

“Something Funny That Happened to Me”

Using *Past Simple* and *Past Continuous* in Storytelling

Learning Objectives

By the end of the lesson, the student will be able to:

1. Distinguish between past simple and past continuous forms and uses.
2. Use past continuous to describe background actions and situations.
3. Use past simple to describe completed actions and interruptions.
4. Tell a short, coherent, and humorous story from their past using both verb tenses accurately.
5. Self-correct or respond to feedback during spoken storytelling.

Warm-Up Activity

Purpose: Activate background knowledge and build comfort with past narration.

Conversation Prompts (Tutor-led):

- “Have you ever had an embarrassing or funny moment?”
- “Where were you when it happened?”
- “Who was with you?”

Tutor Notes:

- Do not correct grammar yet; focus on fluency and comfort.
- Take brief notes of verbs the student uses naturally (e.g., *was walking, fell, said*).

New Lesson: Grammar Focus

1. Review of Verb Forms

Past Simple

- Form: *verb + -ed / irregular forms*
- Use: Completed actions, main events, interruptions
- Examples:
 - “I **slipped** on the floor.”
 - “Everyone **laughed**.”

Past Continuous

- Form: *was / were + verb-ing*
- Use: Background actions, actions in progress
- Examples:
 - “I **was walking** into the room.”
 - “People **were watching** me.”

2. Using Both Tenses Together

Explain and model:

“I **was walking** into the restaurant when I **tripped** and **spilled** my coffee.”

Key Concept (Simple Explanation):

- Past continuous = *what was happening*
- Past simple = *what suddenly happened*

Use a short timeline or gesture (hand moving = ongoing action; clap = interruption).

Guided Practice

Activity: Build a Story Together

Tutor and student co-create a short story orally.

Use guiding questions:

- “What were you doing?”
- “Where were you?”
- “What happened suddenly?”
- “What did people do or say?”

Example Frame (spoken):

- “I was __-ing when I __.”
- “While I was __-ing, someone __.”

Correct gently by reformulating:

- Student: “I walk and I fall.”
- Tutor: “Oh, so you *were walking* and you *fell*?”

Independent Practice & Assessment

Activity: Tell Your Funny Story

The student tells a **2–3 minute funny story** from their past.

Requirements (explained simply):

- Use at least **3 past continuous verbs**
- Use at least **3 past simple verbs**
- Include:
 - Where they were
 - What they were doing
 - What went wrong / what was funny

Tutor Role:

- Listen without interrupting.
- Take notes on:
 - Correct use of tenses
 - Common errors
 - Strengths

Extension (if appropriate for student’s ability):

- Tutor writes down the story as the student tells it (including any mistakes that are made)
- Student reads the story and corrects any mistakes
- Student rewrites the story in corrected form (may be done for homework)

Feedback & Mini-Correction

1. Praise first:
 - “Your story was clear and funny.”
 - “You used past continuous very well.”
2. Review 2–3 key corrections:
 - Write or say corrected sentences.
 - Ask the student to repeat the improved version.

Example:

- Original: “I was drop my phone.”
- Corrected: “I **dropped** my phone.”

Closure Activity

Reflection & Wrap-Up

Ask the student:

- “Which tense was easier for you?”
- “When do we use past continuous?”
- “When do we use past simple?”

Optional Extension (if time allows):

- Ask the student to retell the story in **30 seconds**, focusing on clarity and verb accuracy.

Optional Homework (if appropriate)

- Write 8–10 sentences about another funny or surprising moment from the past using both tenses.
- Be ready to tell it next session.

Something Funny That Happened to Me

Storytelling Worksheet: Past Simple & Past Continuous

Part 1: Quick Review

A. Choose the Correct Verb Form

Circle the correct option.

1. I (**was walking / walked**) down the street when I (**tripped / was tripping**).
2. We (**were talking / talked**) when the teacher (**entered / was entering**) the room.
3. While I (**was cooking / cooked**), I (**burned / was burning**) the food.
4. They (**were laughing / laughed**) when they (**heard / were hearing**) the joke.

B. Match the Use to the Verb Tense

Draw a line to match.

Verb Tense	Use
Past Simple	a. An action in progress
Past Continuous	b. A completed action
Past Simple	c. A sudden interruption
Past Continuous	d. Background action

Part 2: Plan Your Funny Story

A. Set the Scene (Past Continuous)

Complete the sentences.

1. I was _____ when the story happened.
(example: walking to work, shopping, talking on the phone)
2. I was at _____.
3. I was with _____.

B. What Happened? (Past Simple)

Complete the sentences.

4. Suddenly, I _____.
5. Then, _____.
6. Everyone _____.

C. Put It Together

Use when or while.

7. I was _____ when I _____.
8. While I was _____, someone _____.

Part 3: Write Your Funny Story

Write 8–12 sentences.

Use:

- **Past continuous** for background actions
- **Past simple** for completed actions and interruptions

You may use the sentences above to help you.

My Funny Story

Part 4: Self-Check

✓ Check each box after you finish.

- I used past continuous (was / were + verb-ing)
- I used past simple verbs
- My story has a beginning, middle, and ending
- My story explains why it is funny

Telling a Funny Story

Adverbs of Time Worksheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

Part 1: Review – Adverbs of Time

A. Common Adverbs of Time

Read the adverbs below. These words help show **when** something happened.

- yesterday
- last night
- last week / last year
- earlier
- at that moment
- suddenly
- while
- when
- eventually
- finally

B. Match the Adverb to Its Meaning

Draw a line to match.

Adverb of Time	Meaning
suddenly	a. In the end
while	b. At a past time before now
finally	c. At the same time
yesterday	d. Very quickly / unexpectedly

Part 2: Choose the Best Adverb

Circle the best answer.

1. I was sleeping (**when / suddenly**) the phone rang.
2. (**Yesterday / While**) I was walking to work, I saw my boss.
3. I was talking to my friend (**while / finally**) the waiter dropped the food.
4. (**Suddenly / Last year**), I fell off my chair in the meeting.
5. I felt embarrassed, but (**eventually / when**) everyone laughed.

Part 3: Complete the Sentences

Use an adverb of time from the box.

Word Bank:

when · while · suddenly · yesterday · at that moment · finally

1. I was waiting for the bus _____ it started to rain.
2. _____, my phone fell out of my pocket.
3. _____ I was cooking, the smoke alarm went off.
4. _____, I realized everyone was looking at me.
5. I missed the bus, but _____ I arrived at work.

Part 4: Build Story Sentences

Complete each sentence using:

- **one adverb of time**
- **past simple or past continuous**

1. _____ I was _____, I _____.
2. I was _____.
3. _____, everyone _____.

Part 5: Use Adverbs in Your Story

Write 6–10 sentences about a funny moment from your past.
Try to use at least 4 adverbs of time.

My Story

Part 6: Self-Check

✓ Check all that apply.

- I used adverbs of time
- I used past simple verbs
- I used past continuous verbs
- My story is clear and easy to follow
- My story explains when things happened

Telling a Funny Story

Using WHEN and WHILE to Make Complex Sentences

Part 1: Quick Review

A. Read and Notice

Read the sentences.

1. I **was walking** to work **when** I fell.
2. **While** I **was cooking**, the fire alarm **went off**.

Remember:

- **WHEN** → often introduces a **short, completed action** (past simple).
- **WHILE** → often introduces a **longer action in progress** (past continuous).

B. Choose the Correct Word

Circle **when** or **while**.

1. I was driving (**when** / **while**) my phone rang.
2. (**When** / **While**) I was shopping, I met an old friend.
3. We were laughing (**when** / **while**) the teacher walked in.
4. (**When** / **While**) I slipped, everyone was watching.
5. I was talking to my boss (**when** / **while**) I spilled my coffee.

Part 2: Match the Sentence Halves

Draw a line to match the sentence parts.

Sentence Beginning	Sentence Ending
1. I was sleeping	a. when the waiter dropped the food
2. While I was giving a presentation	b. when my alarm didn't ring
3. We were eating dinner	c. the lights suddenly went out
4. I woke up late	d. my phone started vibrating

Part 3: Combine the Sentences

Combine the two sentences using **when** or **while**.

1. I was walking home. I slipped on the ice.
→ _____
2. She was talking on the phone. She missed her stop.
→ _____
3. I cooked dinner. The fire alarm went off.
→ _____
4. We were watching a movie. The power went out.
→ _____

Part 4: Complete the Sentences

Use **when** or **while** and the correct verb form.

1. I was _____ (walk) _____ I _____ (fall).
2. _____ I was _____ (talk), my boss _____ (enter).
3. We _____ (laugh) _____ the teacher _____ (ask) a question.
4. _____ I was _____ (drive), the police _____ (stop) me.

Part 5: Write Your Own Complex Sentences

Write **4 sentences** about a funny or surprising moment from your past.

Each sentence must use **when** or **while**.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Part 6: Story Challenge (Optional)

Write a short story (6–8 sentences).

Use **when** or **while** at least 3 times.

My Story

Part 7: Self-Check

✓ Check each box.

- I used **when** correctly
- I used **while** correctly
- I used past simple verbs
- I used past continuous verbs
- My sentences are complete and clear