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Exercise 1: Past Progressive

The Andersons had a very busy day yesterday. Look at the schedule below and complete the following sentences.

Note: One use of the past progressive tense is to describe an action that was happening (in progress) at a particular point in time in the past.

The Andersons' Very Full Day

Time	Mr. Anderson	Mrs. Anderson
7:00 – 7:15	showered	made breakfast for family
7:15 – 7:20	shaved	
8:00 – 8:30	ate breakfast	ate breakfast
9:00 – 12:00	wrote emails	taught history class
12:00 – 1:00	ate lunch in a restaurant	ate lunch at school
1:00 – 2:00	met with boss	taught math class
2:00 – 3:00	met with secretary	met with principal
3:00 – 4:00	wrote reports	exercised at gym
4:00 – 5:00	visited clients	bought groceries
5:30 – 6:00	played tennis	made dinner
6:30 – 7:00	ate dinner at home	ate dinner
7:00 – 9:00	cleaned apartment	cleaned apartment
9:00 – 11:00	watched a movie	watched a movie
11:00	fell asleep	fell asleep

Ex. At 7:10 Mr. Anderson was taking a shower.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. At 7:15 Mrs. Anderson

_____ | 6. At 1:30 Mrs. Anderson

_____ |
| 2. At 8:15 Mr. and Mrs. Anderson

_____ | 7. At 3:30 Mrs. Anderson

_____ |
| 3. At 10:00 Mr. Anderson

_____ | 8. At 4:30 Mr. Anderson

and Mrs. Anderson |
| 4. At 11:00 Mrs. Anderson

_____ | 9. At 8:00 Mr. and Mrs. Anderson

_____ |
| 5. At 12:30 Mr. Anderson

and Mrs. Anderson
_____ | 10. At 11:30 Mr. and Mrs. Anderson

_____ |

Exercise 2: Past Progressive

Class survey. Interview the classmates in your group. Find out what they were doing at the specific times mentioned and complete the chart below.

Ex. What were you doing at 4:00 pm yesterday? I was playing basketball.

Time	Classmate #1	Classmate #2	Classmate #3	You
4:00 pm yesterday				
5:00 pm yesterday				
6:00 pm yesterday				
8:00 last night				
10:00 last night				
1:00 this morning				
6:00 this morning				
7:45 this morning				
8:15 this morning				
8:45 this morning				

Exercise 3: Past Progressive Vs. Simple Past

Make sentences using the past progressive and the simple past to describe the situation below.
Follow the example given.

Note: The past progressive tense is used to describe an action that was in progress when another action took place.

Situation: Yesterday, the students at Calvin High School were all busy doing things when the fire alarm rang.

Ex. grade 12 boys / play basketball / in the gym

The grade 12 boys were playing basketball in the gym when the fire alarm rang.

1. school choir / practice for the concert _____

2. grade 10 class / study Spanish _____

3. principal / meet / with group of parents _____

4. history teachers / discuss / final exam _____

5. custodian / clean / girls' locker room _____

6. the student council / discuss / graduation dance _____

7. actors / rehearse / school play _____

Exercise 4: Past Progressive Practice

Complete the following sentences using the correct form of the past progressive tense of the verbs provided.

Ex. They were standing (stand) on the corner when I saw them.

1. The sun _____ (shine) when I woke up this morning.
2. It _____ (rain) when I left the office.
3. I _____ (eat) dinner when you called me.
4. She got very sick while she _____ (travel) overseas.
5. Martin _____ (work) in the garden when it started to rain.
6. I _____ (cook) dinner when the phone rang.
7. Mr. Johnson cut himself while _____ (shave).
8. She fell asleep while she _____ (watch) the movie.
9. Andrea broke her ankle when she _____ (skate).
10. I saw a bad accident while I _____ (drive) home.
11. She found a ten-dollar bill while she _____ (walk) home.
12. They _____ (speed) when the accident happened.
13. The baby _____ (sleep) when we got home from the party.
14. She broke a plate while she _____ (do) the dishes.
15. When you called, I _____ (take) a shower.
16. David met his neighbors while he _____ (move) into his new apartment.

Exercise 5: Past Progressive and Simple Past

Read each situation below. Answer the first question using the past progressive. Then use your imagination to answer the second question using the simple past.

Ex. Dan was walking to work when it started to rain.

What was Dan doing when it started to rain? *He was walking to work.*

What did Dan do when it started to rain? *He opened his umbrella and ran to the bus stop.*

1. **Maryann was writing a letter to her boyfriend when the electricity went out.** What was Maryann doing when the lights went out?

What did Maryann do when the lights went out?

2. **Brenda was cooking dinner when she saw a mouse on the kitchen floor.** What was Brenda doing when she saw the mouse?

What did Brenda do when she saw the mouse?

3. **Last week Andrew was having coffee with his beautiful new secretary when his wife came into the café.** What was Andrew doing when his wife came into the café?

What did Andrew do when his wife came into the café?

4. **Kevin was painting the house when he fell off the ladder.** What was Kevin doing when he fell off the ladder?

What did Kevin do when he fell off the ladder?

5. **I was walking to work when I saw the car accident.** What were you doing when you saw the accident?

What did you do when you saw the accident?

Exercise 6: Past Progressive Vs. Simple Past Practice

Complete the following sentences using the correct form (past progressive or simple past) of the verbs provided.

1. Chris _____ (fall) off the ladder while he _____ (paint) the ceiling.
2. _____ (you/study) when I _____ (call) you last night?
3. They _____ (drive) very fast when the police officer _____ (stop) them.
4. While I _____ (drive) to work yesterday, I _____ (see) an accident.
5. I _____ (read) a great book last week.
6. My friends _____ (drop in) for a visit while I _____ (watch) TV last night.
7. I _____ (see) Andrea at the party last night. She _____ (wear) a beautiful dress.
8. The children _____ (go) to bed at 9:00 last night. At 10:00, they _____ (sleep).
9. We _____ (have) dinner at a new restaurant last night. While we _____ (eat), one of the waiters _____ (drop) a tray on the floor.
10. Monty _____ (work) in his garage last night when he _____ (hear) a loud noise. He _____ (put) down his tools and _____ (go) outside into the yard. While he _____ (look) around, someone _____ (run) out of his front door. Monty _____ (call) the police. He _____ (tell) the police that the robber _____ (wear) a black jacket and jeans.
11. When Sue _____ (arrive) at the theater, her friends _____ (wait) for her inside.
12. John _____ (break) his leg while he _____ (play) football.
13. Mr. Duncan _____ (get) home last night while his wife _____ (cook) dinner and the children _____ (watch) TV.
14. Paula _____ (stay) home yesterday because it _____ (snow) very heavily.

Exercise 7: Past Progressive Review (Find Someone Who...)

*Interview your classmates. If your classmate answers **yes**, write his/her name on the right, and write a full sentence on the line provided. Walk around the class and find someone....*

1. who was sleeping at 10:00 last night. _____

2. who was standing in the hall when the class began this morning. _____

3. who was sitting in the classroom when the teacher came in this morning. _____

4. who was eating dinner last night when someone called. _____

5. who was wearing earrings yesterday. _____

6. who was chewing gum before class. _____

7. who was doing homework at 9:30 last night. _____

8. who was taking a bath at 10:00 last night. _____

9. who was playing a sport at 7:00 last night. _____

10. who wasn't sleeping when his/her alarm clock rang this morning. _____

Answer Key

Exercise 1:

1. was making breakfast for the family
2. were eating breakfast
3. was writing emails
4. was teaching history class
5. was eating lunch in a restaurant / was eating lunch at school
6. was teaching math class
7. was exercising at the gym
8. was visiting clients / was buying groceries
9. were cleaning the apartment
10. were sleeping

Exercise 3:

1. The school choir was practicing for the concert when the fire alarm rang.
2. The grade 10 class was studying Spanish when the fire alarm rang.
3. The principal was meeting with a group of parents when the fire alarm rang.
4. The history teachers were discussing the final exam when the fire alarm rang.
5. The custodian was cleaning the girls' locker room when the fire alarm rang.
6. The student council was discussing the graduation dance when the fire alarm rang.
7. The actors were rehearsing for the school play when the fire alarm rang.

Exercise 4:

- | | | | | | |
|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|-----------------|-------------------|
| 1. was shining | 2. was raining | 3. was eating | 4. was traveling | 5. was working | 6. was cooking |
| 7. was shaving | 8. was watching | 9. was skating | 10. was driving | 11. was walking | 12. were speeding |
| 13. was sleeping | 14. was doing | 15. was taking | 16. was moving | | |

Exercise 5:

(Second answers will vary.)

1. She was writing a letter.
2. She was cooking.
3. He was having coffee with his beautiful secretary.
4. Kevin was painting.
5. I was walking to work.

Exercise 6:

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------------|--|----------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1. fell / was painting | 2. Were you studying / called | 3. were driving / stopped | 4. was driving / saw | |
| 5. read | 6. dropped in / was watching | 7. saw / was wearing | 8. went / were sleeping | |
| 9. had / were eating / dropped | 10. was working / heard / put / went / was looking / ran / called / told / was wearing | 11. arrived / were waiting | 12. broke / was playing | 13. got / was cooking / were watching |
| 14. stayed / was snowing | | | | |

Spelling Note: This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Neighbors*, *Theater*, *Traveling*, *Practicing*, and *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Neighbours*, *Theatre*, *Travelling*, *Practising*, and *Practise* (when used as a verb, *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the text and see if they know the alternate spellings.