choose the **title** and **topic** for your story. In the second unit, you will write an **outline** for your story. In the third unit, you will write a **draft** of your story. In the fourth unit, you will **revise** your draft.

Glossary

- **title** (noun) – the name of a story
- **topic** (noun) – the main idea; the subject someone writes about
- **outline** (noun) – a written list of only the most important ideas
- **draft** (noun) – a piece of writing that is not finished
- **revise** (verb) – to change something because of new ideas

While you work on your story, you will **participate** in many activities. You will **practice** vocabulary and grammar, write your ideas in online **discussions**, give **feedback** to your classmates on their stories, and maybe do some **independent** study.

Glossary

- **participate** (verb) – to take part; to be involved; to join in
- **practice** (verb) – to do something again and again so it can be done better
- **discussion** (noun) – talking about something
- **feedback** (noun) – helpful information about what can be done better
- **independent** (adjective) – free and separate from other people

Practice Exercise 1

Choose the word that best completes each sentence.

required
orientation

instructions
optional

activities

1. My favorite _____ are reading, watching movies, and playing piano.
2. This unit is called the _____ unit because you are learning all about the new course and getting ready to participate.
3. Before you do your work, read the _____ so that you know how to do it correctly.
4. This course is _____. You can join if you want, but you do not have to.
5. If you want a good grade in the class, you must do all of the _____ activities.

Practice Exercise 2

Choose the word that best completes each sentence.

topic
independent

revise
glossary

participate
discussion

1. Before you finish your story, you might write and _____ it several times.
2. When you read, you can use the _____ to find the meaning of new words.
3. You can write a story about any _____ you want to.
4. We talked about her story. It was an interesting _____.
5. If you _____ in this course, you will learn English.
6. You can learn new words through _____ study, but you should also work with other people sometimes.

Practice Exercise 3

Match the words with their definitions.

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. _____ activities | a. necessary; you must do it |
| 2. _____ independent | b. things that you do |
| 3. _____ instructions | c. teaching someone all about something new |
| 4. _____ required | d. free and separate from other people |
| 5. _____ orientation | e. not necessary; you can choose whether to do it or not |
| 6. _____ optional | f. telling or showing someone how to do something |

Practice Exercise 4

Match the words with their definitions.

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. _____ discussion | a. to change something to make it better |
| 2. _____ outline | b. main idea; subject you want to write or talk about |
| 3. _____ participate | c. talking about something |
| 4. _____ revise | d. to take part or be involved in something; to join in, |
| 5. _____ topic | e. a list of the main and most important ideas |

Grammar Lesson A: Past Tense Review

Past Tense Verbs

When you tell a story, you usually tell about it happening in the past, some time before now. Past tense verb forms help you tell your story correctly.

First, what is a verb?

Verbs are words that describe an action (play, work, speak) or a state (be, live, know).

In other words, verbs tell what somebody or something does.

- I **play**.
- She **works**.
- We **speak**.
- They **are** nice.
- He **lives** in a small house.
- You **know** me.

English has two kinds of verbs.

- regular verbs (play, work, live)
- irregular verbs (speak, be, know)

The only difference between these kinds of verbs is in their past tense forms. First, let's talk about regular verbs. To form the past tense, just add "-ed" to the end (sometimes a spelling change is needed).

Today	Yesterday
I play.	I played.
She works hard.	She worked hard.
He lives in a small house.	He lived in a small house.

Practice Exercise 5

Write the following verbs in past simple tense. These are regular verbs.

1. walk _____
2. play _____
3. work _____
4. cook _____
5. help _____

We mentioned that sometimes you have to change the spelling when you add “-ed” to regular verbs. The most common spelling changes happen when the base form of the verb ends with “e” or “y,” or when the base form ends with a stressed vowel and then a consonant.

- When the verb already ends with “e,” just add “d.”
 - change → changed
 - hope → hoped
- When the verb ends with “y” after a consonant, change the “y” to an “i” before adding “-ed.”
 - hurry → hurried
 - try → tried

This doesn’t happen if there is another vowel before the “y.”

- annoy → annoyed

When the verb ends with a stressed vowel and then a consonant, double the last consonant, and then add “-ed.”

- stop → stopped
- prefer → preferred

Note that you don’t double the consonant if the vowel is unstressed.

- open → opened

In British English, however, you still double the consonant if it’s an “l.”

- travel → travelled (British) or traveled (American)

Practice Exercise 6

Write the following verbs in past simple tense. These are regular verbs, but you may need to add or change a letter.

1. live _____
2. plan _____
3. happen _____
4. share _____
5. study _____

Now, let's talk about irregular verbs. To form the past tense, change the spelling (there is no single rule; you have to memorize all the forms).

Today	Yesterday
We speak.	We spoke.
They are nice.	They were nice.
You know me.	You knew me.

These verbs are a little more complicated since many of them have two different past tense forms. Let's look at the irregular verb "choose."

- I need to **choose** a new class today.
- I **chose** three classes in September.
- I had originally **chosen** different classes, but I changed my mind.

Base Form	Past Simple	Past Participle
choose	chose	chosen

Here are some more examples with the verb "give."

- I want to **give** you a present.
- She **gave** me these earrings last year.
- I have never **given** someone such a nice gift.

Base Form	Past Simple	Past Participle
give	gave	given

Here are some more examples with the verb "speak."

- I like to **speak** with my mother.
- I **spoke** to my teacher after class yesterday.
- I should have **spoken** to her sooner.

Base Form	Past Simple	Past Participle
speak	spoke	spoken

For some irregular verbs like "catch," the past simple form and the past participle are the same.

- I can **catch** a baseball.
- I **caught** the ball when she threw it.
- I have **caught** thousands of balls while practicing baseball.

Base Form	Past Simple	Past Participle
catch	caught	caught

As we said before, you just have to memorize the irregular past tense forms. Here is a list with 50 of the most common irregular verbs. How many do you already know?

1. become, became, become	26. know, knew, known
2. begin, began, begun	27. leave, left, left
3. blow, blew, blown	28. lose, lost, lost
4. break, broke, broken	29. make, made, made
5. bring, brought, brought	30. mean, meant, meant
6. buy, bought, bought	31. meet, met, met
7. choose, chose, chosen	32. pay, paid, paid
8. come, came, come	33. put, put, put
9. do, did, done	34. quit, quit, quit
10. draw, drew, drawn	35. read, read, read
11. drink, drank, drunk	36. ride, rode, ridden
12. drive, drove, driven	37. rise, rose, risen
13. eat, ate, eaten	38. run, ran, run
14. fall, fell, fallen	39. say, said, said
15. feel, felt, felt	40. see, saw, seen
16. fight, fought, fought	41. sell, sold, sold
17. find, found, found	42. send, sent, sent
18. fly, flew, flown	43. speak, spoke, spoken
19. forget, forgot, forgotten	44. swim, swam, swum
20. get, got, gotten	45. take, took, taken
21. give, gave, given	46. teach, taught, taught
22. go, went, gone	47. tell, told, told
23. have, had, had	48. think, thought, thought
24. hear, heard, heard	49. understand, understood, understood
25. keep, kept, kept	50. write, wrote, written

You can easily find longer lists online. There are a little more than 200 irregular verbs that are regularly used, and another 200 that are rare. Regularly study the common irregular verbs. Someday you will know them all.

Practice Exercise 7

Write the following in past simple tense. These are irregular verbs. If you do not remember the past tense form, look at the verb list.

1. give _____
2. take _____
3. meet _____
4. go _____
5. see _____
6. speak _____
7. find _____
8. bring _____

9. write _____
10. eat _____

Grammar Lesson B: Punctuation Review

In this course, we will talk a lot about sentence structure, including subjects, verbs, sentence fragments, compound sentences, and complex sentences.

Before you begin, you should know some basic information about sentence structure.

A sentence is a group of words expressing an idea.

A sentence must begin with a capital letter.

Right: The cat came back.

Wrong: the cat came back.

If it doesn't begin with a capital letter, it's not a correct sentence.

A sentence must end with correct punctuation.

Only three punctuation marks are correct to end sentences. They are

. = period

? = question mark

! = exclamation point

Here are some examples:

Right: I like to eat carrots.

Right: Do you like to eat carrots?

Right: I love carrots so much!

If there is no punctuation mark at the end of the sentence, or if there is a punctuation mark besides these three, the sentence is not correct.

Wrong: we don't like carrots at all

Wrong: She never eats carrots /

Practice Exercise 8

Write "C" on the line if the sentences have correct capitalization. Write "I" on the line if the sentences have incorrect capitalization.

1. _____ We are happy to see you.
2. _____ She will come tomorrow.
3. _____ My mother is very tall.
4. _____ Mary sings very well.
5. _____ Her friend needs a new car.

Practice Exercise 9

Write “C” on the line if the sentences have correct punctuation. Write “I” on the line if the sentences have incorrect punctuation.

1. _____ She is good at photography
2. _____ Will you come tomorrow?
3. _____ I have two white cats at my house
4. _____ They need to do their homework after dinner,
5. _____ I really like your new haircut!
6. _____ I can't find my keys this morning;

UNIT 1

UNIT 1 READINGS

A glossary at the end of each story provides meanings and parts of speech for words that are numbered and in bold.

Story 1: Lost and Found by Renee Dawn

In this story, a woman loses her earring and finds it again. You will be surprised when you find out where it was!

I touched my ear and touched it again to make sure. Yes, it was missing – one of the pair of **earrings**¹ my son, Jack, had just given me for Christmas a few hours before. I was so **disappointed**.² The earrings were very lovely, so I hated to lose one so soon. Also, I appreciated Jack's choice of gift, which showed he knew exactly what I like. The earrings were special to me for so many reasons. And of course, the last thing I wanted to do was tell my son that I had lost the gift he had given me just a few hours before.

Because it was Christmas, my family had driven 300 miles (500 kilometers) to the home of my husband's family. That is where I discovered that the earring was missing. The first thing I did when I noticed it missing was to search and search inside the car, but no luck – the earring was not there. Then I called my parents to ask if they had found an earring when I was dropping off our family dog to stay with them while we were away. My parents looked all over their house for the earring, but they could not find it. My dad even went to our house to look for the earring there. No luck – no earring.

Two days later, my family and I returned to our home in Chicago. I looked in our house again, up and down, everywhere I could, but no earring. I checked the car one more time, but by that time, I had given up on finding the earring again. Finally, I decided to find out where Jack had bought the earrings so I could secretly replace them, and he would not find out I had lost one. As I walked out to the car to look inside it one more time, suddenly a silver flash caught my eye. I saw something **gleaming**³ on the **bumper**⁴ of the car. I got closer and bent down to see what it was. **Miraculously**,⁵ it was the missing earring! It had ridden over 600 miles (1000 kilometers) on the outside bumper of the car without falling off! I could not believe my eyes or my luck!

Finally, I told my family what happened. No one could believe that the earring had ridden 600 miles and had not fallen off the outside bumper of the car! What an incredible story! Jack and I were so happy – I had the earrings that he had given me back. I did not have to buy a new pair or disappoint Jack by telling him about the loss. After that, I bought new earring backs for the earrings that were tighter than the first ones so I would not lose them again. From that time on, I treasured the earrings and took very special care of them. That was five years ago, but I still have the earrings today. They are one of my most **precious**⁶ possessions.

Glossary

1. **earring** (noun) – a piece of jewelry for the ear
2. **disappoint** (verb) – to feel sad or unhappy about something
3. **gleaming** (adjective) – shining

4. **bumper** (noun) – a bar fixed on the front or back of a car to protect it if it hits anything
5. **miraculously** (adverb) – like a miracle; surprisingly, incredibly
6. **precious** (adjective) – very special and dear; extremely valued and appreciated

Story 2: Where's the Baby? by Beth Sheppard

In this story, a two-year-old leaves home, and his family doesn't know where to find him. Luckily, it all turns out alright in the end.

"Go to sleep, go to sleep, go to sleep," Dad was thinking. But two-year-old Tommy wanted another book, another stuffed animal, another song.

"Rest quietly now, Tommy," said Dad, "and when you wake up we'll go shopping at the market."

"The market?" Tommy said, with a sparkle in his eye. Tommy sometimes gets a piece of chocolate at the market.

"Not now, **Sweet Pea**.¹ Later we'll go."

"Maybe I'm keeping him up," Dad thought. "If he doesn't fall asleep in a minute, I'm going to go downstairs and let him fall asleep alone."

A few minutes later, Dad gave Tommy two kisses and went downstairs. At the bottom of the stairs is the kitchen, with a door to the garage. On the other side of the kitchen is the living room, where Dad set up his computer and started his work.

Now, Dad is **hard of hearing**,² but still Tommy must have been quite **silent**³ as he came down the stairs in his socks. He remembered that Daddy was going shopping, so he thought the market would be the best place to find him. The shortest way to the neighborhood grocery store is through the garage, across the yard, up an alley, and over the parking lot. That must be how Tommy went, over dirt and gravel in his little striped socks.

A few minutes later, Dad went upstairs to see if Tommy was asleep yet. He was surprised to see Tommy's empty bed, but he was not **worried**.⁴ He thought the baby was probably somewhere else in the house. Was he in the bedroom? No . . . The bathroom? Not there either. He wasn't in the den or the guest room. Dad went to Big Brother's room, and Tommy wasn't there either. Big Brother was playing a computer game, but he stopped when Dad asked him to help find Tommy. They looked in every room of the house.

Where was the baby?

Meanwhile, Tommy was standing in his dirty socks on the clean floor of the market, a tiny boy with round baby cheeks, all by himself. As people walked by him, they looked around for his mother or father.

A woman stopped and asked, "Where are your parents, buddy?"

"My daddy is shopping at the market," Tommy replied, because he thought it was true.

The woman looked around, but there was no daddy in sight. The store manager made an **announcement**⁵ asking for Tommy's daddy, but no one answered.

One of the **cashiers**,⁶ a tall man with long, gray hair named Dan, had recently moved into the neighborhood. Tommy's family had invited Dan to dinner, so he knew the baby and knew where he belonged.

"Hi, Tommy," Dan said. "How about I take you home?"

"Okay," said Tommy. Dan carried him back across the parking lot and down the alley.

Daddy and Big Brother had been getting more worried as they searched the house, the yard, and the neighborhood. They were in the backyard when Dan and Tommy approached.

"Daddy!"

"Tommy!"

"Dan, many thanks!"

What a **relief**⁷ for everyone! If you have a neighborhood grocery store, make friends with a kindly cashier. You never know when you might need his help.

Glossary

1. **Sweet Pea** (noun) – something you say to people you love, a term of endearment
2. **hard of hearing** (adjective) – not able to hear well because something is wrong with the ears
3. **silent** (adjective) – very quiet
4. **worried** (adjective) – feeling fear because you think something bad has happened or might happen
5. **announcement** (noun) – a public statement
6. **cashier** (noun) – a person who takes money at a store
7. **relief** (adjective) – a feeling of comfort when something frightening or worrying ends or does not happen

Story 3: Safety First by Char Heitman

In this story, the kids are having so much fun that they forget to be safe. What will their father say after he saves them?

Every August, the Millers and the Johnsons went camping together at a large lake in the mountains with clean, clear water. Each family had a daughter. One was named Flora and the other was named Jasmine. The families camped near the water, where the girls could swim, catch frogs, or go out on the lake in a **canoe**.¹ Near the **shore**² there were a few little islands that the girls loved **exploring**.³

One morning, the girls were playing by the lake while the parents were making breakfast. The girls decided to go out to an island in the canoe. They had done this many times. The only problem was they were having so much fun that they forgot to put on **life jackets**⁴ before getting into the canoe. After they got in, they **rowed**⁵ out to a small island and played there for a while.

Soon, they were ready to go back to camp and eat breakfast. On the way back, they were playing and teasing each other. Suddenly, one of the **paddles**⁶ fell in the water. They tried to row with one paddle, but it was windy, so they could not go in the direction they wanted to. They tried to row forward, but the wind carried their boat backward. The wind started carrying their boat toward the middle of the lake and farther from shore. They were scared and did not know what to do. They began **yelling**⁷ for help. The parents heard them and came running. When they saw what had happened, Flora's father got in another canoe and took a paddle and life jackets to the girls. The girls put the life jackets on and rowed back to shore.

When they got back, their parents had mixed emotions. They were angry with the girls for not wearing life jackets, but mostly they were very relieved that the girls made it back safely. Over breakfast, they told the girls, "It is fine to have fun, but always remember: safety first." The girls had learned an important lesson. They promised that they would never go out in a canoe without a life jacket again!

Glossary

1. **canoe** (noun) – a type of small boat
2. **shore** (noun) – the edge of the water; where the water meets the land on a river, lake, or ocean
3. **explore** (verb) – to look around to see and discover things
4. **life jacket** (noun) – a vest that is designed to float so that it protects you in water
5. **row** (verb) – to make a boat move forward with a paddle or oars
6. **paddle** (noun) – a long, thin object made of plastic or wood that a person can use to push on water in order to move a boat; oar
7. **yell** (verb) – to speak or cry out loudly

Practice Exercise 10

Choose the best answer.

1. In which story does this happen?
A two-year-old boy walks to a store alone.
 - a. "Lost and Found"
 - b. "Where's the Baby?"
 - c. "Safety First"
2. In which story does this happen?
A mother receives a pair of earrings from her son.
 - a. "Lost and Found"
 - b. "Where's the Baby?"
 - c. "Safety First"
3. In which story does this happen?
Two girls go out on a lake in a canoe.
 - a. "Lost and Found"
 - b. "Where's the Baby?"
 - c. "Safety First"

4. In “Lost and Found,” where does the woman find her earring?
 - a. on a table in the house
 - b. on the floor of the canoe
 - c. on the bumper of the car
 - d. inside the family van

5. Where does the story “Safety First” take place?
 - a. a family’s house
 - b. a beautiful lake
 - c. a blue car
 - d. a grocery store

6. In the story “Where’s the Baby,” who finds the baby first?
 - a. the baby’s father
 - b. the baby’s mother
 - c. the baby’s brother
 - d. a grocery store clerk

UNIT 1 VOCABULARY / GRAMMAR LESSONS

Vocabulary Lesson 1: Adverbs of Time in Storytelling

When did the story happen? What happened next? What happened in the end?

When we read or listen to a story, we want to know the answers to these questions. Adverbs of time help us understand when the events happened so the story makes sense. Adverbs of time describe

- when something happened (yesterday, last spring)
- what happened next (then, after that)
- what happened earlier, later, or at the same time (before, after, while)
- how long something took place (all day, for three days)

1. When did the event take place?

When we tell a story, it helps to tell the reader when the events happened or when the story begins.

Did it happen . . .

- a long time ago?
- one day?
- one summer evening in June?

Or, did it happen . . .

- about six months ago?
- in 2014?
- in May 2015?

In these two examples, the time expressions "one evening last spring" and "about two years ago" tell the reader when the story happened. These expressions are often the first words in a story (but not always!).

- **One evening last spring**, my friends and I decided to walk to an old, abandoned cabin in the forest.
- **About two years ago**, John's family was living in New Mexico.

2. What happened next?

There are many adverbs of time that help the reader or listener understand the order of events in a story. Sometimes, a writer will use words like "then," "later," and "after that" to show that time has passed and a new event will take place. Sometimes, a writer will be more specific and use phrases like "later that evening," "the next day," or "at 5:30."

Here are some examples using this type of time adverb to introduce the next events:

- He cleaned his workshop. **Then** he began to build.
- Everyone was sad about the ruined cake. **The next day**, the boy went to the market for a new one.
- The family advertised their pet. **A few weeks later**, a farm called and they wanted a rooster.

3. Was it earlier, later, or at the same time?

"While," "before," and "after" are adverbs of time. We use them to show the link between two actions in a story.

- a. "While" is used when you want to show that two actions happened at the same time.
 - One day **while the family was eating breakfast**, they heard a loud noise. "Eating breakfast" and "heard a loud noise" happened at the same time.
 - My mom liked all the kids to stay outside **while she was cleaning**. "Kids to stay outside" and "cleaning" happened at the same time.
- b. "Before" is used when you want to show that one action happened earlier than another action.
 - **Before she came to her grandmother's farm**, she had lived with her mother and father in a dirty, crowded factory town. First, she "lived with her mother and father," and then later she "came to her grandmother's farm."
 - They were having so much fun that they forgot to put on life jackets **before getting into the canoe**. First, they "forgot to put on their life jackets," and then they "got into the canoe."
- c. "After" is used when you want to show that one action happened later than another action.
 - **Long after the moon came out**, Sylvie was still awake. First, the moon "came out" and much later she "was still awake."
 - **After they ate**, they all sat outside. First, they "ate" and later they all "sat outside."

4. How long did something happen?

You can make adverb phrases using “for” and “all” to talk about how long an action continued.

- a. Use “for” if you want to tell the reader the amount of time that something happened. For example, you can use “for two minutes,” “for an hour,” “for three days,” or “for a while.” You can use “a while” when the exact amount of time isn’t important.
- He left **for two hours**.
 - They traveled **for two days**.
 - She ran **for 20 minutes**.
 - After they got in, they rowed out to a small island and played there **for a while**.
 - He enjoyed the warm fire **for a few minutes**.
- b. Use “all” if you want to express that something occurred for a whole time period. For example, you can use “all month,” “all day,” or “all afternoon.”
- It was raining, so she stayed home and read **all day**.
 - It was the country’s 100th anniversary, so there were many celebrations and events **all year**.
 - She was trying to get a good score on the test, so she studied **all morning**.
 - They were so excited about the weekend trip that they looked forward to it **all week**.

Practice Exercise 11

Read the paragraph below and choose the best word or phrase for each blank.

Lucy woke up at 7:00 a.m. She got out of bed, got dressed, and ate breakfast. (1) _____, she got her books ready, grabbed her coat, and went to school. At 12 p.m., she had lunch and then went to her afternoon classes. (2) _____, school was finished. She went home, did her homework, and took a nap. (3) _____, Lucy went to a friend's house. They ate dinner and watched a movie together. She realized it was late, so she went home and went to bed. (4) _____, she stayed in bed all morning because it was Saturday and she didn't have to go to school.

1. Blank 1

- a. At 7:00 a.m.
- b. Tomorrow
- c. After that
- d. The next day

2. Blank 2

- a. A few minutes later
- b. The next morning
- c. At 3:00 p.m.

3. Blank 3
 - a. At 8:00 a.m.
 - b. Later that afternoon
 - c. Then

4. Blank 4
 - a. Then
 - b. The next day
 - c. After that

Practice Exercise 12

Read the paragraph below and choose the best word or phrase for each blank.

There are three levels of school in the United States: elementary school, middle school and high school. Students start elementary school when they are five years old. Some very young children, three to four years old, go to preschool (1) _____ they go to elementary school. But not all children go to preschool. (2) _____ elementary school comes middle school. Middle school consists of three grades – 6th, 7th, and 8th. After students finish middle school, they go to high school for four years. Most high school students just take high school classes, but some very smart students take college classes (3) _____ they **attend** high school. (4) _____ high school, many students go to college. However, some students decide to spend a year preparing (5) _____ they go to college. This is called a gap year. After the gap year, these students have a better idea of what they want to study and feel more prepared and ready to go to college.

1. Blank 1
 - a. before
 - b. after
 - c. while

2. Blank 2
 - a. Before
 - b. After
 - c. While

3. Blank 3
 - a. before
 - b. after
 - c. while

4. Blank 4
 - a. Before
 - b. After
 - c. While

5. Blank 5
 - a. before
 - b. after
 - c. while

Practice Exercise 13

Read the sentences and decide which time phrase best completes the sentence.

for 30 minutes all day all week
 for four years for two hours

1. She got a bachelor's degree. She studied _____.
2. They watched the movie in the theater _____.
3. He made a cake. He baked it _____.
4. They left Tokyo at 8 a.m. and arrived in San Francisco at 8 p.m. They flew _____.
5. She was very tired because her neighbor's dog was barking _____ and she didn't sleep well.

Grammar Lesson 1A: Forming Past Tenses

There are three past tenses that are commonly used in stories:

- past simple
- past continuous (also known as past progressive)
- past perfect

Here we will talk about how to form each of these tenses so you can notice them in your reading. In the next two units, we will learn more about when to use each tense.

Let's start with the past simple. All you need is the past tense form of the verb.

Verb	Past Tense Form	Past Simple Sentence
learn	learned	I learned English for two years.
talk	talked	They talked a lot yesterday.
feel	felt	She felt cold this morning.
eat	ate	We ate some fruit on Monday.

The only tricky part of the past simple is learning all of the irregular forms. You should continue studying them.

Let's move on to the past continuous. To form the past continuous, use the past tense of the verb "be," and then an "-ing" form of the main verb.

Subject	Past Tense of "Be"	"-ing" Form of Main Verb	Rest of the Sentence
I	was	learning	English when . . .
You	were	talking	a lot while . . .
He	was	feeling	cold until . . .
We	were	buying	fruit when . . .
They	were	eating	at 2:00.

Finally, let's talk about the past perfect tense. For this tense, we need to use the past participle.

- With regular verbs, the past participle is the same as the simple past form. "Learn" becomes "learned."
- For irregular verbs, it's just a little more complicated. You probably have studied three forms for each irregular verb. For example, drive – drove – driven. The past participle is the third form.

Now we can use the past participle to form the past perfect tense. Use "had" and then the past participle of the main verb.

Subject	Had	Past Participle of Main Verb	Rest of the Sentence
I	had	learned	English for two years when . . .
You	had	talked	to him three times before . . .
He	had	felt	sad for a month by the time . . .
We	had	bought	it before she . . .
They	had	eaten	their lunch already.

We'll talk more in the next unit about when to use the past perfect tense. The sentences above can give you some clues.

Practice Exercise 14

Practice making sentences in the past simple, using the verb in parentheses. You can look up the forms if you need to.

1. Yesterday, I _____ (go) to the store.
2. She _____ (graduate) from high school in 2011.
3. When I _____ (be) a child, I _____ (sing) in a choir.
4. _____ (be) you at the game last week?
5. _____ (you / call) your mother last night?

Practice Exercise 15

Practice making sentences in the past continuous, using the verb in parentheses.

1. At noon, I _____ (eat) lunch.
2. He crashed his car because he _____ (talk) on his phone while driving.
3. He _____ (cook) dinner at 8:00.
4. Where _____ (you / work) in 2013?
5. My sister _____ (live) in Germany three years ago.

Practice Exercise 16

Write the past participle of the following verbs. You can look them up if you are not sure.

1. eat _____
2. say _____
3. do _____
4. work _____
5. know _____
6. take _____

Practice Exercise 17

Practice making sentences in the past perfect, using the verb in parentheses.

1. I _____ (study) English for three years when I visited America.
2. She _____ (finish) her homework, so she played a video game.
3. We were late because he _____ (sleep) through his alarm that morning.
4. By the time you arrived, we _____ (leave) the restaurant.
5. We _____ (never / go) camping until last weekend.

Practice Exercise 18

Look at these sentences from the stories you read in this unit. Which tense is the verb in bold?

1. Dad **gave** Tommy two kisses and went downstairs.
 - a. past simple
 - b. past progressive
 - c. past perfect
2. I **had given up** on finding my earring.
 - a. past simple
 - b. past progressive
 - c. past perfect

3. Big Brother **was playing** a computer game.
 - a. past simple
 - b. past progressive
 - c. past perfect

4. The girls **were playing** near the lake while their parents made breakfast.
 - a. past simple
 - b. past progressive
 - c. past perfect

5. The girls **decided** to go out to an island on the canoe.
 - a. past simple
 - b. past progressive
 - c. past perfect

Grammar Lesson 1B: Complete Sentences

Stories are made of sentences. Do you know what makes a good sentence?

- Sentences should have a subject and a verb.
- You know what a verb is. It tells about an action (or state).
- The subject is the person doing the action (or in the state).

Subject	Verb	More
I	am jumping	.
Mom and Dad	had called	me.
Tommy	felt	sad.
The dog	was	small.

The subject is not always the first word.

More	Subject	Verb	More
Every August,	the Millers and the Johnsons	went	camping together at Waldo Lake.

Every sentence needs a subject and a verb to be a complete sentence. It can have other parts, too, but they are not required. If the sentence has only a subject, or only a verb, it's not a complete sentence.

Sometimes, when you read a story, you might notice some sentences that are not complete sentences. These are called sentence fragments. Authors use sentence fragments to make their stories artistic, but in this class you will learn to write complete sentences. It's important to master the rules before you break the rules.

Practice Exercise 19

Identify the subject and verb.

1. Ann is a nurse at the hospital.

The subject is _____.

- a. Ann
- b. is
- c. a nurse

The verb is _____.

- a. Ann
- b. is
- c. a nurse

2. Soon they were ready.

The subject is _____.

- a. Soon
- b. they
- c. were

The verb is _____.

- a. Soon
- b. they
- c. were

3. My family and I returned to our home.

The subject is _____.

- a. My family
- b. My family and I
- c. returned

The verb is _____.

- a. My family
- b. My family and I
- c. returned

4. Each family had a daughter.

The subject is _____.

- a. Each
- b. family
- c. Each family

The verb is _____.

- a. Each family
- b. had
- c. a daughter

5. From that time on, I treasured the earrings.

The subject is _____.

- a. From that time
- b. I
- c. Treasured

The verb is _____.

- a. From that time
- b. I
- c. treasured

6. Tommy must have been quite silent.

The subject is _____.

- a. Tommy
- b. must
- c. must have been

The verb is _____.

- a. Tommy
- b. must
- c. must have been

Practice Exercise 20

Look at the sentences. Decide if each sentence is a complete sentence or a sentence fragment.

1. Finally, she told her family what happened.
- a. complete sentence
 - b. sentence fragment

2. One of the cashiers, a tall man with a silver ponytail.
 - a. complete sentence
 - b. sentence fragment
3. Ready to go back to camp and eat breakfast.
 - a. complete sentence
 - b. sentence fragment
4. They looked in every room of the house.
 - a. complete sentence
 - b. sentence fragment

Practice Exercise 21

Look at the sentences. Match each sentence with the correct description. Consider subject, verb, and punctuation.

- a. sentence fragment / no subject
 - b. complete sentence
 - c. sentence fragment / no verb
 - d. The sentence ends with the wrong punctuation.
 - e. The sentence does not begin with a capital letter.
1. _____ His dirty socks on the clean floor of the market.
 2. _____ Miraculously, it was the missing earring;
 3. _____ The parents heard them and came running.
 4. _____ she could not believe her eyes or her luck!
 5. _____ Leaping quickly from tree to tree.

UNIT 1 WRITING LESSON: Elements of a Story

Lesson

Let's begin thinking about the important elements of a good story. Creating a story is similar to baking a cake: You need specific elements (ingredients) to make a story (your cake).

What elements (ingredients) do you need?

- **Setting:** Where does your story take place? At home? In a city? In the country? In the woods? By a lake?
- **Characters:** Who is in the story? Your friend? A dog? A mother? A little boy?
- **Plot:** What happens in the story? What are the main events? What is the main action that occurs? In what order do the events happen?
 1. A girl sees a ring in a magazine.
 2. The girl wants the ring.
 3. The girl saves her money.
 4. The girl buys the ring.

The plot usually has three parts:

- **Lead-Up:** This is the sequence of events that builds to an exciting moment. Some examples are when a team practices a lot to win an important game, when the weather starts getting dark and develops into a storm, or when someone is in a hurry and is not being careful.
- **Climax:** This is the most exciting moment of the story. It can be a happy event (birth of a baby, winning of a game, receiving of a present, etc.) or an upsetting moment (friends get in a fight, a big scary storm begins, someone is injured or lost, someone loses something important, etc.).
- **Resolution / Conclusion:** What happens after the climax? How is the happy moment acknowledged or celebrated? Or how is the problem solved or the negative situation improved? And what happens after that? What do the characters learn? How is the situation further resolved or improved? Some examples are when a key is found, the storm ends, the characters have a party to celebrate, a family hugs, etc.

Look at the following story from Unit 1, and notice the different parts of a story:

Cock a Doodle Don't

Section 1 – Setting and Characters

There was a family with a mom, dad, and son, Leo. This family had chickens in their backyard. Not everyone had chickens, but they decided to get some for a few reasons. For one, they enjoyed watching the chickens play. They also enjoyed eating the eggs the chickens gave them and using the chicken manure on their garden to make their plants healthier and their vegetables grow bigger. One day, they decided to get more chicks because some of their chickens were too old to lay eggs.

Section 2 – Plot (Lead-Up)

They went to the farm store, and the son picked out two chicks. He wanted to name them “Calvin” and “Hobbes” because in his favorite book, the characters’ names were Calvin and Hobbes. The mom said, “I like those names, too, Leo, but Calvin is a boy’s name, and these chicks are hens, which are girls.” Leo replied, “Okay, instead of Calvin, we can call her Callie, which is a girl’s name.” The mom and dad agreed.

Little by little, the chicks grew. Leo loved watching and playing with them every day. He noticed lots of little things about all the new chickens, such as who ran out of the chicken coop first, who liked to play together, how their feathers and colors were changing and so on. As the chicks grew bigger, Leo noticed that Callie was growing to be much bigger than Hobbes. He also noticed that Callie was developing a big comb on her head. Leo told his family what he noticed. They worried that Callie might be a rooster instead of a hen. Hens were allowed in the city because they are not too loud, but roosters were forbidden because they crow loudly and can disturb many people. If someone complained about the family having a rooster, they might get in trouble and have to pay a fine.

Section 3 – Plot (Climax)

Sure enough, one day while the family was eating breakfast, they heard a loud “Cock a doodle do,” the sound that roosters make in the morning. Callie was a rooster! Unfortunately, they could not keep him. Some friends and neighbors suggested they kill and eat Callie, but this made Leo sad because Callie was his pet, and he did not want to see him killed.

Section 4 – Plot (Resolution)

So, the family put a notice on the Internet to ask if some farmer wanted Callie on their farm. They got a few calls, but everyone wanted a hen, not a rooster. Leo was worried. Every day, Callie crowed very loudly. He was afraid the neighbors would complain about the rooster and his family would have to pay a fine. A few weeks later, a farm called, and they wanted a rooster. Leo and his family took Callie out to the farm. The family looked around at the many animals on the farm – cows, pigs, chickens, goats, cats, dogs, and other animals. Callie immediately began to make friends and run around with the other chickens. Leo was sad to say goodbye to Callie, but he was pleased that his rooster could live happily on a big farm.

Practice Exercise 22

Read the story and label the parts of the story. Use the words in the box below to label each part of the story.

- a. plot (lead-up)
- b. plot (climax)
- c. plot (resolution)
- d. setting and characters

(Section 1) _____

Every August, the Millers and the Johnsons went camping together at Waldo Lake, which was a large lake in the mountains with clean, clear water. Each family had a daughter. One was named Flora and the other was named Jasmine. The families camped near the water, where the girls could swim, catch frogs, or go out on the lake in a canoe. Near the shore there were a few little islands that the girls loved going out to and exploring.

(Section 2) _____

One morning, the girls were playing by the lake while the parents were making breakfast. The girls decided to go out to an island in the canoe. They had done this many times. The only problem was they were having so much fun that they forgot to put on life jackets before getting into the canoe. After they got in, they rowed out to a small island and played there for a while.

Soon, they were ready to go back to camp and eat breakfast. On the way back, they were playing and teasing each other. Suddenly, one of the oars fell in the water. They tried to row with one paddle, but it was windy, so they could not go in the direction they wanted to. They tried to row forward, but the wind carried their boat

backward. The wind started carrying their boat toward the middle of the lake and farther from shore.

(Section 3) _____

They were scared and did not know what to do. They began yelling for help. The parents heard them and came running. When they saw what had happened, Flora's father, Steve, got in another canoe and took a paddle and life jackets to the girls. The girls put the life jackets on and paddled back to shore.

(Section 4) _____

When they got back, their parents had mixed emotions. They were angry at the girls for not wearing life jackets, but mostly they were very relieved that the girls made it back safely. Over breakfast, they told the girls, "It is fine to have fun, but always remember: safety first." The girls had learned an important lesson. They promised that they would never go out in a canoe without a life jacket again!

Assignment

Think about a story you would like to tell. Your story can be about something that happened to you, or to someone you know. It's okay to "fictionalize" a real-life story as you write it. Fiction refers to a story that didn't really happen. You might fictionalize a true story by imagining details when you don't know everything about what really happened. You may also write a completely fictional story, if you wish. Once you have a story in mind, think about a title. Your title might tell readers what the story is about, or it might be funny or surprising. In the next unit, you will write down the parts of your story.

UNIT 2

UNIT 2 READINGS

A glossary at the end of each story provides meanings and parts of speech for words that are numbered and in bold.

Story 1: An Open Hand by Fran Sheppard

In this story a woman is in a hurry, but things go better when she is more patient.

That old, yellow rug had to go! It was dirty and shabby after five years of shoes walking and crumbs falling on it. But where could I get a rug quickly without spending too much money? I lay down on the rug to **estimate**¹ its length and width – hmm, maybe not a good idea. I found the **measuring tape**² and the rug was 5 feet by 7.5 feet (1.5 meters x 2.5 meters). That seemed easy to remember, but I wrote it down.

Once the decision was made, I wanted to find a rug right away, that day. I don't like to go to retail stores and I hate to pay full price. That morning at yoga class, while I was supposed to be mindfully aware of my body and listening to my breath, I was **obsessing over**³ where I might shop for a rug.

Two hours later, I arrived at the **flea market**⁴ and went straight to a stall in the back where I had bought a rug ten years ago. Amazingly, the same seller was still there and had six rugs! None were perfect, but one seemed all right and he only wanted \$40 for it. The right size, pretty, wool, and well made. It was just about new, but there was something weird about it. If I stood on one side of it, two big areas looked light and the rest looked dark, like shadows were falling on it. If I moved to the other side of the rug, the dark and light parts were reversed.

“Will you take \$30?” I asked. Sold! I was determined to be done with this and move on.

I laid the new rug out on my floor. It was soft under my feet, but it seemed like two quarters of the rug was woven differently. Looking at it, I wasn't very happy with this rug after all. No wonder the guy was happy to make a deal! Now what?

As I drove to work the next day, I was irritated. Why did I buy a rug that I'd never really like? After work I pulled my car out of the parking lot. I saw two rugs rolled up and leaning against the garbage cans. I got out of my car and opened the rugs to look at them. Why on earth do people throw away perfectly good rugs? Well, I guess it's so people like me can feel the **thrill**⁵ of discovering free treasure! I took one home. I shook it, **vacuumed**⁶ it, inspected it, and laid it on my floor. This rug with its practical, brown background and big, colorful polka dots was way more fun and lively than anything I'd seen at the flea market or the store. Hurray! And again, I learned to breathe deeply – the universe provides!

Glossary

1. **estimate** (verb) – to get a general idea about the size, value, or number of something, without being completely sure
2. **measuring tape** (noun) – a long, thin piece of plastic, cloth, or metal that is used to determine the length of other items
3. **obsess over** (verb) – to think too much about one thing
4. **flea market** (noun) – an outdoor market where used items are sold

5. **thrill** (noun) – a feeling of great excitement or happiness
6. **vacuum** (verb) – to clean something with a vacuum cleaner (an electric appliance that sucks up dirt)

Story 2: In the Nick of Time¹ by Melanie Ray

A boy is trying to get home for his big soccer game, but there is a problem with the airplane.

Alex looked at the screen as soon as he got to the airport. He was relieved to see his flight was on time. Alex desperately needed to get back to San Francisco in order to be back for the big game the next day. Alex's soccer team was going to play in the championship game, and Alex was one of their strongest players. Alex hadn't wanted to travel across the country the weekend before the tournament, but it was his grandfather's 75th birthday. He definitely wanted to be part of that **milestone**² celebration.

Alex kissed and hugged his grandparents and waved a teary goodbye. He went to the ticket counter, got his boarding pass, went through airport security, and headed to his gate. He watched the sports updates on one of the airport TVs as he waited to get on the airplane. He looked around at the other **passengers**.³ There was a mother who was holding a handful of dry cereal for her toddler. Some teenagers were playing video games on their phones. A middle-aged man was reading. Also, a group of women were chatting and laughing about their trip. Soon, the flight attendant picked up a microphone and made an announcement: The mechanics had found a problem with the plane and the flight was canceled. Alex felt shocked and concerned: Would he **arrive**⁴ in time for the game?

Passengers began to line up at the ticket counter to get information and a new flight. As Alex stood in line, he wondered if he would be able to find a flight that arrived in time for the soccer game. When he got to the counter, Alex found out he could get to the next city, but there was no other flight for him from that city to San Francisco that evening. The agent told him he could check to see if a seat to San Francisco had become available when he arrived. Alex frowned in **disappointment**⁵ and reserved a ticket on a plane that would get him back the next afternoon, two hours after the beginning of the soccer game.

Alex called his parents and texted his best friend on his team and told them the news. They were disappointed but understanding. All throughout the next flight, Alex thought about how much he wished he could be there for the big game! Maybe a ticket would become available, but he wasn't hopeful. When he arrived in the next city, he went straight to the ticket counter to ask. The line was long since many people had been delayed. He heard the ticket agent tell other people that there were no seats to San Francisco available. Still, he stayed in line just in case. When he got to the ticket counter, he asked about seats to San Francisco. The agent said they were all full but that she would look again. She typed something and looked at the screen. She started to say, "Yes, there are no seats to San Fran . . ." Then she stopped and looked at the screen again. "Wait. A seat just opened up!" Alex raised his eyebrows and exclaimed, "Really?" The agent said, "Let me see . . . yes, there is one seat available. It arrives in San Francisco at 9 a.m. tomorrow. Do you want it?" "Yes, yes!" Alex said excitedly. If he arrived by 9 a.m., he could play in the soccer game. She printed out the new boarding pass and gave it to Alex.

Alex went back to the waiting area. It would be many hours before his flight, but he would arrive in time for the game! He called his parents and best friend to tell them the great news.

Several hours later, the passengers got on the plane. Alex was excited. No delay so far – it looked like he would make the game! When the plane landed, his parents were waiting for him. Alex grabbed his suitcase and jumped in the car. His parents drove to the stadium. In the car, Alex ate a quick breakfast so he would have energy for the game. Fortunately, there was no traffic, so they got to the stadium quickly. He got out of the car and ran to the **locker room**.⁶ When his teammates saw him, they cheered wildly. “Yay, Alex made it!” they exclaimed.

The game was tough. Both teams were very good. The game stayed **tied**⁷ with no score for both halves and went into overtime. After the overtime, there was still no score. The game would be decided by penalty kicks. The coach called Alex over: He would be the penalty kicker for his team. Alex took his place and kicked. The ball went into the goal. His team won! They had won the championship game. The team ran over to Alex and hugged him and **patted**⁸ him on the back. Then, they lifted him into the air, so happy that they had won the game. Alex was so happy he had made it in the nick of time.

Glossary

1. **in the nick of time** – just a few moments before it is too late
2. **milestone** (noun) – an important event; a rarely celebrated event
3. **passengers** (noun) – people riding in a vehicle but not driving it
4. **arrive** (verb) – to come to a place
5. **disappointment** (noun) – sadness when something is not as good as expected
6. **locker room** (noun) – a room where sports players change clothes before and after a game
7. **tied** (adjective) – having the same score
8. **pat** (verb) – to touch or hit lightly and kindly

UNIT 2 VOCABULARY / GRAMMAR LESSONS

Vocabulary Lesson 2: Descriptive Adjectives

In Unit 1 you learned about using adverbials to show time and sequence in stories.

Stories also need descriptive adjectives to help the readers imagine the people, places, and events. Imagine the word "car." What do you picture in your head? Now, what do you picture in your head when you see the phrase "a shiny, new, red sports car" or "an old, rusty, broken-down car" or "a huge, yellow car with green doors and a pink hood"? Writing with descriptive adjectives helps your reader imagine what you have in mind.

As you know, adjectives are words or phrases that describe (give more information about) nouns. You probably already know quite a few adjectives, such as

- beautiful
- ugly
- blue
- red
- small
- large

English has thousands of adjectives, which you can use for more specific and precise descriptions.

Simple Adjective	More Specific Adjectives with Similar Meanings
beautiful	elegant, gorgeous, attractive, pretty, handsome, lovely
ugly	repulsive, unsightly, homely, unattractive
blue	dark blue, sky blue, cobalt blue, navy blue, indigo
red	bright red, crimson, burgundy, reddish
small	tiny, miniature, little, slight, modest, puny
large	huge, enormous, gigantic, big, massive, tall, wide

Some of these words have almost the same meaning, but some of them have important differences in meaning. For example, something that is “tiny” is even smaller than something that is “little.” Something that is “puny” is small, but the word also implies that the thing is not very good.

Practice Exercise 23

The numbered phrases include an adjective in bold. Look at the lettered definitions, and put the best letter next to each number.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. _____ terrible student | a. comes on time; does not come late |
| 2. _____ modest house | b. very bad |
| 3. _____ bland diet | c. not large in size |
| 4. _____ generous man | d. providing a lot, more than enough |
| 5. _____ punctual student | e. not interesting or exciting; plain |

Adjectives don't just describe how things look. You can use adjectives to describe how something or someone looks, sounds, feels, smells, or tastes.

Sense	Adjectives
looks	glamorous, shiny, purple, pale, thin, bald, messy, clean
sounds	loud, deafening, raspy, musical, silent, low-pitched, gentle
feels	rough, bumpy, damp, fluffy, soft, hard, comfortable, oily
smells	fragrant, perfumed, aromatic, fresh, smoky, stale
tastes	delicious, yummy, sweet, sour, bitter, salty, spicy, mild, bland

Practice Exercise 24

The numbered phrases include an adjective in bold. Look at the lettered definitions, and put the best letter next to each number.

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1. _____ immense building | a. quiet; not loud |
| 2. _____ faint noise | b. not modern style |
| 3. _____ messy desk | c. very large |
| 4. _____ old-fashioned car | d. very far from the surface |
| 5. _____ deep hole | e. unorganized; not neat; dirty |

You can also use adjectives to describe other categories such as judgment, feelings, personality, quantity, or time.

Category	Adjectives
judgment	good, great, wonderful, bad, awful, terrible
feelings	sad, excited, silly, worried, depressed, grumpy, angry, tired, calm
personality	kind, generous, patient, helpful, smart, competitive, cruel, arrogant
quantity	few, some, all, enough, half, a third, much, several
time	late, punctual, modern, ancient, fast, slow

In this unit, you're thinking about the story you will write for this class. At the beginning of your story, you might want to describe the characters and the setting using a variety of adjectives.

Try to use some extra details as you imagine and describe your setting and characters. For example, if you have already described how a character looks, try making another sentence using adjectives of personality. Try to include descriptive words from many categories such as smell, touch, taste, sight, feelings, etc. You can use some of the adjectives in this lesson, or use the dictionary to look up new words.

Practice Exercise 25

Choose the best answers.

1. Which of the words below describe sounds? Circle the three best adjectives.
 - a. loud
 - b. fragrant
 - c. gentle
 - d. damp
 - e. deafening
2. Which of the words below describe personality? Circle the three best adjectives.
 - a. generous
 - b. aromatic
 - c. miniature
 - d. competitive
 - e. helpful
3. Which of the words below describe feelings? Circle the three best adjectives.
 - a. crimson
 - b. grumpy
 - c. smoky
 - d. excited
 - e. calm

Grammar Lesson 2A: Past Tense Use

As you learned in the last unit, there are three different forms of past tense:

Simple Past	Past Progressive	Past Perfect
talked	was talking	had talked
went	was going	had gone
ate	was eating	had eaten
made	was making	had made
wrote	was writing	had written

You also need to know how to form the negatives of past tense.

To form the negative in simple past, you need to add the word "did" and then the word "not." This sometimes forms a one-word contraction "didn't."

- Negative simple past: did + not + base form of verb

For past continuous and past perfect, you only need to add the word "not." You can keep the word "not" separate (was not going, had not gone) or make a contraction (wasn't going, hadn't gone).

- Negative past continuous: was + not + "-ing" form of verb
- Negative past perfect: had + not + past participle of verb

Let's compare the negative forms of each tense:

Simple Past	Past Continuous	Past Perfect
didn't go	wasn't going	hadn't gone
didn't eat	wasn't eating	hadn't eaten
didn't walk	wasn't walking	hadn't walked

It is important to know when to use which past tense. Look at the examples of the use of different tenses.

Past simple is used to describe past states, events, or actions.

- Every evening, Sylvie **left** her grandmother's house to bring the cows home.
- The forest **was** full of shadows as the girl **hurried** home.

Past continuous is used to describe events that were occurring at the same time as another event.

- Sylvie **was trembling** as she whispered.
- As Sylvie climbed slowly down the tree, the stranger **was waking up**.

Past perfect is used to describe an event that is completed before another action.

- Sylvie **had seen** that bird on the other side of the forest.
- She was sure she would be able to see where the white heron **had hidden** its nest.

Read the following sentences. Count the number of times each of these tenses is used: simple past, past continuous, and past perfect.

Sylvie **gave** a long sigh. She **knew** the wild bird's secret now. Slowly she **began** her dangerous trip down the ancient pine tree. She **did not dare** to look down and **tried** to forget that her fingers hurt and her feet **were bleeding**. All she **wanted** to think about **was** what the stranger would say to her when she **told** him where to find the heron's nest.

As Sylvie **climbed** slowly down the pine tree, the stranger **was waking** up back at the farm. He **was smiling** because he **was** sure from the way the shy, little girl **had looked** at him that she **had seen** the white heron.

As you can see, past simple is more common than past continuous or past perfect.

In general, you should use past simple for most of your story unless you have a specific reason to use another tense.

If you want to describe an action that was taking place at the same time as another, you might choose to use past continuous.

If you want to emphasize that an event or state was completed **before** another action occurred, you might use past perfect for the completed action.

Practice Exercise 26

Look at each verb in bold in the following sentences and identify the tense: past simple, past continuous, or past perfect.

1. The girls **were playing** by the lake while their parents **made** breakfast.

were playing

- a. past simple
- b. past continuous
- c. past perfect

made

- a. past simple
- b. past continuous
- c. past perfect

2. Daddy **gave** Tommy two kisses and **went** downstairs.

gave

- a. past simple
- b. past continuous
- c. past perfect

went

- a. past simple
- b. past continuous
- c. past perfect

3. I **noticed** that one of the earrings my son **had given** me a few hours before **was** missing.

noticed

- a. past simple
- b. past continuous
- c. past perfect

had given

- a. past simple
- b. past continuous
- c. past perfect

was

- a. past simple
- b. past continuous
- c. past perfect

Practice Exercise 27

Choose the correct negative form of the following sentences. Keep the same tense.

- 1. Julie walked to school.
 - a. Julie walked not to school.
 - b. Julie didn't walk to school.
 - c. Julie hadn't walked to school.

- 2. Sam was eating.
 - a. Sam wasn't eating.
 - b. Sam didn't eat.
 - c. Sam hadn't eaten.

3. Ben and Gloria were eating.
 - a. Ben and Gloria didn't eat.
 - b. Ben and Gloria hadn't eaten.
 - c. Ben and Gloria weren't eating.

Practice Exercise 28

Change the following sentences into negative form. Write the correct answer in the blank.

1. Tom jumped. _____
2. Maria was talking. _____
3. Ben had called. _____

Practice Exercise 29

Read the following two paragraphs. Count the number of times each of these tenses is used: past simple, past continuous, and past perfect. Put your answers below.

Sylvie **gave** a long sigh. She **knew** the wild bird's secret now. Slowly she **began** her dangerous trip down the ancient pine tree. She **did not dare** to look down and **tried** to forget that her fingers hurt and her feet **were bleeding**. All she **wanted** to think about **was** what the stranger would say to her when she **told** him where to find the heron's nest.

As Sylvie **climbed** slowly down the pine tree, the stranger **was waking** up back at the farm. He **was smiling** because he **was** sure from the way the shy little girl **had looked** at him that she **had seen** the white heron.

1. How many times was past simple used? _____
2. How many times was past continuous used? _____
3. How many times was past perfect used? _____
4. Based on the numbers above, which tense do you think is most common in describing events in the past or stories about things that take place in the past?

Grammar Lesson 2B: Sentence Structure 1

You already know that a complete sentence needs to begin with a capital letter and end with a period, question mark, or exclamation point. In Unit 1 we discussed how a complete sentence must include a subject and a verb.

Sometimes the subject includes more than one person. That's okay since they are still one grammatical subject. In fact, you could probably say it in another way with just one word for the subject.

- My mother and my sister are coming. = They are coming.
- Sylvie's bare feet and tiny fingers grabbed the tree's rough trunk. = She grabbed the tree's rough trunk.

Sometimes the subject does more than one action at a time. That's okay, too. They are still one subject / verb combination. In fact, you could probably say it in another way with just one word for the verb.

- Yesterday I cooked and cleaned. = Yesterday I worked.
- The stranger explained his problem and asked to stay. = The stranger spoke.

All of these are called simple sentences because they have just one subject / verb combination.

Practice Exercise 30

Identify the subject and verb.

1. Every evening, Sylvie went to her grandmother's house.

The subject is _____.

- a. Every evening
- b. Sylvie
- c. went

The verb is _____.

- a. Every evening
- b. Sylvie
- c. went

2. The tree could be seen for many miles around.

The subject is _____.

- a. The tree
- b. could
- c. could be seen

The verb is _____.

- a. The tree
- b. could
- c. could be seen

3. A bird with broad, white wings and a gentle neck flew past Sylvie.

The subject is _____.

- a. A bird
- b. A bird with broad, white wings
- c. A bird with broad, white wings and a gentle neck

The verb is _____.

- a. flew
- b. flew past
- c. Sophie

Now let's learn about another kind of complete sentence.

You can connect two complete sentences to make a longer sentence. This sentence is called a compound sentence.

You can do this using "and," "but," "so," and other words.

Look at these examples from your reading. Notice that the two subjects can be the same or different.

- **She** hid in some bushes, but **she** was too late.
- **We** don't have much, but **you** are welcome to share what we have.
- **He** had promised to do this, and **they** needed the money.
- **Sylvie** spent a lot of time in the forest, so **she** had seen the heron before.

Practice Exercise 31

For each sentence, decide if it is simple or compound.

1. Tom, Sam, and Harry went swimming in the river on Saturday.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
2. Sam was playing in the deep water, and he got stuck for a few minutes.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
3. They had an adventure, but they all came home safe.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound

Finally, there are two more rules to remember:

- Don't connect two complete sentences with just a comma. That's not enough. You need "and," "but," or "so." We usually use a comma before "and," "but," or "so," unless the sentences are quite short, but it's not required. The comma doesn't go after "and," "but," or "so."
- It's not a good idea to begin sentences with these words when you write for academic or professional purposes. It's okay, even common, in stories, but not in writing for school or work. We recommend that you don't use these words at the beginning of sentences for this class.

Practice Exercise 32

Are the following sentences correct or incorrect?

1. I had my first airplane trip last year, it was very exciting.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect

2. I traveled with my parents, but they usually let me explore on my own.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
3. We visited my cousins and, we had a vacation at the beach.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
4. It was a wonderful trip, I wish we could have stayed longer.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
5. But hoping to take another trip in a year or two.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
6. They had to leave early, so she didn't talk with them.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect

UNIT 2 WRITING LESSON: Story Outline

Lesson

A story outline tells the important parts of the story in a few words. It can help you plan your story, so it's easier to write. If you don't have an outline, you might spend too long on the lead-up and never tell your main story, or you might need to make a lot of changes to the story later. A story outline is like a map of your story – you can follow the map while you write.

Assignment

In Unit 1 you thought about a story and chose your title. Now you will write an outline. In the boxes below, write down the main elements (characters, setting, plot, lead-up, climax, and resolution / conclusion) of your story. You can change parts of the outline later if you need to. For the story outline, it is fine to use just words and short phrases instead of whole sentences.

Elements	Outline
Title	What is the name of your story?
Characters	Who are the people in your story?
Setting	Where does the story take place?
Lead-Up	What happens at the beginning of your story?
Climax	What is the most exciting moment in the story?
Conclusion	What happens at the end of the story?

UNIT 3

UNIT 3 READINGS

A glossary at the end of each story provides meanings and parts of speech for words that are numbered and in bold.

Story 1: **Kitty Miracle**¹ by Char Heitman

A family loses their cat. You might be surprised about how they get her back.

“Here, kitty, kitty, kitty,” we called again and again, trying to find our lost cat, Sierra. Every night we set food and water outside our door, just in case she came back. We talked to all the neighbors and asked if they had seen a black cat with white paws and green eyes. We put up posters around the neighborhood with a picture of Sierra and our address and phone numbers.

We wondered what had happened to her. Had she run away? Had she been hit by a car? Had someone taken her? Every day we wondered and worried about her. We hoped she would come home. The first few days, we looked up and down the street repeatedly and jumped **eagerly**² every time our phone rang. The street stayed empty. No one called.

We had gotten Sierra as a kitten. She was so cute and soft. She entertained us with her funny actions. She loved curling up on our laps to get petted. She was also **feisty**.³ If our dog bothered her, she meowed at him and hit his face with her **paw**.⁴ She had been part of our family for ten years, and we missed her a lot.

After two weeks, we started losing hope of seeing Sierra again. It had been so long that it was hard to imagine her coming home now. Then, one evening, my husband was talking to our neighbor. They were discussing weather and sports. Suddenly, a movement in our neighbor’s garage window caught my husband’s eye. Above our neighbor’s garage was a room with a window facing the street. When my husband looked up, he saw Sierra meowing and hitting the window with her paw. My husband couldn’t believe his eyes! He and the neighbor quickly ran into the garage and opened the small door that went to that room. They ran to Sierra. She was thin and weak, but she was alive. Immediately, they got Sierra some food and water. She ate and drank a lot. She was so hungry and thirsty.

As we talked to the neighbors, we understood the story. A few weeks earlier they had been moving boxes up to the room where Sierra was. During that day, the door was open for a long time. Sierra must have gone up there then. After that day, they did not go back to that room. The door was shut, and Sierra was **trapped**,⁵ but no one knew it.

We were so happy to see Sierra and she was happy to see us. We took her to our house and nursed her back to health. She slept in our bedroom every night and stayed in the house all day. She did not go outside. But little by little, she gained weight and **confidence**.⁶ At first, she was outside for a few minutes at a time, but stayed near our house. Every day she went a little farther and stayed outside a little longer. Eventually, she returned to her happy, feisty self again. She walked around the neighborhood and played with our dog and the neighbor cats. Five years later, Sierra is still with us and is healthy and happy.

Glossary

1. **miracle** (noun) – something unbelievable, incredible, and amazing
2. **eagerly** (adverb) – with excitement
3. **feisty** (adjective) – energetic, bold
4. **paw** (noun) – a cat’s foot
5. **trapped** (adjective) – unable to leave
6. **confidence** (noun) – courage, braveness

Story 2: Swimmer by Samantha Schmidt

She may not be talented, but she tries hard!

When I was a kid, I joined the swimming team.

Actually, learning to swim was hard. I took swimming lessons in the summers, and I repeated Level 2 for three years. That’s the level where you learn to turn your head to the side for a **breath**¹ of air. I had a lot of trouble learning to do it.

Well, the summer that I was eight years old, I finally learned to turn my head to the side and get a breath of air. Then I could swim across the pool, and they let me join the swim team! Instead of just swimming in the summers, now I swam after school all year.

When I was thirteen years old, swim practice changed from five days a week to six days a week. And then when I was fifteen, we started having practice before school and after school – two practices a day. I wasn’t really **talented**² in swimming, but I was working hard and getting faster. There are four swimming strokes: crawl stroke, backstroke, breaststroke, and butterfly. The butterfly is the hardest one, but it is so fun once you finally learn to do it **efficiently**.³ The butterfly became my favorite stroke when I was 15 or 16 years old.

It was probably not really such a good idea to practice 20 hours a week in a sport that I didn’t have a talent for. I could never **qualify**⁴ for the high-level races. But I did learn a lot from swimming. I learned to work hard. I learned that when a challenge sounds impossible, I can still do it, just one step at a time.

And finally, when I was 17 and 18 I did qualify for some higher-level **races**.⁵ This was only because the best swimmers move to different types of competitions at those ages, so it’s easier to qualify. Still, it was a good experience. I remember a regional race when I was 18. It was my last year in school, and my last big swimming race. I was so nervous. I had worked hard all year. Sometimes I had fallen asleep at school because I woke up so early and swam so much. Then for a few weeks before the race, our training became easier, so we could save energy for the race. We got special swimsuits. The day before the race we had a party with special food for racing energy. I remember diving into the water for the beginning of my race. The first lap of the 200-meter butterfly really was like flying, so smooth and easy and fast. I kept my rhythm for the whole race, and got my best time. I was so proud. Swimming on the swim team helped to make me who I am.

Glossary

1. **breath** (noun) – the air that you take into your lungs when you breathe
2. **talented** (adjective) – being able to do something especially well
3. **efficiently** (adverb) – in a way that doesn't use too much energy
4. **qualify** (verb) – to have the skills required to participate in a competition
5. **race** (noun) – a competition to see who is the fastest

UNIT 3 VOCABULARY / GRAMMAR LESSONS

Vocabulary Lesson 3: Dictionary Skills

When you write in English, you will probably use a bilingual dictionary to look up words you need to know. That means you will find a word in your language, and the dictionary will give you a word, or several words, in English.

This seems very easy, but it can also cause some problems.

Sometimes you will get a word that means something different than you wanted. When you use this word in your writing, the result can be confusing or funny or even offensive.

How can you avoid these problems? First, we suggest that you use the dictionary less.

- Use the English words that you already know well. Try to explain the idea in a simple phrase or sentence. Your writing should match your language level!
- Write a slightly different idea. Say something you know how to say. Using known words will make your writing more accurate.

There are some techniques that can help you use a bilingual dictionary more accurately.

- Don't just choose the first translation. Read all the possible translations and make your best choice about which translation is right for what you want to say.
- Look at the sample sentences. Many dictionaries (especially online dictionaries) give you a sample sentence for each translation. This will help you get a better idea of what the English word really means.
- Look up the word in both languages. If you are still not sure which translation is best, turn to the other half of your dictionary, and translate the word back to your first language.
- Be sure you know the symbols and abbreviations in your dictionary.

As you write your own story, you will probably need to look up some words in the dictionary. These techniques can help you get the right word.

Practice Exercise 33

Choose the best answers.

1. What are three ways you can avoid problems when using a bilingual dictionary to write a story?
 - a. Use the dictionary more.
 - b. Use words that you already know.
 - c. Use the dictionary less.
 - d. Change what you write.
 - e. Look up a lot of new words.

2. What advice would you give a friend learning to use a bilingual dictionary? Choose the three best ideas.
 - a. Look up a word in both languages.
 - b. Pick the first word.
 - c. Read all the translations before you choose.
 - d. Don't worry about the symbols.
 - e. Read the example sentences carefully.

A bilingual dictionary is great for finding the translation of a word quickly, but sometimes you need more information about a word to make the best choice in your writing. As your English improves, you should begin to look up unknown words in a monolingual (English only) dictionary.

The entries in monolingual dictionaries may include some unfamiliar abbreviations and symbols. It's important to understand all the parts of a dictionary entry to help you apply what you learn.

Look at the dictionary entry for **whistle** below. What do you see?

Dictionary Entry: whistle

whistle \ˈwi-səl\ n. [C] 1. a high and loud sound. *He heard the train's loud whistle several minutes before the train passed;* 2. a small instrument for making a high and loud sound. *The referee blew the whistle to end the game.* • v. [I] 1. to make a high and loud sound by forcing air through teeth and lips. *He whistled loudly to get the taxi to stop for him.*

- The first part of the entry is the word itself (whistle).
- The second part tells you how the word is pronounced (\ˈwi-səl\). If you do not understand the symbols a dictionary uses, you can find a key at the beginning of the dictionary to help you.

- The third item in the dictionary entry is the part of speech:

Abbreviation	Meaning
n.	noun
v.	verb
adj.	adjective
adv.	adverb
pron.	pronoun
prep.	preposition

- The next part gives you information about the noun or verb; for example, if the noun is countable [C] or uncountable [U], or the verb is transitive (takes an object) [T] or intransitive (does not take an object) [I]. You can see that “whistle” is both a countable noun and an intransitive verb.
- Next is the definition and an example of how the word is used in a sentence. As a noun, “whistle” has two definitions, which are numbered: 1. a sound and 2. an instrument. As a verb, it has one definition: 1. making a sound.

Look for all these parts when you use the dictionary.

Practice Exercise 34

Read the dictionary entry for “stream.” Each part represents different information about the word. Match information given on the left with its meaning on the right.

stream \stri:m\ n. [C] 1. a natural flow of water that is smaller than a river. *A stream flows through the field.* 2. any flow of light, smoke, liquid, or gas. *A steady stream of smoke rose above the forest fire.* 3. a continuous flow of people or things. *A long stream of fans entered the stadium.* • v. [I] 1. to flow steadily. *Tears streamed down her face.* 2. to transfer digital data continuously. *They streamed the movie from Amazon.*

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. _____ \stri:m\ | a. word’s part of speech |
| 2. _____ n.; v. | b. pronunciation |
| 3. _____ [C], [I] | c. example of use |
| 4. _____ a long stream of fans... | d. countable; intransitive |
| 5. _____ to flow steadily | e. definition |

Grammar Lesson 3A: Past Tense Meaning and Use

As you have learned in the past two units, there are three different forms of past tense.

Simple Past	Past Continuous	Past Perfect
talked	was talking	had talked
went	was going	had gone
ate	was eating	had eaten
made	was making	had made
wrote	was writing	had written

In this lesson, we will talk more about the meaning and use of those forms.

Meaning

Look at the following sentences and think about the differences in meaning between them:

- When Jack came home, Maya ate.
- When Jack came home, Maya was eating.
- When Jack came home, Maya had eaten.

These three sentences have the same subjects (Jack, Maya) and the same verbs (come home, eat), but their meaning is very different.

What is the difference in meaning between the three above sentences?

The difference in meaning is when the action happened. Did the two actions happen at the same time or one before the other? Did one action finish before the other began? Or did one action begin and end during the other action?

Sentence	Relationship between Actions
When Jack came home, Maya ate.	(1) Jack came home. (2) Maya ate.
When Jack came home, Maya was eating.	(1) Maya started eating. (2) Jack came home. (3) Maya continued and finished eating.
When Jack came home, Maya had eaten.	(1) Maya ate. She finished eating. Then (2) Jack came home.

Verb tenses show the relationship between two actions.

Past Action

Most of the time, you can use the simple past tense to talk about actions in the past.

- The lake **was** clear and cool. The canoe **rocked** back and forth gently.
- I **went** to the store and **bought** groceries.
- I **came** home, **cooked** dinner, **ate**, **washed** the dishes, **read** a book, and **went** to bed.

Notice that these sentences contain descriptions, or tell about single events or sequences of events.

Look at these examples of simple past tense use.

- Describing setting and character
 - The forest **was** full of shadows as a little girl **hurried** through it one summer evening in June. It **was** already eight o'clock, and Sylvie **wondered** if her grandmother would be angry with her for being so late.
- Describing sequence of events
 - When they **reached** her, the stranger **put** down his gun and **explained** his problem to Sylvie's smiling grandmother.

Practice Exercise 35

Write 3 sentences using the simple past tense.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Simultaneous Action

Sometimes you want to describe actions that happened at the same time in the past. You can use the simple past tense for this, but you can also use the past continuous.

- While my husband **was driving**, I **looked** in the car for the lost earring.
- My friend **called** while the family **was eating**.
- While I **was making** dinner, my son **was doing** his homework.

Notice that one or both verbs can be in the past continuous tense. The past continuous is used to emphasize that an action continues for a while. If one verb is continuous and the other one is in the simple past, it means that the continuous action started first and ended last. The simple action was shorter.

Look at these examples of past continuous use.

- Describing a short action (whispered) that occurred during a longer action (was trembling)
 - Sylvie **was trembling** as she **whispered**, "two miles."
- Describing two long actions (thinking for a while, staring for a while)
 - Sylvie **was thinking** about the heron, and the young man **was staring** at her.

Practice Exercise 36

Write 3 sentences using past continuous tense.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Completed Action

When you want to emphasize that one event finished before another event happened, you can use the past perfect tense. You will combine it with another verb in the simple past. The past perfect action took place before the simple past action.

- When her mom **arrived**, Sally **had done** her homework already.
- She **had** just **finished** eating dinner when I **called**.
- I **gave** my neighbor the newspaper because I **had finished** reading it.

Notice that you can put the past perfect action at the beginning or at the end of the sentence, but either way it means that action happened before the other action. The past perfect action is finished before the past simple action begins.

Look at these examples of past perfect use.

- First, Sylvie lived in a factory town. That time finished, and then she came to live with her grandma.
 - Before Sylvie **came** to live with her grandmother, she **had lived** in a dirty, crowded factory town.
- The time when Sylvie didn't see anyone so handsome was before the time of the story. That time finished when she saw the young man and excitement filled her heart.
 - She **had never seen** anyone so handsome and charming. A strange excitement **filled** her heart.

Practice Exercise 37

Write 3 sentences using past perfect tense.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Practice Exercise 38

Look at the following sentences and decide in which order the events happened.

1. Dad **gave** Tommy two kisses and **went** downstairs.
 - a. First: gave kisses; Second: went downstairs
 - b. First: went downstairs; Second: gave kisses
 - c. These events happened at the same time.
2. The girls **were playing** by the lake, and their parents **were preparing** breakfast.
 - a. First: girls were playing; Second: parents were preparing
 - b. First: parents were preparing; Second: girls were playing
 - c. These events happened at the same time.
3. We **realized** that they **had pushed** the shoes into the swamp.
 - a. First: we realized; Second: they had pushed
 - b. First: they had pushed; Second: we realized
 - c. These events happened at the same time.
4. He **pulled off** his gloves, **took out** his matches, and **lit** the fire.
 - a. First: pulled off; Second: took out; Third: lit the fire
 - b. First: took out; Second: pulled off; Third: lit the fire
 - c. These events happened at the same time.

5. While we **were driving** to the house, I **looked** in the car for the earring.
 - a. First: we were driving; Second: I looked
 - b. First: I looked; Second: we were driving
 - c. These events happened at the same time.

Grammar Lesson 3B: Sentence Structure 2

In Unit 2, you learned about simple and compound sentences. Remember that simple sentences have one grammatical subject and one verb.

- Ann played a game.
- John and his sister watched the movie.

Compound sentences are two simple sentences joined with words like “and,” “but,” or “so.” The connecting word goes before the second simple sentence.

- Ann played a game, **and** John read a book.
- Ann decided to go outside, **but** John stayed inside the house.

Practice Exercise 39

Decide whether each sentence is simple or compound.

1. I ate lunch, but she only had ice cream.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
2. Usually, I eat lunch and then ice cream.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
3. My sisters and I are not allowed to have dessert without lunch.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
4. We want to be healthy, so we don't mind.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound

Complex sentences

Complex sentences seem like two simple sentences that are connected with words like “when,” “if,” “because,” “although,” “while,” “as,” “where,” “before,” “after,” and others. These words are called subordinating conjunctions. Complex sentences are very useful to show how ideas are related to each other.

- You would know it if you saw it.
- As Sylvie climbed slowly down the pine tree, the stranger was waking up at the farm.
- When the cow heard Sylvie's voice calling her, she would hide among the trees.
- He was smiling because he was sure that she had seen the white heron.

As you can see, each sentence has two subjects and two verbs. The subordinating conjunction can be before the first subject (like in the second and third sentences) or the second subject (like in the first and fourth sentences).

Practice Exercise 40

Decide if each of the following sentences is simple, compound, or complex and circle the correct choice.

1. I don't know if she will come.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
 - c. complex

2. My mother and sister will come.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
 - c. complex

3. While I am waiting for them, I will cook dinner.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
 - c. complex

4. I will cook, but my brother will wash the dishes.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
 - c. complex

5. Ann will bring a cake because she is an excellent baker.
 - a. simple
 - b. compound
 - c. complex

Complex sentences must have two parts: one part of the sentence has a subordinating conjunction (If it rains . . .) and the other part of the sentence does not (. . . we stay inside and play games).

If the two parts of the sentence are separated, you will have an incomplete sentence and a simple sentence. It is good to include a mix of simple, compound, and complex sentences in your story.

Compare these incomplete, simple, and complex sentences:

Incomplete	Simple	Complex
When it is sunny.	We like to eat in the garden.	When it is sunny, we like to eat in the garden. We like to eat in the garden when it is sunny.
Because it was raining.	We stayed inside.	Because it was raining, we stayed inside. We stayed inside because it was raining.
If it rains.	We play games inside.	If it rains, we play games inside. We play games inside if it rains.

When you create complex sentences, always include both parts of the sentence like in the examples above.

Practice Exercise 41

Choose the best answers.

1. Look at the sentences below. Some sentences are incomplete and some are complex. Which three sentences are complex?
 - a. When the cow heard Sylvie's voice calling her, she hid.
 - b. As Sylvie waited, she put her feet in the stream.
 - c. Sylvie was still awake when the moon came out.
 - d. If the young man had left his gun at home.
 - e. Because the shy little girl had looked at him.

Practice Exercise 42

Combine the two sentences to make one compound or complex sentence, using the given word. Keep the two sentences in the given order. Don't forget your capital letter and period.

Example: She studied all night. She had a test. (because)

Answer: She studied all night because she had a test.

1. My mother is a nurse. My father is a doctor. (and)

2. My parents met. They were working in a hospital. (when)

3. They worked together. They wanted to meet more often. (although)

4. They work hard. They are very happy. (but)

UNIT 3 WRITING LESSON: Writing Your First Draft

Lesson

In a first draft, you write down all your ideas. It's a complete story, but there will be some things you can still improve. In fact, most writers create several drafts of their stories. If you try to make every word and sentence perfect the first time around, it's hard to write anything at all. You might not be able to focus on the events of your story. To begin your first draft, just write. Tell yourself, "It's okay if my writing has errors – I'm going to tell a story in English." Don't translate from your first language – go straight from your ideas to English sentences. You already know where the story takes place – describe it. Then tell about the characters and what they do. Show your readers who the characters are and how they feel. Make the events of the story dramatic and interesting. If you want, you can include dialogues between your characters. You probably know exactly what you like in a story, so that is how you should write. But it's okay to keep it simple. If you try to make your story or your sentences very complex, you might get stuck. Sometimes the most meaningful stories and sentences are the simple ones. Try to have fun writing your story. If you do get stuck, take a break, do another task, or talk to someone about it. Then start writing again. Include all the parts of your story outline. Then give yourself a treat – you have written a story in English.

Assignment

Using the story outline you created in Unit 2, write a complete story of at least 300 words. This first draft is your complete story, but you can still improve it in the next unit.

UNIT 4

UNIT 4 READINGS: Example Stories from *Tell Your Story in English* MOOC Participants

The following stories were written by students who took the *Tell Your Story in English* MOOC offered on Canvas by the University of Oregon during March 2017. All the stories are original stories written by the author listed. A glossary at the end of each story provides meanings and parts of speech for words that are numbered and in bold.

Story 1: A Difficult Grammar Exam by Angel Rafael Torres, Dominican Republic

Getting up so early this cold Monday morning was kind of hard. But Linda was so excited that she didn't even realize how chilly it was. She went directly to the bathroom and took a shower, got dressed, and ate her sweet breakfast. Her cat, Whisky, was rubbing her legs while **meowing**¹ softly. Last night Linda had gone to bed at midnight, since she was studying hard for an English grammar exam. Linda had been studying grammar every day for the past four months. She felt **confident**² now. She knew how hard it was to pass the test because she had flunked it several times, but failing it again was not an option for her. She wanted to surprise her parents and friends. They trusted in her skills. Since they came to Boston from the Caribbean, she had been **struggling**³ with the new language.

Linda looked at her smartphone to see the time. It was 7:35 so she had time to take the train. She **rushed**⁴ her way out of the house. She put on her coat and walked down the street. At 7:45 she arrived at the bus stop. A few people were there, but Linda didn't notice them. She was so immersed in her thoughts about the exam that she got disconnected from the real world. The bus was there at five minutes until eight. The huge metal monster swallowed all the people and went on its way. Linda sat alone in the back of the bus, reviewing her grammar book. In one hour, she would arrive at the language school.

She got off the bus and walked for about five minutes. The sun was fighting to open a breach through the heavy clouds with no success. The chilly wind kissed Linda's face.

Linda got into the building and went up the stairs to the fifth floor. Once there, she said hello to the **receptionist**⁵ and told her that she was there to take the grammar exam. The receptionist smiled at her and told her that the exam was postponed until April, in four months. Linda felt like a cold bucket of water had been thrown on her. She felt so disappointed. Without saying goodbye to the receptionist, she left sadly.

One client, sitting in the lobby, listened to their conversation and was curious, so he asked the receptionist, "What exam? This is a Law Firm. I don't get it. What happened to that woman?"

The receptionist answered the man, "In the past there was a language school here. But five years ago, they closed down. Before leaving they told me the story of that woman. She tried to pass a grammar exam that they had every four months. She took it many times, but she never passed it. So, they decided to tell her not to take it again. But she kept coming every four months. So, when I started working here they told me about the distressed woman and her strange behavior."

The man felt sorry for the woman and asked the receptionist, “But why do you tell her to come back in four months? Just tell her that the school is not open anymore.”

The receptionist answered: “I did so, but she keeps coming.”

Glossary

1. **meow** (verb) – to make the sound a cat makes
2. **confident** (adjective) – believing that you can do something well or succeed
3. **struggle** (verb) – to try very hard; make a great effort; experience problems
4. **rush** (verb) – to move or act very quickly; hurry
5. **receptionist** (noun) – a person whose work is dealing with people who call or enter

Story 2: Up or Down by Dong Mei, China

When I was just beginning to learn English, I had trouble using the direction words “left” and “right.” Every time when I needed to use them, I had to think two or three times about which side is left and which side is right. I had struggled for a long time until one of my American friends told me the best way to remember it. She said, “Stretch out both of your arms, and then stretch out your **index finger**¹ and thumb. What do you see? Do you see a letter ‘L’?” “I see it!” I answered. “So, that is your left. Left is the word beginning with ‘L,’” she told me. From then on, I could easily find out how to use these direction words. If I am not sure, I just stretch out my fingers.

Several years later, I found that I was not the only one who struggled with direction words while learning English. My friend Yong was confusing the direction words “up” and “down.” He often made mistakes when using these words. One day, he was working as a teaching assistant in a **computer lab**.² Many students were practicing a computer program, and they kept asking Yong all kinds of questions. Yong was so busy and was trying to answer all the students’ questions. Finally, it was end of the class. While Yong was busy working with one student, another student asked Yong, “What do I need to do on the computer before I leave the classroom?” Without thinking twice, Yong said “**shut up**”³ instead of “**shut down**.”⁴ The student was shocked. “What did I do wrong?” Yong suddenly realized his mistake and said, “I am sorry. I mean you need to shut down your computer.” Fortunately, the student wasn’t mad at him. She shut down the computer and left the lab.

We were laughing at Yong after we heard his story. Those direction words sometimes confuse foreigners because they are used to translating them to their native language first, thinking about them two or three times, and then using them correctly. To use these words quickly, you need to practice often and try not to think about them in your native language first. Instead, think in English. Also, it will be helpful if you remember words in phrases, not by individual words.

Glossary

1. **index finger** (noun) – the finger next to the thumb
2. **computer lab** (noun) – short form of computer laboratory; a place equipped with computers for learning computer skills
3. **shut up** (verb) – to stop talking, laughing, etc. or to cause someone to stop talking, laughing, etc.
4. **shut down** (verb) - to stop operating or to cause (a machine) to stop operating

Story 3: House Saver by Ezzat Sabri Salah Mohammed, Egypt

It was the night before Thanksgiving. I had arrived in America three months before. It was the first time for me to experience Thanksgiving, the U.S. holiday held in November to celebrate the **harvest**.¹ The man I lived with bought a turkey, the traditional food eaten at Thanksgiving, two days before. Everything was ready for the following day.

That night, the man went out to enjoy a concert with some friends. I went up to my bedroom to get some rest after a tiring day at school. He arrived at midnight. He was feeling hungry, so he put some food on the **stove**² and waited with his two dogs. While he was waiting for his food to warm, he fell asleep.

An hour later, I heard the alarm sound. I thought I was dreaming. No, it was not a dream. I went downstairs. I could smell smoke. The first thing I did was turn the stove off. I carried the pan with oven gloves, put it in a sink, and turned the **tap**³ on. I opened the doors and the windows to clear the smoke. I called out to my host, but he didn't answer. I knocked on his bedroom door, but he was not there. After that, I heard him coughing in the dogs' room. I told him about the fire. He thanked me for saving his house from burning.

From that time on, he often told me that I should be a firefighter. I could not stop myself from laughing. We had a good time the following day enjoying a **delicious**⁴ meal of turkey.

Glossary

1. **harvest** (noun) – the time of year when vegetables, fruits, and crops are gathered from the plants to eat and store
2. **stove** (noun) – an appliance in the kitchen used to cook things
3. **tap** (noun) – the faucet; the place in the sink where the water comes out
4. **delicious** (adjective) – yummy; good tasting; good to eat

Story 4: Team Work by Gashbin Shamal, Kurdistan

It was a summer day in a town called Halo. Tommy was a twelve-year-old boy who loved to play soccer with his friends on their team. Tommy's father, Sam, practiced with Tommy so he could be ready for the games. Every day at the end of their practice, Sam told his son that the most important thing was **teamwork**¹ because if they had that they could score a goal in the match and have fun, too. However, Tommy didn't understand that. He thought he was the most important player among his friends because he thought the one who scored a goal was the most important member of all. His father was **worried**.²

In the first match, Tommy had a chance to score two goals. He shouted, "I am number one, the one who did it all." All his friends were looking at him and they didn't like his **reaction**,³ so they just looked at him. The next day, they had the second game and again Tommy's friends helped and gave him a pass that he took advantage of to score a goal. The game finished, and they won again. Tommy was shouting and running around saying all the credit went to him alone.

On the way home, Sam told Tommy it wasn't good to do that to his friends because they had defended his goals against the goalkeeper and prevented the other team from scoring. He told his son, "Tommy, you are on the offensive team, and that is why you get to score goals. But you need to have teamwork to win. Each person has an obligation on the field."

The next day, Tommy went into the final match dreaming of scoring and winning the championship. In the game, every time he asked for a pass, his teammates turned him down. When the first half was finished, Tommy hadn't been able to score. Suddenly, he remembered Sam's word "teamwork," and he started to understand what he had done in the previous days. He went to his friends and apologized to them all, telling them from now on it would be teamwork among them because everyone has to do his part.

Soon they were back in the game. Tommy got a pass and scored a beautiful goal and his team won the championship and the trophy. By the end of the day, they were more than friends; they were **champions**⁴ because Tommy and everyone understood the real meaning of teamwork and worked together to achieve their dream.

Glossary

1. **teamwork** (noun) – more than two people working together
2. **worried** (adjective) – troubled; concerned; not at peace
3. **reaction** (noun) – action; behavior
4. **champion** (noun) – in first place; winners

Story 5: The Sulfur Holders of the Kawa Ijen Volcano by Jean-Michele Basset, France

During the summer of 2012, my wife, Boua, my son, Franck, and I were in Indonesia.

The trip was 22 days, and I had organized it with the first part on Java Island with temple visits and a special visit to the Bromo and Kawa Ijen Volcanos. The second part was planned for Bali Island, which was more oriented to **aquatic**¹ activities like scuba diving.

During the first part of the trip, on the southeast part of Java Island, in the Park of the Volcanoes, I had planned to climb the Kawa Ijen Volcano to meet the **sulfur**² holders.

What should have been a simple tourist visit became a big life lesson for my son, Franck.

After a short night in a small hotel on a tea plantation, we woke up early in the morning. We took the car and went to the beginning of the trail. We walked on the slopes of the Kawa Ijen Volcano and soon we met a few men with two baskets connected by a wooden plank. In each basket was a large number of yellow blocks. And with each step, there was a little grinding of baskets that suggested the weight was important.

In fact, the yellow blocks were sulfur, and the men who we met had **extracted**³ the sulfur from the bottom of the crater, in the terrific acid **vapors**,⁴ with simply a tissue over their noses. The air was unbreathable and we could hear some coughing fits. The life expectancy of sulfur holders rarely exceeds 45 years. Each man brings his **harvest**⁵ of 80 to 90 kilograms of sulfur on his shoulders from the bottom of the crater to the base camp.

It was a job for mules, but it provided a good salary that allowed them to pay their children's school fees to enable them to have a better future than theirs.

Franck, 14 years old, did not speak a lot during this walk. But he observed a lot, and showed great emotion in the sound of his voice and sometimes tears in his eyes when he saw these living conditions. On that day, he really discovered that everyone doesn't have equal opportunities on earth.

And he has changed a lot since this trip. He pays more attention to the humanitarian problems and a lot less to other issues. It was what I wanted to **trigger**⁶ in him with this trip.

A successful plan!

Glossary

1. **aquatic** (adjective) – relating to water
2. **sulfur** (noun) – a chemical element and mineral
3. **extract** (verb) – to remove something; to take something out
4. **vapors** (noun) – a substance floating the air
5. **harvest** (noun) – a season's yield
6. **trigger** (verb) – to start

Story 6: The Black-Faced Gander Who Thought He Was a Dog! by Mario Garro Bustamante, Costa Rica

In a little rural town, there used to live a happily married couple. They were Betty and Pepe. This couple had been married for almost three years when they had their first baby, who they called Joaquin.

Ever since Joaquin was a little baby, everybody called him Quincho. Once, when Quincho was six years old, his parents took him to a relative's farm in a nearby town. This farm belonged to Mario, Betty's uncle. There they had a great time. They saw many animals. They milked cows, rode horses, fished in a lake, and harvested beans and corn. They stayed on the farm for one week.

The day they were leaving the farm, they saw something that caught their attention. One of the workers on the farm was asked by Mario to kill a little **gosling**¹ because it was sick. Betty, Pepe, and Quincho immediately asked the **laborer**² not to kill the gosling, and they decided to ask Mario to give it to them. Mario accepted, but reminded them that the gosling was sick and that it would die sooner than they thought. Betty told him that even animals need a second chance and that they were going to do everything to save the gosling. Mario gave the gosling to Betty's family, and they put it in a cage and took it back home. There, they took really good care of the gosling for a few days until it recovered.

As time passed and the gosling started growing and changing color, they found it to be different from any other they had ever seen because this one was growing black feathers around its face. They all fell in love with the gosling, which they called Blacky. Blacky grew up with a dog Quincho had been given by his parents some time before. Blacky became a very beautiful white **gander**³ with a black face.

One day when Librado, Betty's neighbor, was passing in front of the house and wanted to drop by to greet his neighbors, Blacky came out and started chasing and biting Librado, who ran as fast as he could and climbed a **guava**⁴ tree. From a branch of the tree, he called for help because Blacky was moving in circles around the tree. When Pepe and Quincho realized what was happening, they went outside their house to get Blacky, who was really angry and looked as though he were a guard dog.

As they got Blacky, Librado climbed down the tree and everybody started laughing about the event. Ever since, every time an **outsider**⁵ comes to Betty's house, Blacky greets the visitors by biting them and sometimes chasing them all around the yard.

Glossary

1. **gosling** (noun) – a young goose
2. **laborer** (noun) – a person whose work needs physical strength
3. **gander** (noun) – a male goose
4. **guava** (noun) – a small tropical fruit with pink flesh and many seeds inside
5. **outsider** (noun) – a person who doesn't belong to a particular social or family group

UNIT 4 VOCABULARY / GRAMMAR LESSONS

Vocabulary Lesson 4: Remembering Vocabulary

Over the last three units, you've learned a lot of new words.

One of the most important parts of improving your English is to develop a large vocabulary. You have made a good start, but you still have many words to learn.

In this unit, we want to give you some tips that will help you become a better vocabulary learner.

First, think about how you have learned vocabulary up till now. Do you use flashcards? Do you re-read lists of words? Do you just do language exercises and hope that the words will stick?

There are three main keys to follow when you study:

- Study by testing yourself.
- Study frequently, but not constantly.
- Make connections to what you already know.

Let's talk about these one at a time.

- Study by testing yourself.

In order to memorize vocabulary, it's not enough to just look at it. If you want to be able to remember the word when you need it, practice trying to remember it without looking at the answer. Quiz yourself on the words you want to know. If you have tried and you really can't remember, then look it up. A little while later, quiz yourself again.

Flashcards are one really good way to study by quizzing yourself. Put the words you're learning on one side, and the meaning on the other side. Or use electronic flashcards on your computer or smartphone. The important thing is not to just look at both sides. Once you see one side, do your best to remember what's on the other side, even if you're not sure. Only check after you have given your answer. This may feel harder, but it will give you better results.

Be sure to change the order of the words each time you test yourself, and remove words you know well from the testing set. Then put them back in after a while to make sure you still know them.

- Study frequently, but not constantly.

The best time to study by quizzing yourself is when you've just started to forget what you learned the last time you studied. Your knowledge will be there, but you'll have to work a little bit to recall it.

If you study the same few words for hours and hours, they will start to seem easy, but you will probably also forget them easily. It's better to study for a few minutes, and then another few minutes the next day, and so on. The better you know the words, the longer you can wait before studying them again. It's even better if you study one thing, then study something else, and then come back to

the first topic. You need to forget a little bit, and then try hard to remember. Learning feels harder, but it will stay with you longer.

- Make connections to what you already know.
When you learn a new word, think about how it fits with the words you've already learned.
 - Try to make sentences in English using the new word. Make the sentences about something that is important to you.
 - Connect the new word to related words that you already know.
 - Think about how the sound of the new word reminds you of something familiar (in any language), or how the parts of the words fit together.
 - If you can, draw a picture of the word.

When you connect your new word to your old knowledge, it's like you are tying it down in your memory. Those connections give it a home, and can help you recall it later.

Again, this is more work than just repeating the word over and over in your mind, but it will pay off when you are able to remember the word long after you studied it.

Studying is a bit like exercising. It's the effort that grows your muscles. You could do easy exercises, but the benefit will be small. Or you can do hard exercises for a greater benefit. Study by testing yourself, just when you're starting to forget, and think hard about the words, trying to make connections with them. It's worth the extra effort.

Practice Exercise 43

Choose the best answers.

1. Look at the tips below and choose the three that were mentioned in the passage about how to best remember vocabulary words.
 - a. Study the flashcards in a different order each time.
 - b. Put both the word and its meaning on the same side of the flash card.
 - c. Try to think of the right answer on your own before you look at the correct answer.
 - d. Take words out of the set of flashcards when you learn them.
 - e. Only use a paper version of flash cards to quiz yourself.

2. Look at the sentences below and select the three tips for remembering vocabulary that were given in the passage.
 - a. Study the same word over and over.
 - b. Make a sentence using the word you are studying.
 - c. Draw a picture of the word.
 - d. Study using easy exercises.
 - e. Think about words related to the word you are studying.

3. Choose the sentence that matches the tip given in the passage.
 - a. Study the same thing one time for many hours.
 - b. Study the same thing for a few minutes every day for several days.

4. Which of the following is a better choice for remembering vocabulary for a long time?
 - a. Study one subject for a long time. Then study another subject for a long time.
 - b. Study one subject for a short time. Then study another subject for a short time. Then go back to the first subject again.

Grammar Lesson 4A: Past Tense Error Correction

An important reason to study past tense forms and past tense use is so that you can make sure to write correct sentences in your story and other writing assignments. In the first part of this lesson, you will work on finding and fixing sentences that have incorrect past tense forms.

First, let's review the three past tense forms of one regular and two irregular verbs.

Simple Past	Past Continuous	Past Perfect
learned	was learning	had learned
wrote	was writing	had written
went	was going	had gone

Now let's review the negative of the past tense forms of the same verbs.

Simple Past	Past Continuous	Past Perfect
didn't learn	wasn't learning	hadn't learned
did not learn	was not learning	had not learned
didn't write	wasn't writing	hadn't written
did not write	was not writing	had not written
didn't go	wasn't going	hadn't gone
did not go	was not going	had not gone

Practice Exercise 44

Look at the following sentences. Some are correct and some have errors. For each sentence, decide if it is correct or incorrect.

1. Paul not go there last week.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect

2. Last night, Mary learning new words, and her brother writing a story.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect

3. William had already eaten breakfast when his friend arrived.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
4. Johnny had not seeing Mary since last week.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
5. Linda did not call her mother that day.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect

Let's review when you should use each form of the past tense.

Simple past is used to describe past states, events, or actions. It is the most commonly used past tense.

- John **was** happy that he **passed** the exam.
- Last week, my family and I **drove** to the city.
- It **was** sunny last week.

Past continuous is used to emphasize that an event was occurring at the same time as another event, and continuing for a while.

- While John **was cooking** dinner, I **was talking** to our guests.
- She **was walking** down the street when she saw her friend.

Past perfect is used to emphasize that an event finished before another event.

- The manager **had just locked** the shop door when I arrived, so I couldn't do my shopping.
- By the time he **had finished** his homework, it was too late to go outside.

Practice Exercise 45

Look at each sentence below and decide if it is correct or incorrect. If you think it is incorrect, decide which option is best. Pay attention to the part of the sentence in bold.

1. Maria **went** to the restaurant with her friends yesterday, so today she will probably stay at home.
 - a. Maria had gone to the restaurant with her friends yesterday, so today she will probably stay at home.
 - b. Maria was going to the restaurant with her friends yesterday, so today she will probably stay at home.
 - c. The sentence is correct.

2. While James **had played** a video game, he heard a loud noise from the kitchen.
 - a. While James played a video game, he had heard a loud noise from the kitchen.
 - b. While James was playing a video game, he heard a loud noise from the kitchen.
 - c. The sentence is correct.

3. The student **had finished** the exam before the teacher told the class to stop writing, so he worked on his homework.
 - a. The student was finishing the exam before the teacher told the class to stop writing, so he worked on his homework.
 - b. The student finished the exam before the teacher was telling the class to stop writing, so he worked on his homework.
 - c. The sentence is correct.

Grammar Lesson 4B: Sentence Structure Error Correction

The most important reason to study sentence structure is so that you can make sure to write correct sentences in your story and other writing assignments. In this unit, we will work on finding and fixing incorrect sentences.

First, let's review what can make a sentence incorrect.

Sentence Correction: Punctuation

Remember that a sentence must begin with a capital letter and end with a period, question mark, or exclamation point.

A comma is not enough for a compound sentence. You need to use “and,” “but,” “so,” or a similar word (with or without a comma).

Here are some good examples:

- My friends came to my house this afternoon.
- Tom was early, **but** Sally was late.
- Sally was late **but** Andrew was even later.

Bad Examples	Possible Corrections
my father grew up in the country	My father grew up in the country. My father grew up in the country!
His parents needed help on the farm, he baled hay and took care of animals.	His parents needed help on the farm. He baled hay and took care of animals. His parents needed help on the farm, so he baled hay and took care of animals.
He went to university he still came home to help all summer.	He went to university, but he still came home to help all summer. He went to university but he still came home to help all summer.

Sentence Correction: Subject and Verb

Remember that each sentence needs a subject and a verb. If it is missing one of these, it's just a fragment. A sentence can also have other parts, but it still needs both a subject and a verb. It can have more than one subject and verb, but it must have at least one of each.

Here are some good examples:

- Nina was singing.
- Nina's mother and sisters were singing with her.
- She loved singing and dancing and listening to music.
- Whenever she got a chance, she always sang a song.

Bad Examples	Possible Corrections
Tom and his four brothers and sisters.	Tom and his four brothers and sisters liked soccer. Tom had four brothers and sisters.
Played soccer every day with many friends.	They played soccer every day with many friends. Every day, many friends played soccer together.

Sentence Correction: Complex Sentences

Remember that complex sentences must have two (or more) parts to be a complete sentence: one part looks like a simple sentence, and the other part looks like a simple sentence with a subordinating conjunction like “when,” “if,” “because,” “before,” or others. The subordinating conjunction can be before the first part or the second part of the sentence.

Here are some good examples:

- He is always happy **when** he reads a good book.
- **If** his friends see him reading, they don't talk to him.
- They let him read first **because** he likes to finish the book **before** he talks.

Bad Examples	Possible Corrections
When she studies English.	She often studies English. When she studies English, she learns a lot. She learns a lot when she studies English.
Because she likes to talk to foreigners when she travels.	She likes to talk to foreigners when she travels. She studies English because she likes to talk to foreigners when she travels. Because she likes to talk to foreigners, she travels.

Practice Exercise 46

Look at the following sentences. Some are correct because they are complete sentences, and some are incorrect and not complete. For each sentence, choose correct or incorrect.

1. The tall, intelligent, interesting girl with two cats at home.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
2. She needed to talk to her teacher, but the teacher wasn't in his office.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
3. She looked in his classroom he wasn't there either.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
4. Because he was in a meeting with the rest of the math department.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect
5. The girl left a note for her teacher before she returned to her house.
 - a. correct
 - b. incorrect

UNIT 4 WRITING LESSON: Revision to Final Draft

Lesson

After you finish writing your first draft, take a break. Don't look at your story for a few days. This is a good time to read some other stories in English. Once you have taken a break, you can look at your story again and make revisions. When you revise a story, you make it better. This can mean improving the ideas in the story, or it can mean improving the quality of the sentences and word choices.

You can revise your story independently, or you can ask for help and suggestions from someone else who knows English. Here are some suggestions:

Asking another person for help

- Tell the other person why you are writing a story. Give them some background information about your story (Is it true? Fictionalized? Created?).
- Tell the other person you would like to know if any parts are unclear. Tell them they can ask questions or make suggestions about the plot.
- Tell the other person if you would like them to correct your grammar and vocabulary.
- After you make the suggested changes, read your story to see if you agree. Is it clearer? If you are unsure about the corrections, you can ask the person who helped you.

Revising independently

- Get a colored pen or pencil and a dictionary or computer and sit down with your story.
- First, read to make sure everything is clear. When you use a pronoun (he, she, they, it, this, that, etc.), will the reader know who or what you are talking about? When something happens, is it clear why this event matters to the story? Did you use any words you weren't sure about? If so, look them up to see if they mean what you think they mean.
- Next, read for grammar. Check the tense. If you have written your story in the past tense, make sure you always used the past tense, and check for past perfect when you refer to something before the time of the story. Check your irregular past tense forms. Finally, check the sentence structure. Find the subject and verb of each sentence to make sure the sentences are complete. Check the punctuation in the sentences so that they are complete and have conjunctions to connect the parts.
- Make all your corrections and read your story one more time. Is it clearer?

Now you have written your final draft. Are you proud of yourself? Congratulations!

Assignment

Look over your story again. Make changes and corrections to the ideas and grammar to revise your story. This can make the story clearer and easier to understand. Take your time to make a final draft you are proud of. Now try to find a way to share your story. You can post it on a blog or social media, or see if there is a local English club that would like to read or publish it. If you still know any of your past English teachers, one of them might be excited to see your work.

ANSWER KEY

Practice Exercise 1

1. activities
2. orientation
3. instructions
4. optional
5. required

Practice Exercise 2

1. revise
2. glossary
3. topic
4. discussion
5. participate
6. independent

Practice Exercise 3

1. b
2. d
3. f
4. a
5. c
6. e

Practice Exercise 4

1. c
2. e
3. d
4. a
5. b

Practice Exercise 5

1. walked
2. played
3. worked
4. cooked
5. helped

Practice Exercise 6

1. lived
2. planned
3. happened
4. shared
5. studied

Practice Exercise 7

1. gave
2. took
3. met
4. went
5. saw
6. spoke
7. found
8. brought
9. wrote
10. ate

Practice Exercise 8

1. C
2. C
3. C
4. C
5. C

Practice Exercise 9

1. I
2. C
3. I
4. I
5. C
6. I

Practice Exercise 10

1. b
2. a
3. c
4. c
5. b
6. d

Practice Exercise 11

1. c
2. c
3. b or c
4. b

Practice Exercise 12

1. a
2. b
3. c
4. b
5. a

Practice Exercise 13

1. for four years
2. for two hours
3. for 30 minutes
4. all day
5. all week

Practice Exercise 14

1. went
2. graduated
3. was, sang
4. were
5. Did you call

Practice Exercise 15

1. was eating
2. was talking
3. was cooking
4. were you working
5. was living

Practice Exercise 16

1. eaten
2. said
3. done
4. worked
5. known
6. taken

Practice Exercise 17

1. had studied
2. had finished
3. had slept
4. had left
5. had never gone

Practice Exercise 18

1. a
2. c
3. b
4. b
5. a

Practice Exercise 19

1. a, b
2. b, c
3. b, c
4. c, b
5. b, c
6. a, c

Practice Exercise 20

1. a
2. b
3. b
4. a

Practice Exercise 21

1. c
2. d
3. b
4. e
5. a

Practice Exercise 22

1. d
2. a
3. b
4. c

Practice Exercise 23

1. b
2. c
3. e
4. d
5. a

Practice Exercise 24

1. c
2. a
3. e
4. b
5. d

Practice Exercise 25

1. a, c, e
2. a, d, e
3. b, d, e

Practice Exercise 26

1. b, a
2. a, a
3. a, c, a

Practice Exercise 27

1. b
2. a
3. c

Practice Exercise 28

1. Tom didn't jump.
2. Maria wasn't talking.
3. Ben hadn't called.

Practice Exercise 29

1. 10
2. 3
3. 2
4. past simple

Practice Exercise 30

1. b, c
2. a, c
3. c, a

Practice Exercise 31

1. a
2. b
3. b

Practice Exercise 32

1. b
2. a
3. b
4. b
5. b
6. a

Practice Exercise 33

1. b, c, d
2. a, c, e

Practice Exercise 34

1. b
2. a
3. d
4. c
5. e

Practice Exercise 35

1. answers vary
2. answers vary
3. answers vary

Practice Exercise 36

1. answers vary
2. answers vary
3. answers vary

Practice Exercise 37

1. answers vary
2. answers vary
3. answers vary

Practice Exercise 38

1. a
2. c
3. b
4. a
5. c

Practice Exercise 39

1. b
2. a
3. a
4. b

Practice Exercise 40

1. c
2. a
3. c
4. b
5. c

Practice Exercise 41

1. a, b, c

Practice Exercise 42

1. My mother is a nurse, and my father is a doctor.
2. My parents met when they were working in a hospital.
3. Although they worked together, they wanted to meet more often.
4. They work very hard, but they are happy.

Practice Exercise 43

1. a, c, d
2. b, c, e
3. b
4. b, c, e

Practice Exercise 44

1. b
2. b
3. a
4. b
5. a

Practice Exercise 45

1. c
2. b
3. c

Practice Exercise 46

1. b
2. a
3. b
4. b
5. a