

TELL ME A STORY

Past Simple vs. Past Continuous



LET'S TALK!



Do you enjoy telling stories?
If so, what kinds of stories
do you like to tell? If not,
why not?

What makes a story
interesting to you?

Would you rather tell or
write a story that happened
to you?

Can you say if a person tells
a real story or an invented
one?

LET'S READ!

Read two stories below. Which one do you find more interesting?

Mike's Camping Trip

Last summer, my friend Emma and I decided to go on a camping trip. We found a beautiful place near a lake in the forest. While I was collecting wood for our campfire, Emma was making delicious sandwiches. Suddenly, we heard some noise in the bushes near us, which made us both a little scared, but we quickly forgot about it.

Then, around 6 p.m., we were sitting by the fire, and Emma started telling a spooky ghost story. I was listening to it carefully. Suddenly, out of nowhere, we heard a laugh behind us! Those were our friends Mark and Lucy, trying to scare us. We all laughed together.

During the night, while we were sleeping in our tent, it started to rain. Water came into our tent! I woke Emma up, and we moved to a dry place.

The next morning, the sun was shining brightly after the rain. While I was cooking breakfast, Emma was packing our things. Even though it rained, we had lots of fun.

That camping trip was amazing!



Lia's Christmas Holiday

Two years ago I had the best trip of my life. My family and I were enjoying Christmas in Paris. The city looked magical with twinkling lights everywhere and the smell of yummy pastries. We stayed in a cozy apartment near the Eiffel Tower, waking up to the bakery's delicious croissants each morning.

On Christmas Eve, we went to a beautiful midnight church service at Notre Dame Cathedral. I got a sketchbook and coloured pencils as gifts! We visited the Louvre and saw famous paintings like the Mona Lisa.

The most amazing moment was at a park near the Eiffel Tower. As the sun was setting, the tower started lighting up, and people were dancing happily. We joined in, dancing under the sparkling lights—a magical moment!

Later, we were enjoying a tasty dinner at a lovely café at about 9 p.m., trying ratatouille and sipping hot chocolate while the city was sparkling.

That Christmas in Paris felt like a fairy tale. The things we saw, the food we ate, and being together made it an amazing adventure. Paris was a fascinating place, and I'll always remember this adventure!

READING COMPREHENSION

1. Match the halves of the sentences from the texts.

1. My family and I were

2. The things we saw, the food we ate,

3. On Christmas Eve, we

4. Suddenly, we heard some noise in the bushes near us, which

5. During the night, while we were

6. Then, around 6 p.m. we were sitting by the fire, and Emma

a) started telling a spooky ghost story.

b) enjoying Christmas in Paris.

c) and being together made it an amazing adventure.

d) sleeping in our tent, it started to rain.

e) made us both a little scared, but we quickly forgot about it.

f) went to a beautiful midnight church service at Notre Dame Cathedral.

2. Work in pairs and answer the questions.

1. What was Emma doing while Mike was collecting wood?

2. What happened when Mike and Emma were sitting by the fire?

3. How did Mike react when water came into their tent?

4. Where did Lia and her family stay during Christmas in Paris?

5. Which famous paintings did Lia see at the Louvre?

6. What dishes did Lia and her family try during dinner at the café?



PAST SIMPLE VS PAST CONTINUOUS

Read the sentences from the text and match each sentence with the corresponding rule.

1. Suddenly, we heard some noise in the bushes near us, which made us both a little scared, but we quickly forgot about it.
2. The city looked magical with twinkling lights everywhere and the smell of yummy pastries.
3. Two years ago I had the best trip of my life.

1. Then, around 6 p.m. we were sitting by the fire, and Emma started telling a spooky ghost story.
2. My family and I were enjoying Christmas in Paris.
3. During the night, while we were sleeping in our tent, it started to rain.

- a. The past simple is used to talk about a certain action or event that took place at a specific point in the past.
- b. We use the past simple to talk about past events in chronological order.
- c. We use the past simple to tell details of the story.

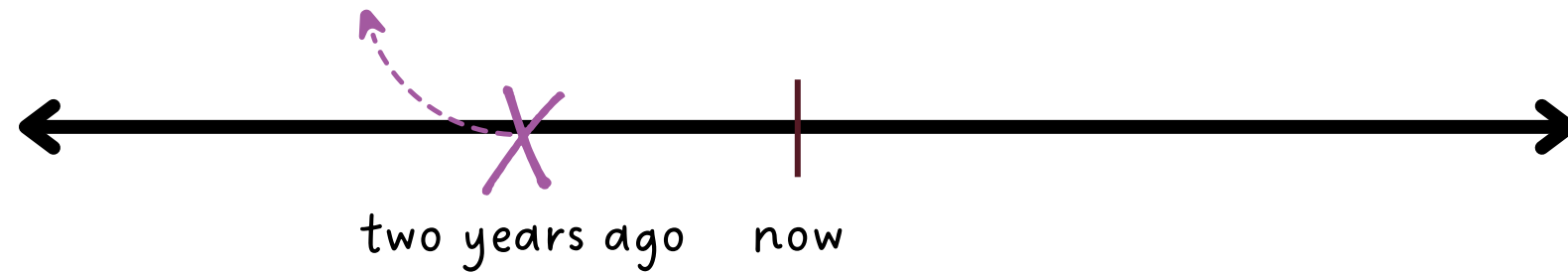
- a. We often use the past continuous to set the scene.
- b. We use the past continuous to talk about an action that was in progress at a particular time.
- c. We use the past continuous for actions in progress in the past or longer actions interrupted by shorter actions in the past simple.



PAST SIMPLE VS. PAST CONTINUOUS

past simple

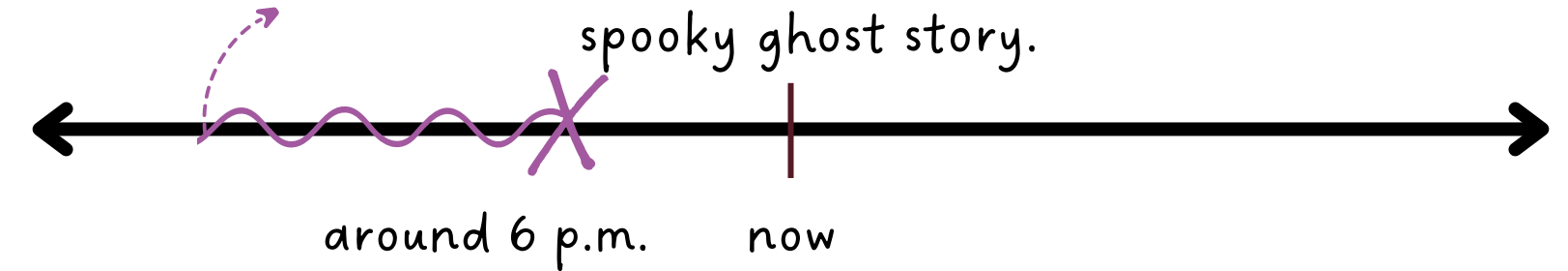
Two years ago I *had* the best trip of my life.



- The past simple is used to talk about a certain action or event that took place at a specific point in the past. *Two years ago I had the best trip of my life.*
- We use the past simple to talk about past events in chronological order. *Suddenly, we heard some noise in the bushes near us, which made us both a little scared, but we quickly forgot about it.*
- We use past simple to tell details of the story. *The city looked magical with twinkling lights everywhere and the smell of yummy pastries.*

past continuous

Then, around 6 p.m. we *were sitting* by the fire, and Emma started telling a spooky ghost story.



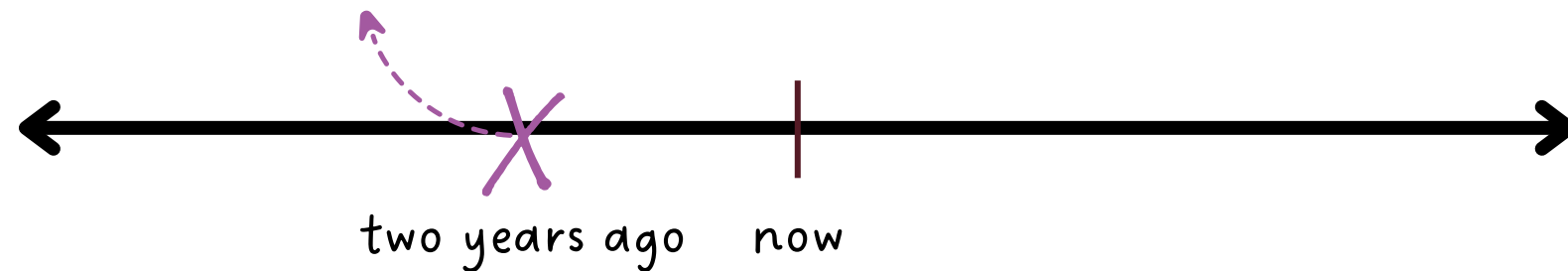
- The past continuous tense is used to talk about an action or event that was in progress at a specific point in the past. *Then, around 6 p.m. we were sitting by the fire, and Emma started telling a spooky ghost story.*
- We use the past continuous to set the scene in a story. *My family and I were enjoying Christmas in Paris.*
- We use the past continuous for actions in progress in the past or longer actions interrupted by shorter actions in the past simple. *During the night, while we were sleeping in our tent, it started to rain.*



PAST SIMPLE VS. PAST CONTINUOUS

past simple

Two years ago I *had* the best trip of my life.



yesterday, last night/ week/month/year, ago, in 2021, in the past

+ Subject + V2/ed

We heard a laugh behind us.

- Subject + didn't + V

We didn't hear a laugh behind us.

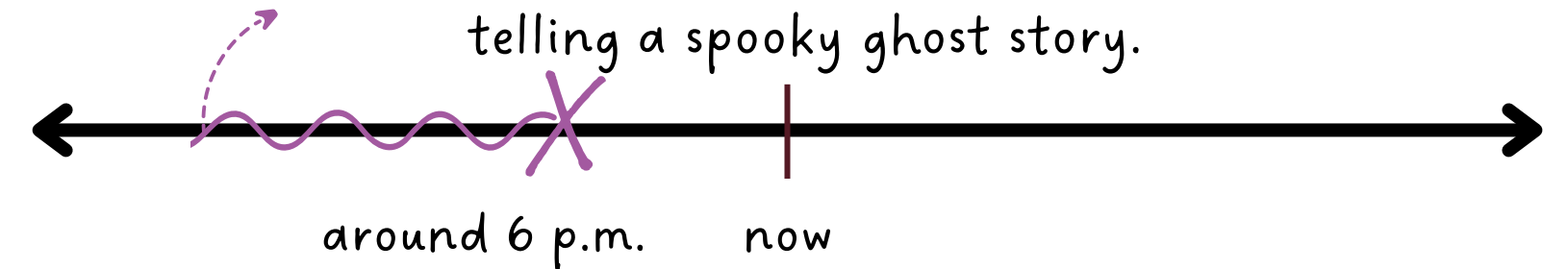
? Did + Subject + V

Did we hear a laugh behind us?



past continuous

Then, around 6 p.m. we *were sitting* by the fire, and Emma started telling a spooky ghost story.



while, when, all day, all evening, for hours, at that time, yesterday at 7 a.m.

+ Subject + was/were + V+ing

The sun was shining brightly after the rain.

- Subject + wasn't/weren't + V+ing

The sun wasn't shining brightly after the rain.

? Was/Were + subject + V+ ing

Was the sun shining brightly after the rain?

Create your own examples in both tenses.



LET'S PRACTISE



1. Fill in the gaps with the correct form of Past Continuous:

1. While Grandma _____ (tell) her tales of adventure, the children were listening by the fireplace.
2. When the storyteller arrived, the audience _____ (settle) down in their seats.
3. The writer _____ (craft) stories all day, while the illustrators _____ (draw) characters for the book.
4. Yesterday at 7 a.m., the author _____ (type) on the keyboard while sipping coffee and creating an amazing plot for her novel.
5. At that time, the brothers _____ (act) out a story but their parents _____ (film not) them.
6. _____ the students _____ (write) their own stories in their notebooks yesterday at 7 a.m.?
7. While the group of friends _____ (have) a picnic, one friend _____ (entertain) everyone by sharing amusing stories.
8. The family _____ (watch) TV all evening, but dad _____ (tell) bedtime stories to his daughter.

2. Fill in the gaps with the correct form of Past Continuous or Past Simple:

1. As the children _____ (listen) to the story, the thunder _____ (rumble) loudly outside.
2. While Sara _____ (tell) her tale, her little brother suddenly _____ (fall) asleep on the couch.
3. When the clock _____ (strike) midnight, the storyteller _____ (create) an intriguing plot twist.
4. The fire _____ (crackle) softly in the background while Grandpa _____ (tell) his adventures from long ago.
5. While the wind _____ (blow) outside, the storyteller suddenly _____ (catch) everyone's attention.
6. As the moonlight _____ (light) through the windows, the children _____ (sit) in a circle to listen to the fairy tale.
7. The storyteller _____ (paint) bright pictures with words when the microphone _____ (stop) working.
8. The rain _____ (start) pouring outside, while the old man _____ (entertain) the guests with his fascinating anecdotes.

LET'S WRITE!

**Example: While I was
dancing, my mum was
cooking.*

What were they doing? Create sentences using 'While'

1.



2.



3.



LET'S WRITE!

**Example: I was mopping
the floor when my mom
came in.*

What were they doing when something happened? Create sentences using 'When'

1.



2.



3.



LET'S WRITE!

What was happening yesterday in the morning?

**Example: Yesterday at 8
a.m. I was having
breakfast.*

7 a.m.

8 a.m.

9 a.m.

10 a.m.

11 a.m.

12 a.m.

1.



2.



3.



LET'S PLAY!

Play 'Mystery Squares' and practise Past Simple and Past Continuous.

Choose a square you would like to open and point at it. Read the sentence. Complete it with the correct tense of the verb in brackets. CLICK on the square to see how many coins you get.

Have fun!

ENG HUB

Use a pencil to keep track of the points.

SCORE

MYSTERY SQUARES

1 2 3 4 5

A

B

C

D

Choose a square you would like to open and point at it. Read the sentence. Complete it with the correct tense of the verb in brackets (Past Simple or Past Continuous). CLICK on the square to see how many coins you get.

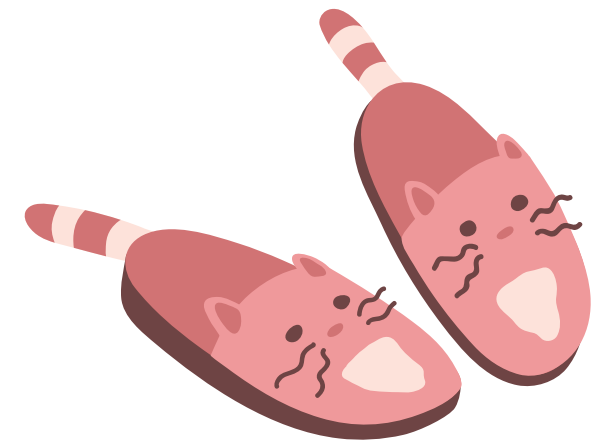
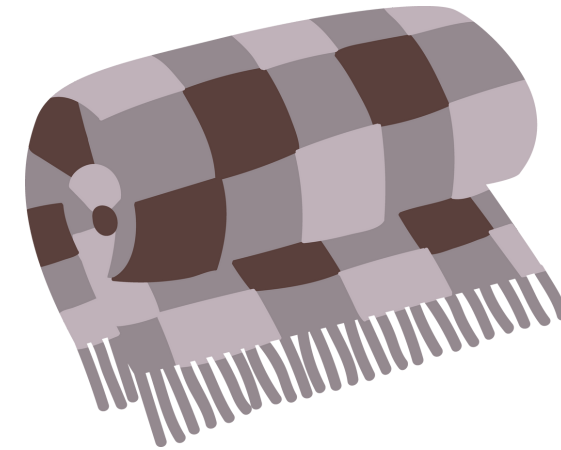
Use the letters and the numbers on the sides to name the square you want to open.

PLAY NOW

LET'S CREATE!

Look at the pictures and create a story using Past Simple or Past Continuous tense.

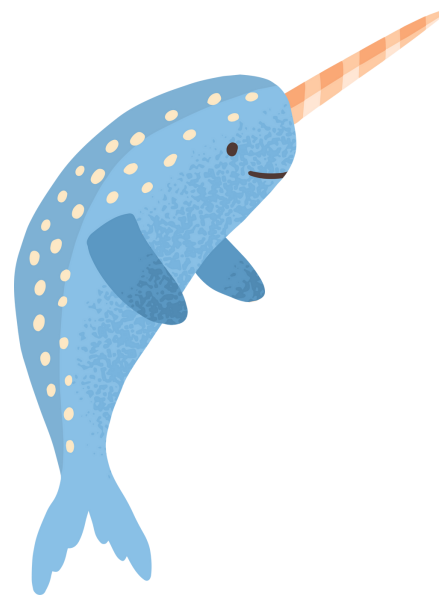
**You may work in pairs, so each student uses 5 cards for their story*



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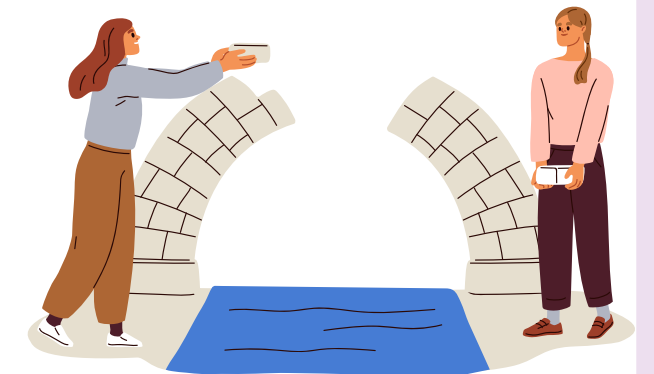
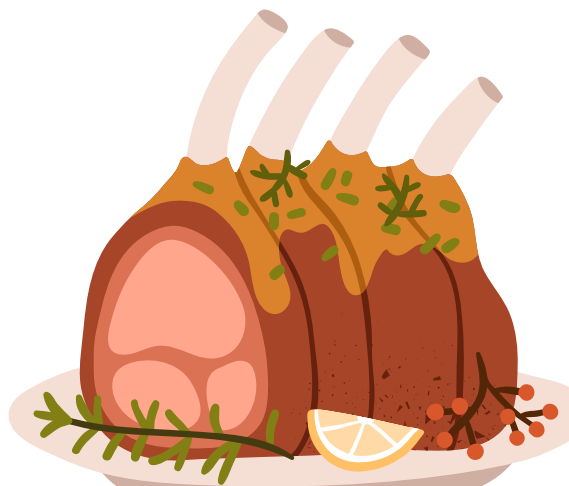
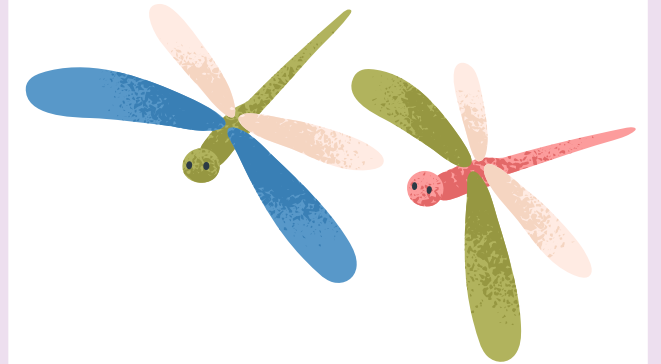
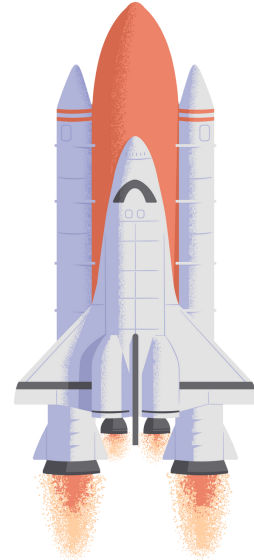
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LET'S CREATE!

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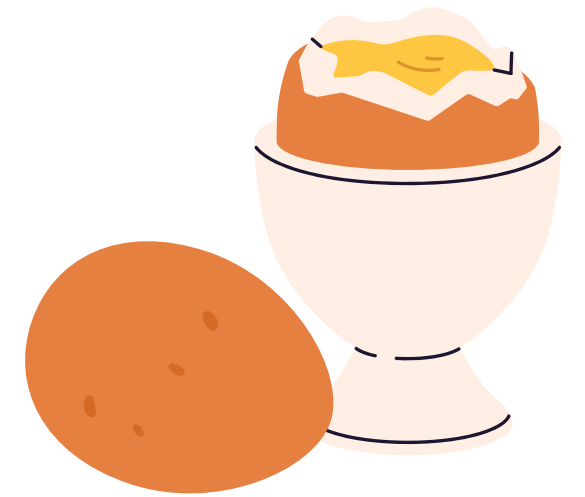
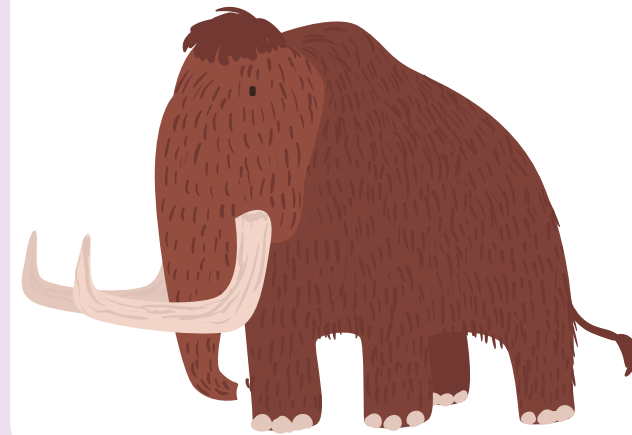
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EXTRA TASK

1. Underline the correct verb form in brackets.

Yesterday evening, while Mr. and Mrs. Thompson (walked/were walking) through the park, they (noticed/were noticing) something unusual. The park was usually quiet, but this time, a group of musicians (played/were playing) near the fountain.

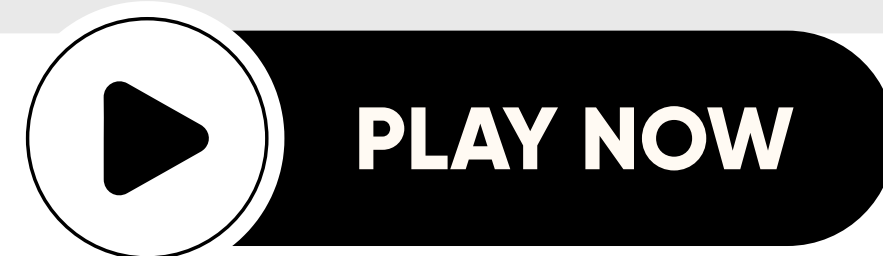
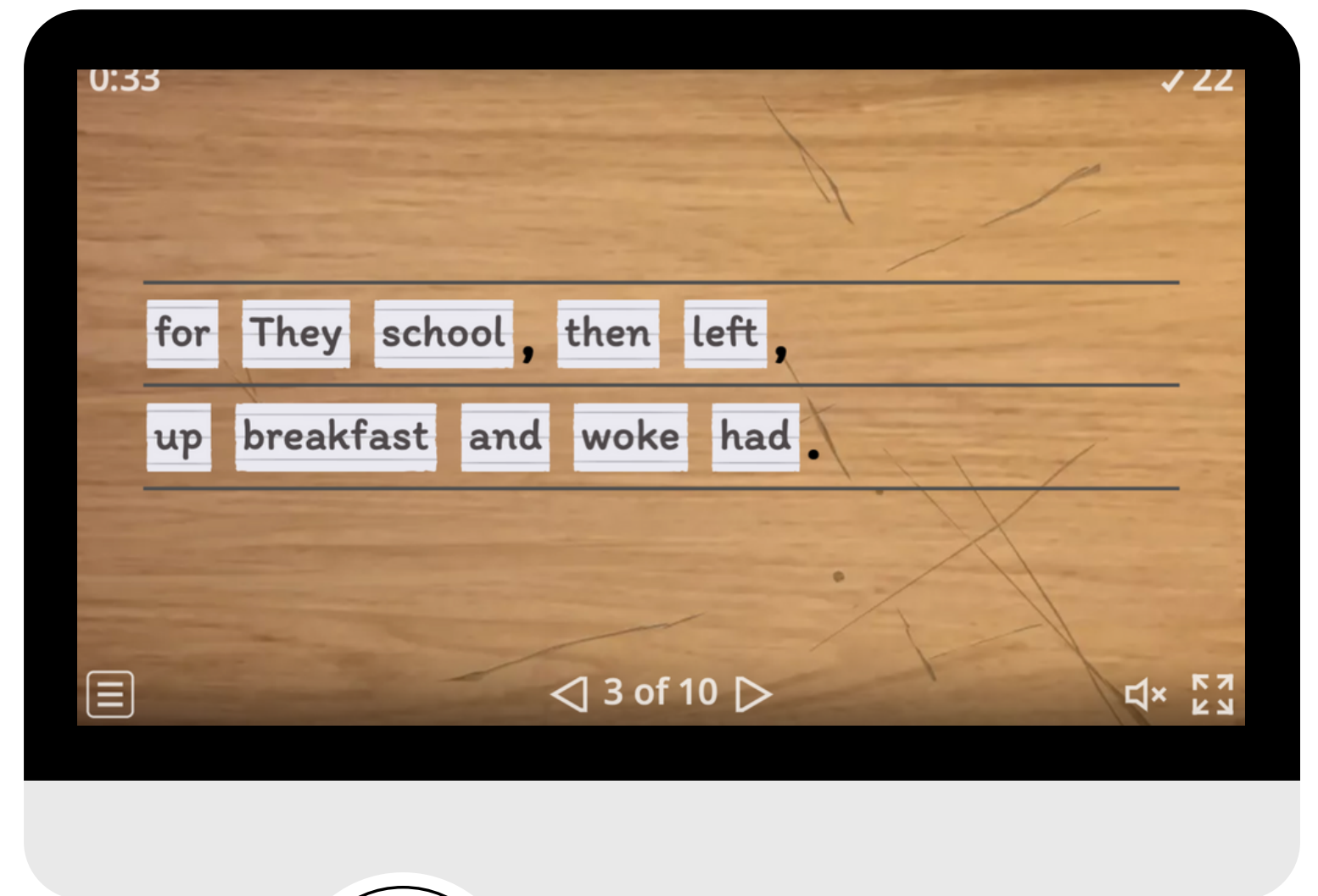
As they (continued/were continuing) their walk, they (saw/were seeing) their old friend, Mr. Green. He (jogged/was jogging) past them, headphones in his ears. He (waved/was waving) but (did not stop/was not stopping) to chat.

Near the end of their walk, the Thompsons (decided/were deciding) to sit on a bench. As they (watched/were watching) the sunset, the sky (turned/was turning) brilliant shades of orange and pink.

While they (enjoyed/were enjoying) the peaceful moment, a dog (ran/was running) up to them. It (wagged/was wagging) its tail excitedly. They (realized/were realizing) it (belonged/was belonging) to their neighbour. Smiling, they (stood up/were standing up) to return the dog home.



2. Wordwall activity. Unscramble the sentences.



YOUR STORY

Think of a story that happened to you and write it down. Mind the Past Continuous and Past Simple tenses.

- Then
- After
- Because
- So
- But
- Later

Here are some of the most common connectors that can help make story writing easier:



THANK YOU!

