

PAST TENSES EXERCISES

1. Choose the correct answer.

This story is based on true events that _____ (1) many, many years ago in Scotland. One day, Mr Clark _____ (2) home with a smile on his face. He _____ (3) something very valuable in his hand: tickets for a long, long journey.

After many years working and saving, Mr Clark _____ (4) all the money he needed to take all his family to the United States. Earlier that afternoon he _____ (5) all the tickets that now he _____ (6) in his hand. It was the opportunity of their lives. "The United States of America", he repeated aloud just to see how nice it _____ (7) in his ears.

A few days before their departure, Mr Clark's son _____ (8) in the street when a dog _____ (9) him. The doctor _____ (10) to their home and _____ (11) the child's wound. Then he _____ (12) a yellow sheet on their front door. That yellow sheet meant that they _____ (13) quarantined. They _____ (14) to stay at home for two weeks because of the possibility of rabies.

Five days later, Mr Clark was at the docks. He _____ (15) the house and now he _____ (16) their ship to leave to the United States without him or his family. When the ship _____ (17) in the horizon, he _____ (18) and _____ (19) back home, crying.

A few days later, the tragic news spread throughout Scotland – the mighty Titanic _____ (20), taking hundreds of lives with it.

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|--------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. a) happened | b) were happening | c) had happened | d) had been happening |
| 2. a) walked | b) was walking | c) had walked | d) has been walking |
| 3. a) carried | b) was carrying | c) had carried | d) has been carrying |
| 4. a) saved | b) was saving | c) had saved | d) had been saving |
| 5. a) bought | b) was buying | c) had bought | d) had been buying |
| 6. a) held | b) was holding | c) had held | d) had been holding |
| 7. a) sounded | b) was sounding | c) had sounded | d) had been sounded |
| 8. a) played | b) was playing | c) had played | d) had been playing |
| 9. a) bit | b) was biting | c) had bitten | d) had been biting |
| 10. a) went | b) was going | c) had gone | d) had been going |
| 11. a) treated | b) was treating | c) had treated | d) had been treating |
| 12. a) hung | b) was hanging | c) had hung | d) had been hanging |
| 13. a) just were | b) were just being | c) had just been | d) had just been being |
| 14. a) had | b) were having | c) had had | d) had been having |
| 15. a) left | b) was leaving | c) had left | d) had been leaving |
| 16. a) watched | b) was watching | c) had watched | d) had been watching |
| 17. a) disappeared | b) was disappearing | c) had disappeared | d) had been disappearing |

| | | | |
|-----------------|--------------------|-----------------|-------------------------|
| 18. a) stood up | b) was standing up | c) had stood up | d) had been standing up |
| 19. a) went | b) was going | c) had gone | d) had been going |
| 20. a) sank | b) was sinking | c) had sunk | d) had been sinking |

2. Complete the sentences with the correct past form.

- By the time we _____ (get) to the theatre, the play _____ (already/start).
- Last night I _____ (dream) about going to the Moon.
- When Ginny _____ (see) me yesterday, I _____ (cross) the street..
- My dad _____ (paint) the living room for two hours before my brother _____ (come) to help him.
- Nora _____ (lie) in a hammock while Phil _____ (weed) the garden.
- Before the Smiths _____ (buy) their new house, they _____ (look) for a suitable one for a year.
- Laura _____ (send) us a postcard from her holiday in Italy.
- As Claire _____ (dust) the furniture, she _____ (break) her mum's vase.
- My sister _____ (never/be) to the circus before last week.
- Pam and I _____ (study) for the history exam when the lights _____ (go) off.
- The alarm clock _____ (not/ring) yesterday morning and I _____ (be) late work.
- Mr. Roberts _____ (work) in the company for six years before it _____ (go) bankrupt.
- You _____ (not/sleep) when I _____ (return) last night.
- When _____ (they/visit) you last time?
- Yesterday at this time, Karen _____ (write) a letter of application to the manager of L'Oréal.
- I _____ (not/pay) attention to the teacher and my friends _____ (not/pay) attention, either.
- When we _____ (go) out for a walk last Sunday morning, the sun _____ (shine) and it _____ (be) quite warm.
- We _____ (never/see) the Pyramids before our trip to Egypt in 2005.
- _____ (Simon and Alice/get) married last year?
- They _____ (wait) for more than an hour before Lady Gaga _____ (appear) on the stage.
- Michael and Robert _____ (rollerblade) in the backyard when Sally _____ (phone).
- I _____ (meet) Harry at Brenda's birthday party last month.
- Where _____ (you/spend) your last winter holidays?
- My cousin and I _____ (sit) on a park bench when we _____ (hear) a thunder.
- By six o'clock Ted _____ (pack) all his stuff in his backpack.

26. I _____ (sunbathe) for two hours before it _____ (start) to rain.

3. Rewrite the sentences using the words given. Use past tenses.

1. Anne read the book, then she went to see the film. (After)

2. Mike moved to Australia six months ago. (for)

3. First, he finished his work. Then he went to the cinema. (After/)

4. I was accustomed to sleeping early. (used)

5. I have been reading this story for a week (ago)

6. The last time I saw my best friend was three weeks ago. (last)

It is three weeks _____ my best friend.

7. The Browns have been living in Seattle for three years. (came)

The Browns _____

8. I have not travelled abroad since last summer. (last)

_____ abroad was last summer.

9. Joseph has played the saxophone for ten years. (ago)

Joseph _____

10. James has not drunk alcohol since last Christmas. (stopped)

James _____

11. First Bob read a comic. Then he read a comic. (had)

Before _____

12. The news finished before we switched on the TV. (By the time)

13. They had never visited a larger city. (largest)

It _____

14. It was the tastiest omelette I had ever eaten. (never)

I _____

15. How long have you been studying English? (begin)
