

Activity Type

Speaking Activity:
matching, sentence
completion (pair work)

Focus

Past tenses

Aim

To work with a partner
to complete sentences
with appropriate endings,
putting verbs in the
sentences in the correct
past tense form.

Preparation

Make one copy of the two
worksheets for each pair
of students.

Level

Intermediate (B1)

Time

30 minutes

Introduction

In this past tense activity, pairs race against each other to complete their partner's sentences with appropriate endings, putting verbs in the sentences in the correct past tense form.

Procedure

Divide the students into pairs (Student A and B). Give each student a corresponding worksheet.

Tell the students not to show their worksheet to their partner.

Student A starts by reading their sentence beginnings to Student B. Student B listens and matches each one with a sentence ending. The student then completes the sentence by putting the verb in brackets in the correct past tense and reading the ending back to their partner.

If Student A agrees the ending is correct, they write it down next to the beginning.

When Student A has completed their sentences, the two students swap roles. The first pair to complete their sentences correctly is the winner.

Afterwards, check the correct answers as a class.

Student A - Answer key

1. c, I *had mopped* it the day before.
2. i, so he *didn't go* to work.
3. f, because he *had been drinking* coffee all day.
4. e, so he *didn't hear* the doorbell ring.
5. j, because the babies *were having* a nap.
6. g, and immediately *lit* another.
7. h, as she *had been running*.
8. b, I *was having* a shower.
9. d, so I *was wearing / wore* sunglasses.
10. a, the ship *had already left*.

Student B - Answer key

1. b, because she *had missed / missed* lunch.
2. f, as it *was still raining*.
3. a, as he *had been feeling* ill for a few weeks.
4. g, so we *ordered* a takeaway.
5. j, where I *had spilt* coffee.
6. h, *was still correcting* homework.
7. c, and *shut* the door behind them.
8. d, and the smoke alarm *went off*.
9. e, while I *was driving*.
10. i, because he *was shaving / had been shaving*.

Student A

A. Read your sentence beginnings to your partner who responds with a suitable ending from their worksheet. If you agree the ending is correct, write it down next to the beginning.

1. The floor was clean because
2. Pete was feeling ill,
3. Jim couldn't sleep
4. John was listening to loud music,
5. We had to be quiet
6. He put out his cigarette
7. Sally was breathless
8. The phone rang while
9. The sun was very bright,
10. By the time we got to the harbour,

B. Now, listen to the sentence beginnings your partner reads out and match each one with a sentence ending below. Then, complete the sentence by putting the verb in brackets in the correct past tense and reading the ending back to your partner.

- a. as he (feel) ill for a few weeks.
- b. because she (miss) lunch.
- c. and (shut) the door behind them.
- d. and the smoke alarm (go off).
- e. while I (drive).
- f. as it (still / rain).
- g. so we (order) a takeaway.
- h. (still / correct) homework.
- i. because he (shave).
- j. where I (spill) coffee.



C. When you have both completed your sentences, shout 'Finished!'. The first pair to complete their sentences correctly is the winner.

Student B

A. Listen to the sentence beginnings your partner reads out and match each one with a sentence ending below. Then, complete the sentence by putting the verb in brackets in the correct past tense and reading the ending back to your partner.

- a. the ship (already / leave).
- b. I (have) a shower.
- c. I (mop) it the day before.
- d. so I (wear) sunglasses.
- e. so he (not / hear) the doorbell ring.
- f. because he (drink) coffee all day.
- g. and immediately (light) another.
- h. as she (run).
- i. so he (not / go) to work.
- j. because the babies (have) a nap.



B. Now, read your sentence beginnings to your partner who responds with a suitable ending from their worksheet. If you agree the ending is correct, write it down next to the beginning.

- 1. Alice was starving
- 2. The match was cancelled
- 3. Jerry went to the doctor
- 4. We didn't have any food in the house,
- 5. There was a stain on the carpet
- 6. At 9 p.m., the teacher
- 7. I said goodbye to the guests
- 8. The toast caught fire
- 9. I ran over a rat
- 10. Tom had a razor in his hand

C. When you have both completed your sentences, shout 'Finished!'. The first pair to complete their sentences correctly is the winner.