Graham Workman

Concept Questions
and
Time Lines

→

Copy2Teach

CONTENTS

Concept questions without time lines

This book is designed to be an introduction to the design and use of concept questions and time lines. The exercises on concept questions in Section 3, "How to write concept questions", are there to provide practice in producing them yourself. The answers are given so you can check your answers.

When you are familiar with how time lines and concept questions work, you are ready to use the photocopiable materials provided in this book. This section provides materials for language forms that are often dealt with on language courses. Below is a simple procedure for using them.

1   Select the relevant photocopiable pages you require. These are the pages which contain the time line, concept and concept questions for the language point you are teaching. They are marked OHT (Overhead Transparency). Copy the pages onto overhead transparencies.

2   Using an overhead projector, gradually reveal the different sections of what is on the transparency. This is best done by placing a piece of paper under the transparency as this will allow you to read what is on it without revealing it to your audience. Show the time line first, ask the accompanying concept questions to check understanding, and then reveal the box which contains the description of the concept.

3   Learners can copy the time lines and concept definitions into their books or you can give your learners a copy of the transparency for reference purposes. You are free to choose if you want the learners to have a copy of the concept questions as well. If you don't want to copy these, simply cover them with a piece of paper when photocopying the page.

4   Remember that time lines and concept questions are designed to *check understanding of meaning* – they don't teach meaning. You have to illustrate the meaning first, either with a situation, an example sentence, or a contextualised sentence from a reading passage, and then use the time lines and concept questions to check that learners have understood correctly.

5   There are some related follow-up grammar reference sheets and practice materials in Section 6 that you can copy and use with your learners. The relevant practice materials and handouts are indicated at the bottom of the photocopiable OHT pages.

What are time lines?
They are lines and drawings that provide a visual representation of different verb forms, showing when things happen or are happening in the present, past or future.

How do you draw them?
The basic drawing is a horizontal and a vertical line.

The horizontal line represents time while the vertical line represents now, the present moment. Everything to the left of this vertical line represents the Past, while everything to the right represents the Future.

```
                      NOW
                       ↑
      PAST             |             FUTURE
                       |
                       |
   ────────────────────┼──────────────────────→
                       |
```
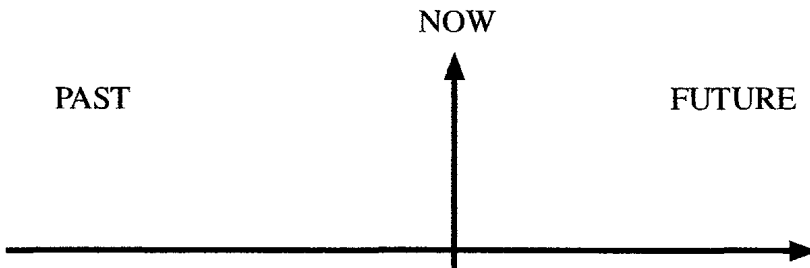
There are certain conventions for representing actions on time lines.

A cross is used to show a single, complete action:

"I saw a good film last week."

```
                      NOW
                       ↑
                       |
        ✗              |
   ──────╳─────────────┼──────────────────────→
                       |
```
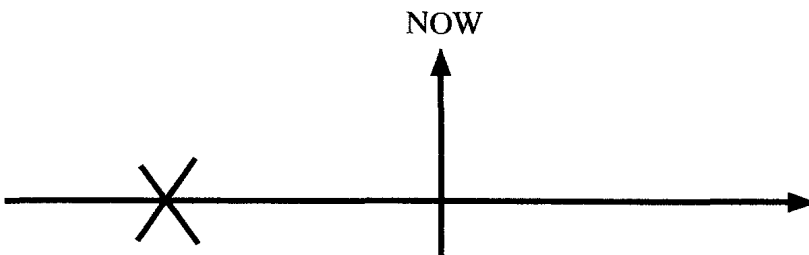
"He will be thirty on Friday."

```
                      NOW
                       ↑
                       |              ✗
   ────────────────────┼──────────╳───────────→
                       |          Friday
```

Chadburn Publishing   Concept Questions & Time Lines
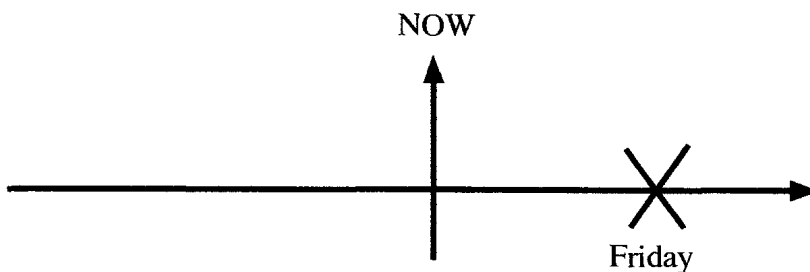
A wavy line is used to show a continuous action:

"I was watching TV."

NOW
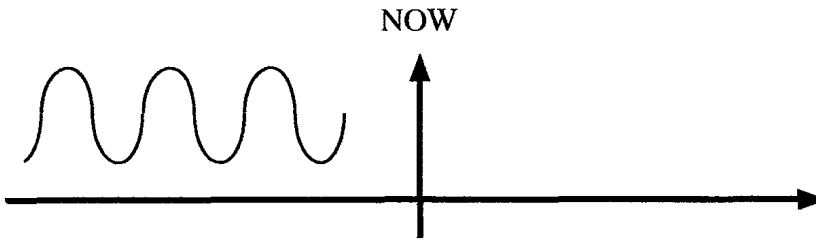
A straight line is used to show the duration of an action:

"I've lived here for 4 years"

NOW

4 years
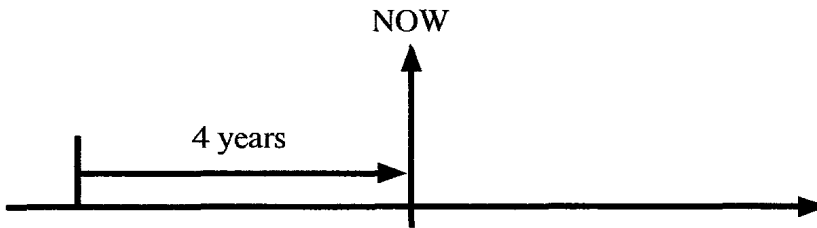
A curved line with question marks is used to show an action that does not have a specific point in time:

"I've found someone's keys."

NOW

? ? ?
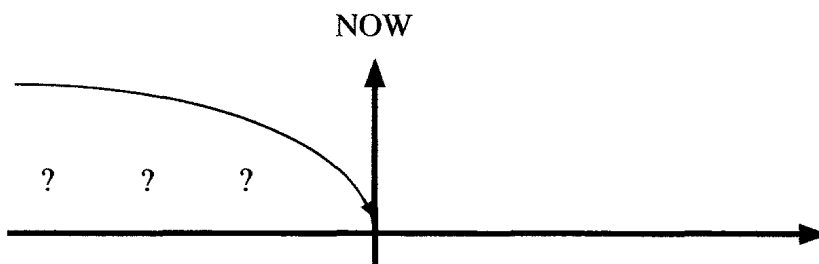
Why use them?
The visual channel is being used to convey understanding of abstract concepts. This can be more memorable than just explanations, and is particularly effective with *visual learners*.

Exercise 1   Match the sentences below with their corresponding time lines.

1. Have you ever been there?   A.
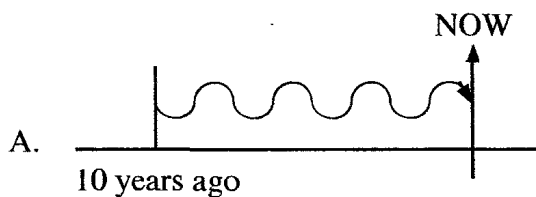
2. When John arrived I left.   B.
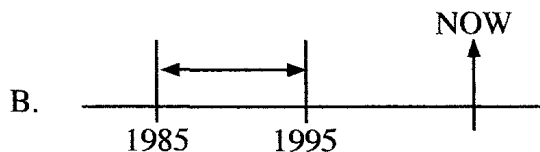
3. I've been studying French for 10 years.   C.
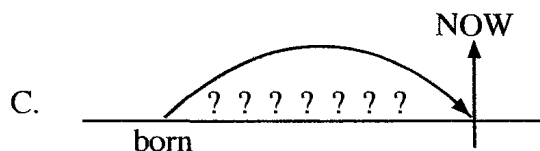
4. While John was cooking, I was watching TV.   D.
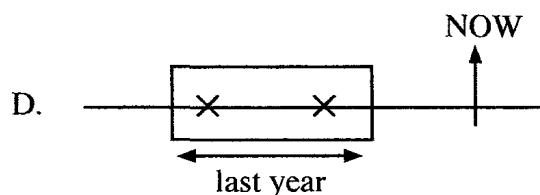
5. He worked there for 10 years.   E.
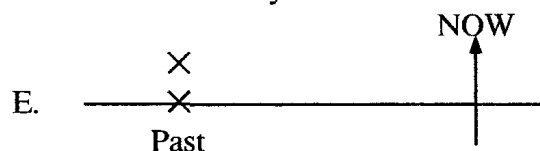
6. She was cooking when he arrived.   F.
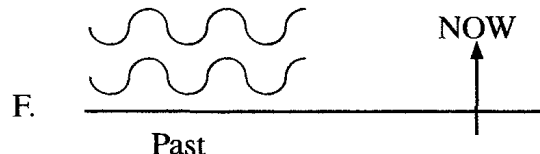
7. I've been to France twice this year.   G.
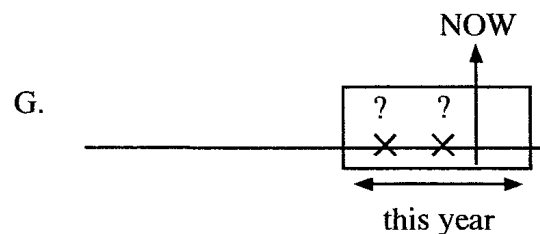
8. I went there twice last year.   H.
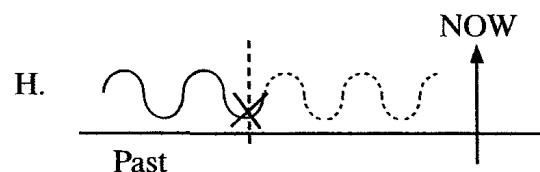
Exercise 2 Make time lines for the following sentences.

1 She <u>had left</u> when I arrived.

2 She<u>'s been</u> to Paris.

3 Oh look! It<u>'s been snowing</u>.

4 She<u>'ll be having dinner</u> at 8 o'clock.

5 I'<u>ll have finished</u> the book by Friday.

6 He <u>stopped to have</u> a drink.

7 He<u>'d been swimming</u> in the sea for two hours when they rescued him.

8 He <u>used to</u> smoke.

What are concept questions?

They are questions that are designed to check learners have understood the meaning of a piece of grammar, an item of vocabulary or a functional expression. The word "concept" is used to signify the essential meaning of a piece of language.

Why use them?

Firstly, because they are an efficient and effective way of checking learners have understood something. They are more effective, for example, than asking learners "Do you understand?" because a) learners may think they have understood something correctly but in reality they have not, and b) learners may be reluctant in a classroom setting to say out loud in front of their peers that they have not understood something since this may expose them to ridicule.

Secondly, because concept questions always work. The concept questions for an item will always be the same since the essential meaning of a piece of language does not change. There may be some examples when the meaning is partly dependent upon the context, but simple adaptation of the concept questions will take care of this. Once you know the concept questions for the use of a particular tense, for example, they will never change and will always work, whatever the example sentence.

Thirdly, because they are a tool for developing the language awareness of teachers. By learning to design and use concept questions, teachers learn to think closely about the meaning of items of language in a systematic and thorough way. In other words, they can be used to develop a teacher's language awareness skills.

When do you ask them?

Concept questions can be used on two occasions.

The first is when a new piece of language is introduced and the teacher wants to check that all the learners have understood the meaning. They are therefore used during the "Checking understanding" stage of a lesson, or at any time a new piece of language comes up and needs checking. They are particularly useful when the item of language is complex, or does not exist in the learners' language, or is used in a different way, or is a false friend.

Secondly, they can be used as a correction technique, either to remind the learner of a concept they have forgotten, or to get the learner to think about the concept of a piece of language they are using. For example, if a learner says "I visit my aunt at 3 o'clock on Saturday", you may want to check if the learner wants to talk about a regular habit (ie something the learner does every Saturday at this time) or whether the learner wants to talk about a definite arrangement for this Saturday at 3pm. By asking the learner "Is this something you do every Saturday?" and "Is it a definite arrangement?" we get the learner to think about the difference in meaning and the correct form that is needed.

How many concept questions do you ask?

It depends on the meaning of the item being checked, but usually it will be somewhere between one and five. If you find that you are asking a lot more questions than this, it probably indicates that you are asking some questions which are either superfluous or irrelevant.

How do you make them?

Look at the sentence below:

He <u>used to</u> play football.

Firstly you need to break down the meaning of this sentence into a number of statements.

1   He doesn't play football now.
2   He played football in the past.
3   He played football many times in the past.

These three statements are a complete description of the meaning of "used to" (Past Habit) in the example sentence. All that needs to be done now is to turn the statements into questions.

1   Does he play football now?   (No)
2   Did he play football in the past? (Yes)
3   Did he play once or many times?(Many times)

Notice that the answer we expect learners to give is written in brackets. If, for example, the learners answer "Yes" to the first question, we know that they have not understood correctly and clarification is needed.

There are also several other design features that need to be considered. Notice that the language used in the concept questions is simpler than the language being checked. The answers that the learners are required to give are short and simple. Furthermore, we do not use the item itself in the concept question. We do not, for example, ask "Did he use to play football?" since it is possible to answer "Yes" without understanding the meaning of "used to". All the rules for the design and use of concept questions are summarised below.

Rules for the design and use of concept questions

1   Break down the concept of the item into a series of statements of meaning. A dictionary may be helpful if the item is a piece of vocabulary.
2   Make sure the statements of meaning are expressed in simple language.
3   Turn the statements into questions.
4   The questions should be concise and simple.
5   The language you use must be simpler than the language you are checking.
6   The questions should not normally use the language you are checking.
7   Sort the questions into a logical order.
8   Write down the correct answers you expect the learners to give.
9   The answers should be short and simple.
10 If they answer incorrectly, state the correct answer and provide clarification.

The same procedure applies for checking the concept of vocabulary items and functional exponents, though with these you will need to take into account other features such as register, style and connotation. For example, for the following sentence:

"Could you open the door for me, please?"

The concept questions are:

1   Is this an order or a request?   (Request)
2   Am I being polite or impolite?   (Polite)

Concept questions are an excellent way of checking understanding and an extremely useful device for getting learners to think about language.

Exercise 3   What is wrong with these concept questions?

1   **I'm seeing the doctor on Friday.**
   a)   Am I feeling well?   (No)
   b)   Am I going to see the doctor on Friday?   (Yes)
   c)   Will I see the doctor on Friday?   (Yes)
   d)   Do I want to see the doctor?   (Yes)
   e)   Do I have a date with my doctor?   (Yes)

2   **I'll see him at 7.00.**
   a)   Will I see him at 6.00?   (No)
   b)   Will I see him at 7.00?   (Yes)

3   **I should have told her.**
   a)   Would it have been a good idea if I had decided to tell her? (Yes)
   b)   What might have happened, had I told her? (I don't know)

4   **Another cowboy bites the dust.**
   a)   Does the cowboy chew the dust?   (No)
   b)   Does the cowboy eat the dust?   (No)
   c)   Does the cowboy bite the dust?   (Yes)

5   **I didn't know if I was coming or going.**
   a)   Was I coming?   (I don't know)
   b)   Was I going?   (I don't know)
   c)   Did I know if I was coming or going?   (No)

6   **I have to leave early.**
   a)   Is it incumbent upon me to make an early exit? (Yes)
   b)   Is there an external obligation upon me which is forcing me to undertake an
        action which will take place prior to the time I would normally choose to do it? (Yes)

7   **He managed to open the window.**
   a)   Did he manage to open the window?   (Yes)

8   **hedge**
   a)   Is it really a hedge?   (Yes)
   b)   How do you know?   (????)

9   **wardrobe**
   a)   Is it a chest of drawers?   (No)
   b)   Is there one in your house?   (No)

10   **wardrobe**
   What is wrong here?
   Teacher: Who knows what a wardrobe is?
   Student: I know! I know! It's a kind of fish.
   Teacher: Well, you're almost right.

Exercise 4

What is wrong with the following ways of checking understanding?

1   "Do you understand?"
2   "You all know what a plaster is, yes?"
3   "OK, you all seem to have understood that, so we'll move on."

Exercise 5
Look at the following concept questions and say if they are good or not, and why.

1   floor

   a)   Where am I standing?
   b)   Is the floor inside or outside?
   c)   Can you stand on the floor outside?

2   chest of drawers

   a)   Is it made of wood?
   b)   Where do you find a chest of drawers?
   c)   What do people usually put in a chest of drawers?

3   The water is boiling.

   a)   What is happening to the water?
   b)   Is it very hot?
   c)   How hot?

4   This meat is tough.

   a)   Do I have to chew it a lot before I can swallow it?
   b)   Is the meat expensive?
   c)   Is it easy or difficult to cut?

5   kettle

   a)   Do you make tea in it?
   b)   What's it for?
   c)   Do you boil water in it?

6   She felt embarrassed.

   a)   Did she do something wrong?
   b)   Did her face go red?
   c)   Was she ashamed?

Exercise 6   Concept questions **with** time lines

Think of situations to illustrate the meaning of the sentences below. Then write concept questions for them and draw a time line that will help to clarify the meaning.

1   I'm seeing the doctor on Monday.

2   I'm going to see him on Monday.

3   "Can you see Mr Smith on Friday?"
     "No, I'm busy on Friday. I'll see him on Monday."

4   Look at those dark clouds. It's going to rain.

5   a)   I lived in London for ten years.
     b)   I've lived in London for ten years.

6   a)   The students were leaving when the bell rang.
     b)   The students left when the bell rang.
     c)   The students had left when the bell rang.

7   "Goodness! You're covered in paint."
     "Yes, I've been painting the kitchen."

8   a)   She'll be having dinner at 8.00pm.
     b)   I'll have finished the book by Friday.

9   a)   I wish I had a car.
     b)   I wish I had told her.
     c)   I wish you wouldn't smoke in here.

10   a)   I remembered to pay the bill.
     b)   I remembered paying the bill.

Exercise 7   Concept questions **without** time lines

Think of situations to illustrate the meaning of the sentences below. Then write concept questions for them.

1   I <u>had</u> my car <u>repaired</u>.

2   a)   I <u>have to</u> start work at 7.00am.
      b)   I <u>don't have to</u> get up early on Sunday mornings.
      c)   You <u>mustn't</u> smoke in class.

3   She <u>should have locked</u> the door.

4   He <u>must be</u> drunk.

5   a)   I saw him <u>swim</u> across the river.
      b)   I saw him <u>swimming</u> across the river.

6   Don't ring now. She<u>'ll be eating</u>.

7   a)   He <u>needn't have got up</u> early.
      b)   He <u>didn't need to get up</u> early.

8   She <u>should</u> pass the exam.

9   I<u>'m getting used to driving</u> on the left.

Exercise 8   Concept questions for vocabulary and expressions

Think of situations to illustrate the meaning of the vocabulary items and expressions below, and then write concept questions for them.

1   It's a <u>cosy</u> room.

2   The play was a <u>flop</u>.

3   <u>I didn't know if I was coming or going</u>.

4   He <u>hesitated</u> before jumping.

5   She <u>makes do</u> with very little money.

6   "You'll lose your job if you're not careful."
     "<u>I don't care</u>."

7   She has a <u>hectic</u> life.

8   <u>Would you mind if I smoked</u>?

When do I write my concept questions?

Before the lesson. They will help you to analyse the meaning of the language you are teaching and anticipate any possible difficulties your learners may have.

How can I get help with writing them?

Firstly think about the way you use the item and some situations in which it would occur naturally. A dictionary can sometimes help by providing you with a useful description of the concept, as well as some examples of use.

Do concept questions teach meaning?

No, they don't. Concept questions only check understanding of meaning, so you will need to illustrate the meaning of the item before you can use them.

How many should I ask?

If you have done the exercises above, you will have noticed that there are usually between one and five concept questions for each item. Remember that concept questions check the essential meaning of an item, so take care not to focus on unnecessary elements.

What are the most important characteristics of good concept questions?

They are simple and concise. They should use language that is easier than the item that is being checked. They should require learners to give very simple short answers like "Yes", "No", "We don't know", or something from the context that was used to illustrate the meaning. It also helps if you write down what you expect learners to say in response to your questions.

What do I do if learners don't give the right response?

Tell them their answer is wrong. You know they have not understood, and you need to illustrate the meaning again.

Is there anything I shouldn't do?

Yes, you shouldn't use the language of the item in your concept question. For example, if you are teaching "I used to play football", you can't ask "Did I use to play football?" because this question contains "used to", which is the item that is being checked for understanding. However, as you will see from the exercises, you can sometimes use the word or expression in the concept question if it is a vocabulary item.

Anything else I should consider?

Yes, remember that with some expressions and lexical items you may need to check the style, eg "Is this formal or informal language?" "Do I say this to a friend or to someone I don't know?" You might also need to check what function the language is performing, eg "Am I making a request or giving an order?"

Is it always best to use concept questions? Can't I just tell them the meaning?

Yes, on some occasions it can be more effective to simply tell the learners the meaning, especially if the item is simple and straightforward, but with more complex and unfamiliar examples of language they are almost essential. Remember also that concept questions have the advantage of getting the learners to think about meaning and highlight the essential concepts of a language item. Above all they are useful for finding out if learners really have understood something.

Do I use concept questions only when I am presenting new language?

You can also use them as a correction technique to get learners to think about what they have said and to guide them towards the correct form or item. Learners have to think about the meaning, and this can make the item more memorable than simply telling them what the rule or correct meaning is.

Are concept questions the only way of checking understanding?

No, there are other ways. For example, you can get learners to do any of the following:

- match words with definitions
- respond to commands ("Hand over that bag" and the learner does it)
- give you example sentences using the language
- do the exercises that are provided in course books and other published materials and see if they produce correct answers.

Present Simple
habits and routines

I *get up* at 6.00 every morning.

NOW

PAST   FUTURE

6.00am   6.00am   6.00am   6.00am   6.00am   6.00am
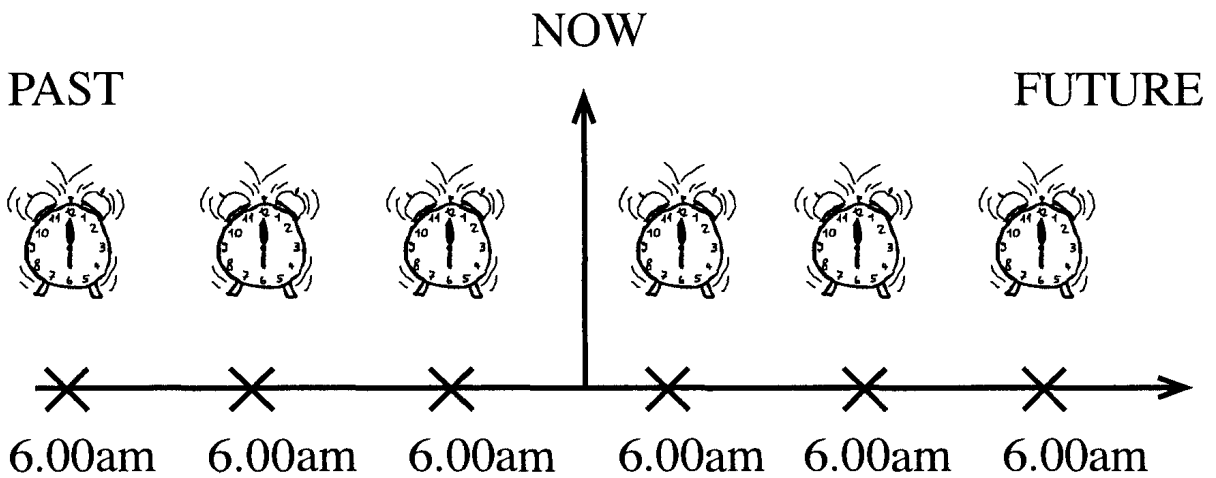
Concept
The Present Simple is used to talk about routines or habits.

Concept Questions

1   Is this something I do every day?   (Yes)
2   Is it a routine / habit?   (Yes)

Present Simple
timetable future

The train *leaves* at 6.00 on Monday.

PAST NOW   FUTURE

train leaves   train leaves   train leaves

6.00   6.00   6.00

Monday   **Monday**   **Monday**
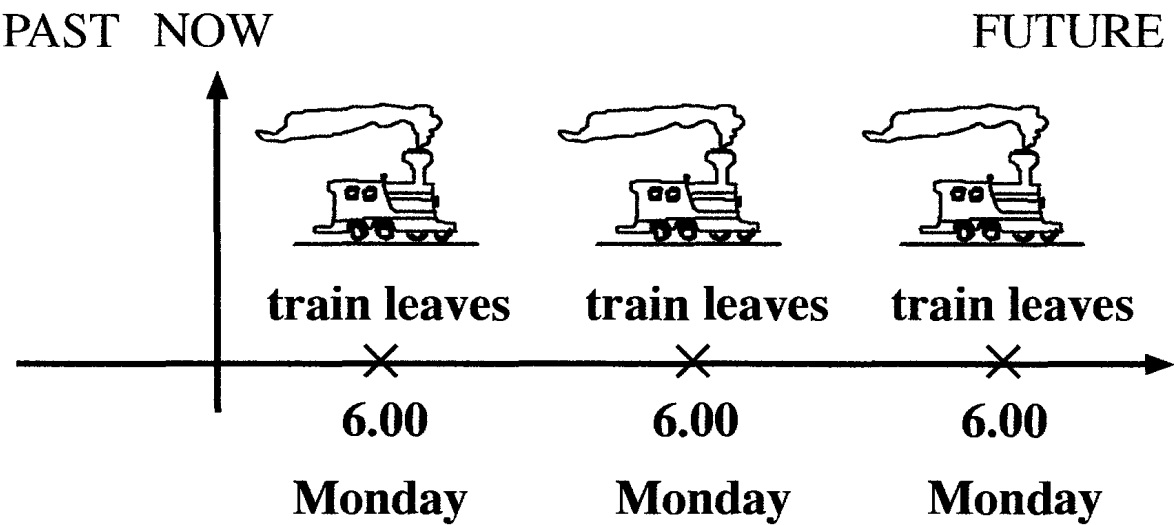
Concept
The Present Simple is used to talk about future events on a timetable or programme of events. This use is sometimes called the "timetable future".

Concept Questions
1   Is it on a timetable? (Yes)
2   Does this happen at the same time every Monday? (Yes)

Present Continuous
happening now

"What are you doing?"
"I'*m listening* to some music."

NOW
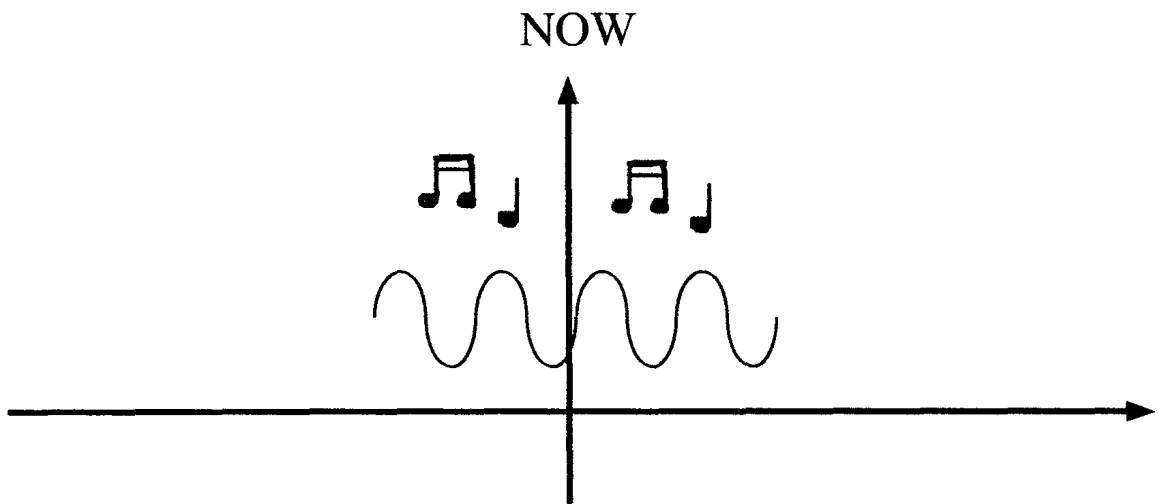
Concept

The Present Continuous is used to talk about something that is in progress at the present moment.

Concept Question

1   Is this happening now? (Yes)

Present Continuous
diary future

I'*m meeting* Jane at 3.30 on Friday.

NOW

meet Jane

3.30pm Friday
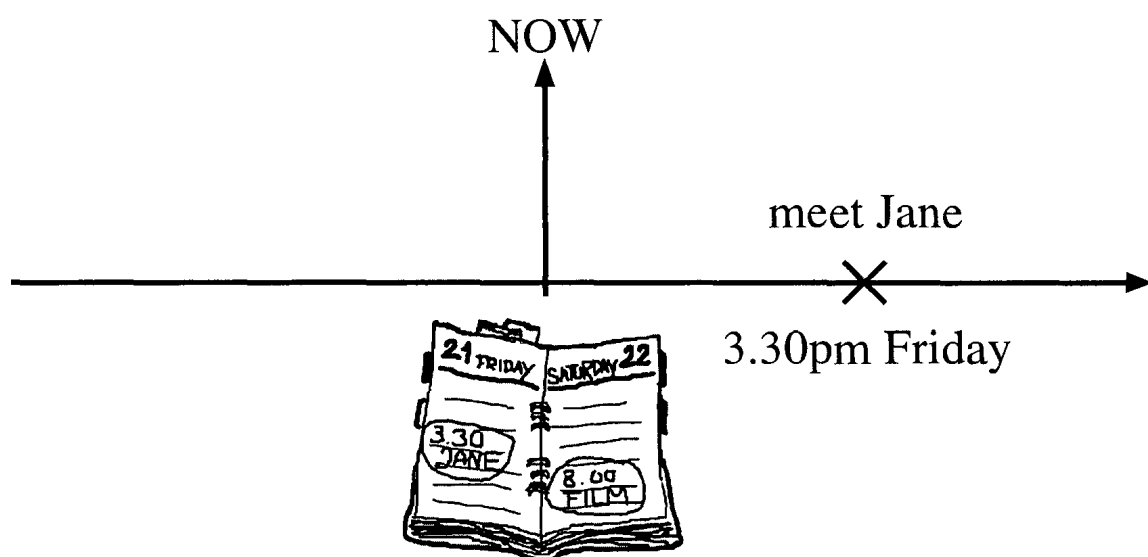
Concept
The Present Continuous is used to talk about definite future arrangements. This use is sometimes called the "diary future". The time reference is either given or understood.

Concept Questions
1 Are we talking about the present or the future? (Future)
2 Is it a definite arrangement? (Yes)
3 So is it in my diary? (Yes)

going to
expressing an intention

I'm *going to* buy a new car.

NOW

buy a new car

decision made
in the past
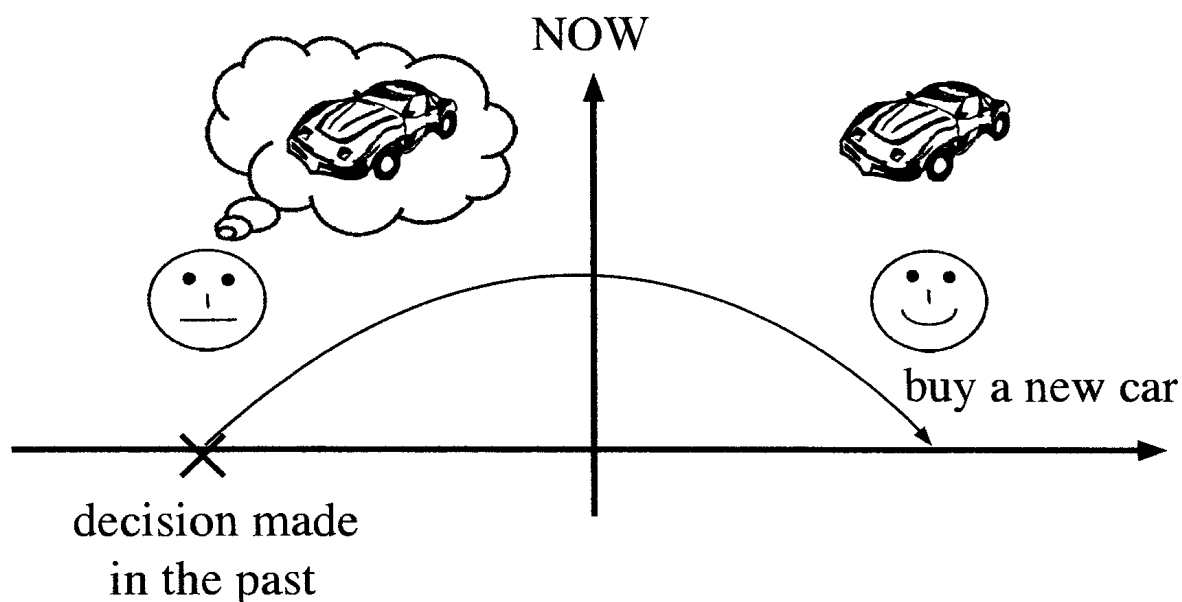
Concept

going to is used to express an intention or plan. It is not a definite arrangement. The decision was made before the moment of speaking.

Concept Questions

1	Are we talking about the future?	(Yes)
2	Is this an intention / plan?	(Yes)
3	Did I decide now or in the past?	(In the past)
4	Is it a definite arrangement?	(No)

See Practice Materials B, C

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going to
making a prediction

"Look at those dark clouds."
"Yes, it's *going to* rain."

evidence

prediction

NOW
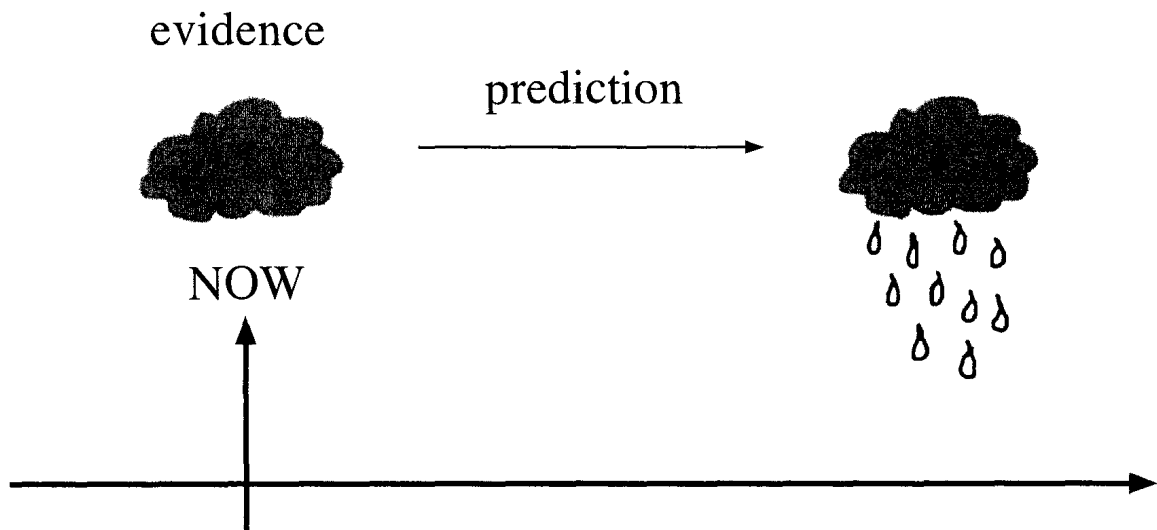
Concept

going to is used to make a prediction about the future, based on evidence in the present.

Concept Questions

1	Are we talking about the future?	(Yes)
2	Are we making a prediction?	(Yes)
3	What is the evidence for this prediction?	(Dark clouds)

See Practice Materials B, C

Future Simple
making a spontaneous decision

"There are no buses today."
"OK, *I'll* take a taxi."

NOW

decision made at the
moment of speaking

take a taxi
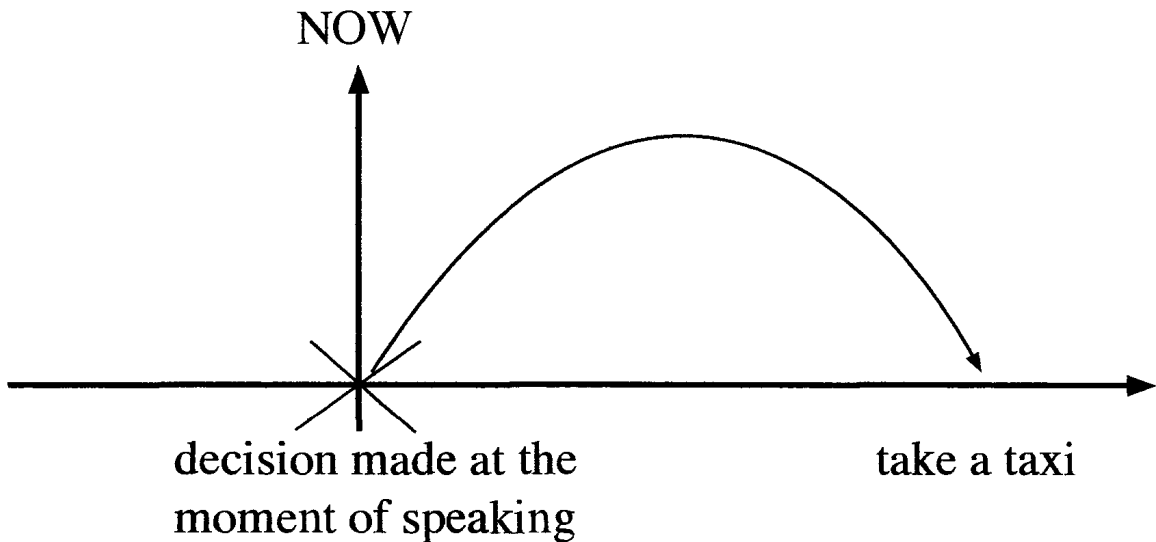
Concept

The Future Simple is used to express a decision made at the moment of speaking - ie it is a spontaneous decision. The contracted form *I'll* is used in spoken English.

Concept Questions

1   Did I decide now or in the past?   (Now)
2   Is it a spontaneous decision?   (Yes)

See Practice Materials B, C

Future Simple
future as inevitable fact

I'll be thirty in July.

NOW

July
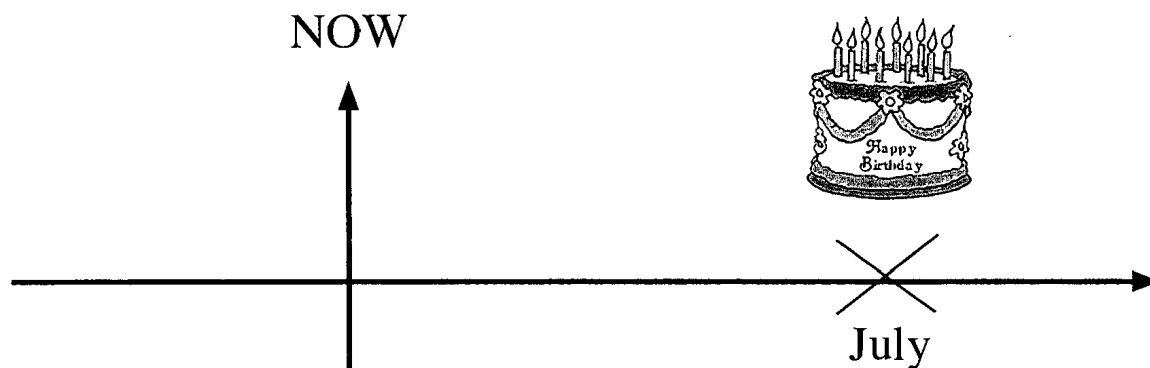
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Concept
The Future Simple is used to talk about
inevitable future events, ie things in the
future that cannot be changed. The contracted
form I'll is used in spoken English.
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Concept Questions
1   Are we talking about the future?   (Yes)
2   Can I change this future fact?   (No)
3   Is it inevitable?   (Yes)

See Practice Materials B, C

Future Continuous
activity in progress at a future point in time

I'*ll be having* dinner at 8 o'clock.

NOW

8 o'clock
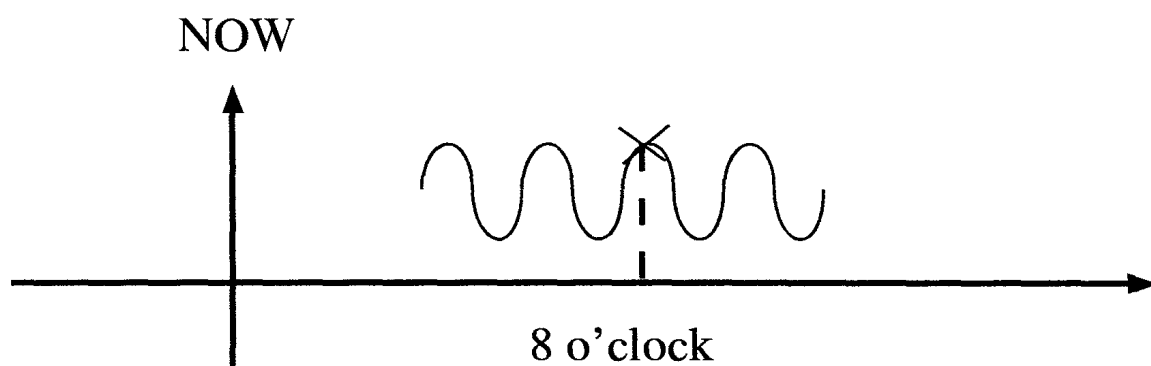
> **Concept**
> The Future Continuous is used to talk about an activity in progress at a future point in time. It is used in the same way as the Past Continuous and the Present Continuous but refers to the future.

Concept Questions

1   Do I start having dinner before 8 o'clock?   (Yes)
2   Am I still having dinner after 8 o'clock?   (Yes)
3   So is this action in progress at 8 o'clock?   (Yes)

See Practice Material D

Future Perfect Simple
an action completed in the future

I'*ll have finished* the book by Friday.

NOW

? ? ? ? ? ?
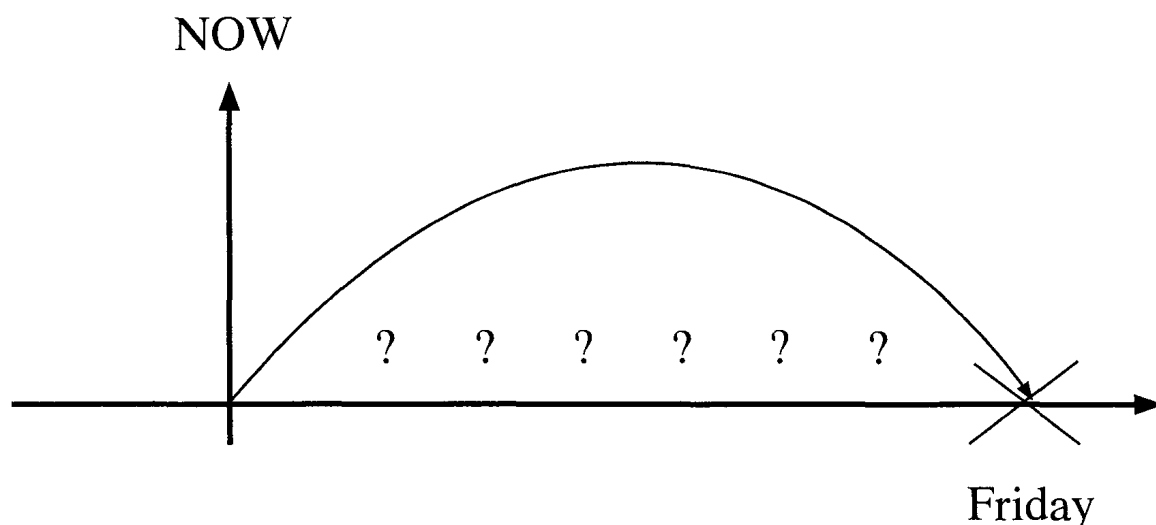
Friday

Concept
The Future Perfect Simple is used to talk about a future action that will be completed at or before a specified time. It is often used with the word *by*, eg *by 2050.*

Concept Questions
1   Imagine it is Friday. Is the book finished?   (Yes)
2   Is the action completed between now and Friday?(Yes)
3   Do we know exactly when?   (No)

Future Perfect Continuous
future duration use

I'*ll have been working* here for 5 years by the
end of June.


```
                              NOW


        ___/\/\___/\/\___|___/\/\___)
                         |           \
       |                 |            X
       |                 |         June 30th
  <----------- 5 years ----------->
```
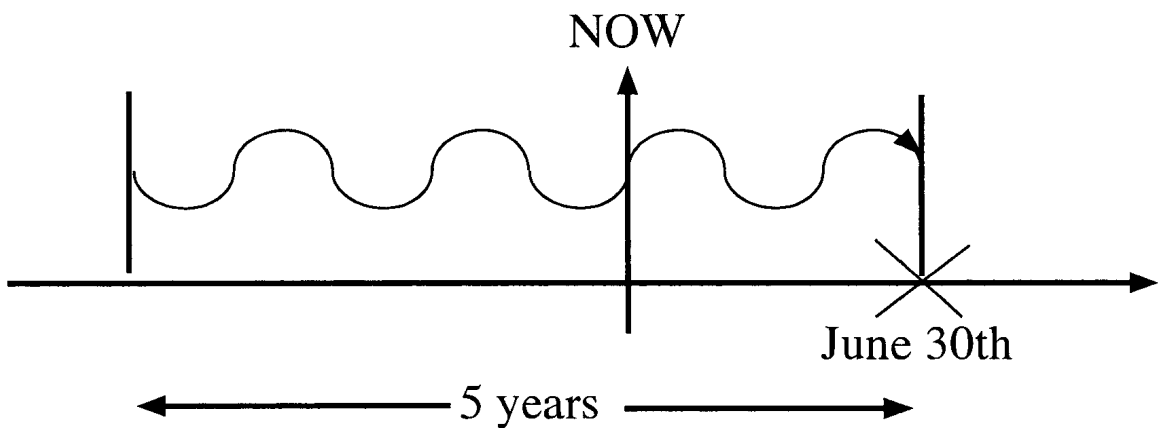
Concept
The Future Perfect Continuous is used to talk about the duration of an activity that started in the past and extends to a future point in time. It is often used with the word *by*.

Concept Questions

1   Am I talking about a period of time that started in the past and continues up to a future point in time? (Yes)
2   Am I interested in the duration of this activity? (Yes)

Past Simple
an action in the past

I *saw* a good film last night.
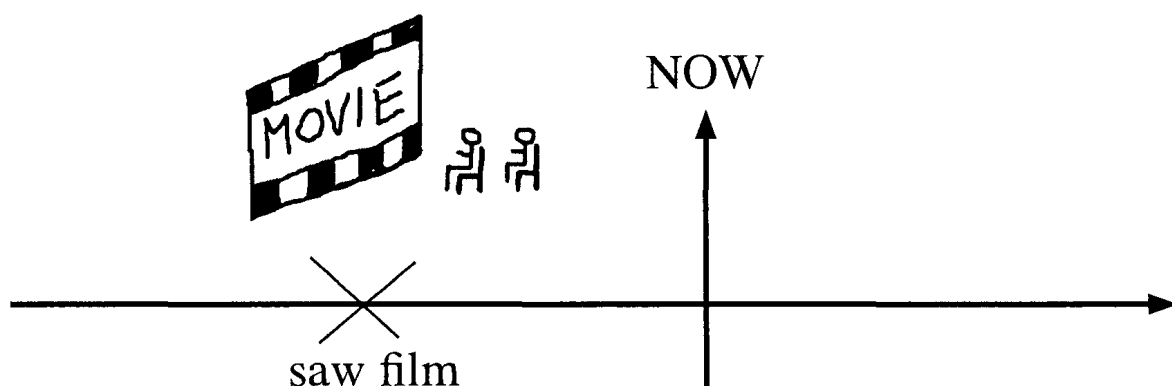
Concept
The Past Simple is used to talk about things that happened in the past, are finished and have no connection with the present. We usually know when the action happened.

Concept Questions
1   Is the action in the past? (Yes)
2   Is the action finished? (Yes)
3   Is there any connection with the present? (No)
4   Do we know when it happened? (Yes, usually)

Present Perfect Simple - Unfinished Past
unfinished period of time use

Have you seen Joe this morning?

NOW

? ? ? ? ?

12.00 midnight   12.00 midday
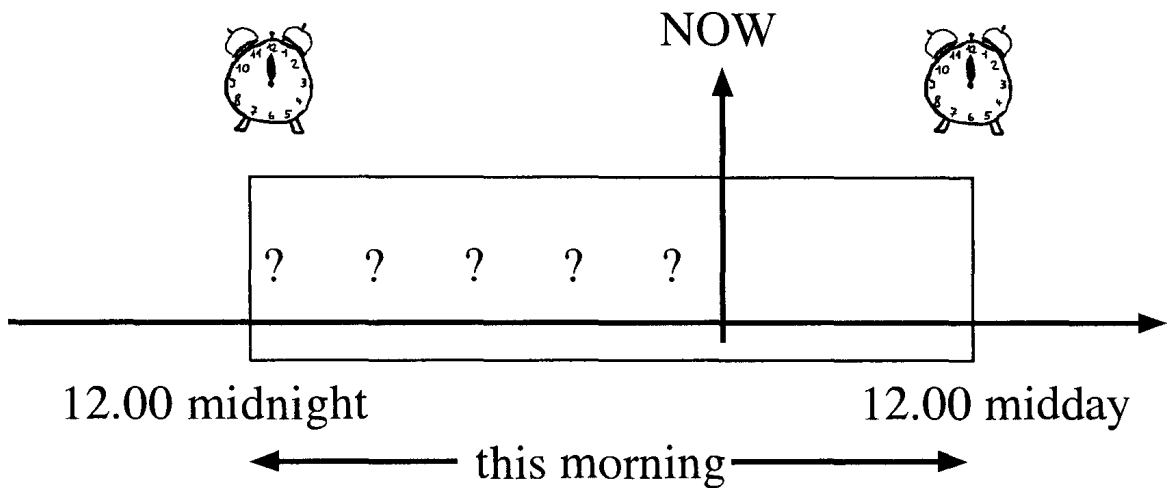
← this morning →

Concept

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about things that have happened in an unfinished period of time that includes the present. It is used with expressions like *this morning, this week, this month, this year.*

Concept Questions

1   Is it still this morning? (Yes)
2   What do we say in the afternoon? (Did you see Joe this morning?)
3   Why? (Because the morning has finished and there is no longer any connection with the present)

See Practice Materials E(i), E(ii), G

Present Perfect Simple - Unfinished Past **duration use**

She *has worked* here for 3 years.
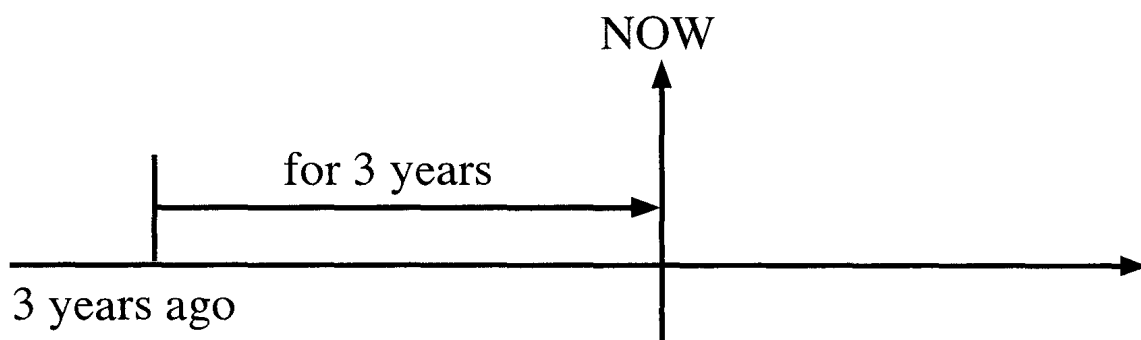
NOW

for 3 years

3 years ago

Concept
The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about the duration of an action that started in the past and continues up to and includes the present. It is often used with *for* and *since*. To ask questions we use "How long have you ....?"

Concept Questions

1   Do we know when the action started? (Yes)
2   Does the action continue up to and include the present? (Yes)
3   Does she still work there? (Yes)
4   What are we interested in? (The duration of the action)

See Practice Materials E(i), E(ii), F, G, I

FOR vs SINCE

She has worked here *for* 3 years.
She has worked here *since* _____.

NOW
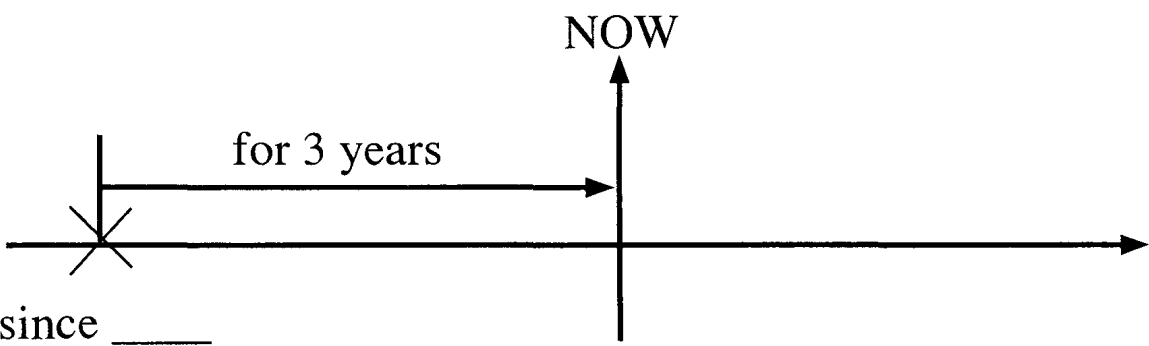
for 3 years

since _____

FOR + *a period of time*
eg for 3 years

SINCE + *a specific point in time*
eg since _____

See Practice Material F

Present Perfect Simple - Indefinite Past result use

"Oh, you *have cut* your hair."

Result
Evident
NOW

?   ?   ?   ?
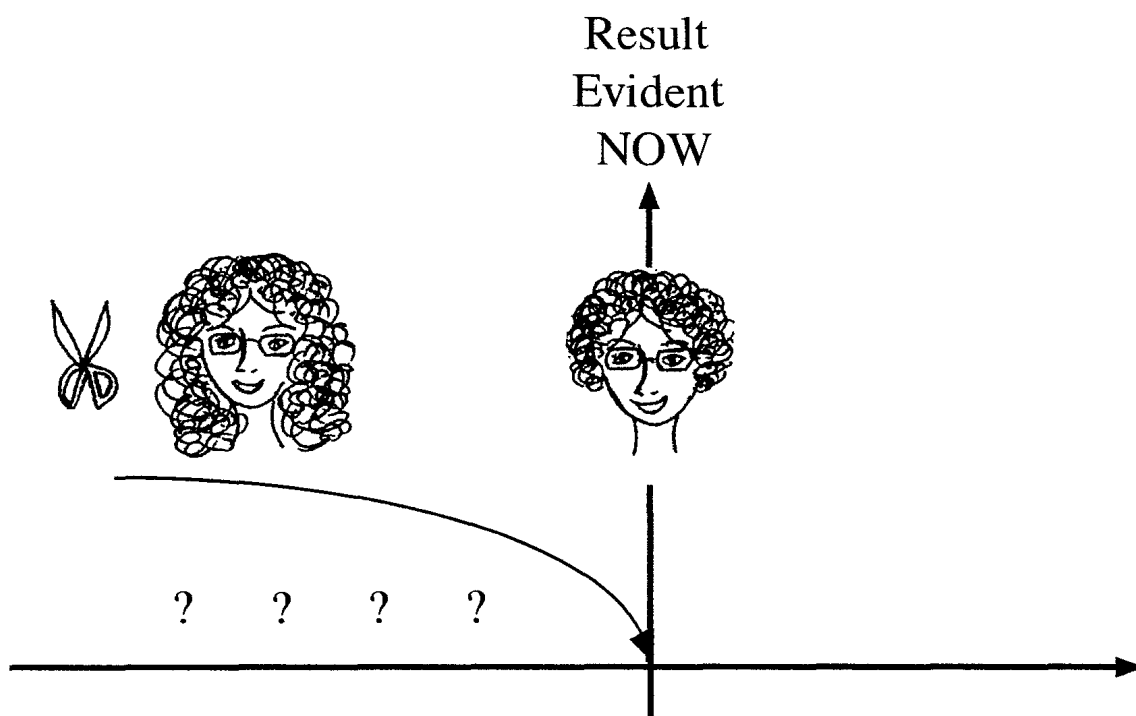
> **Concept**
> The Present Perfect is used to talk about the present result of an action completed at an unspecified time in the past.

Concept Questions

1	Did something happen in the past?	(Yes)
2	Do we know when it happened?	(No)
3	Is there a result in the present?	(Yes)

See Practice Materials E(i), E(ii), G, I

Present Perfect Simple - Indefinite Past **experience use**

He *has travelled* all round the world.
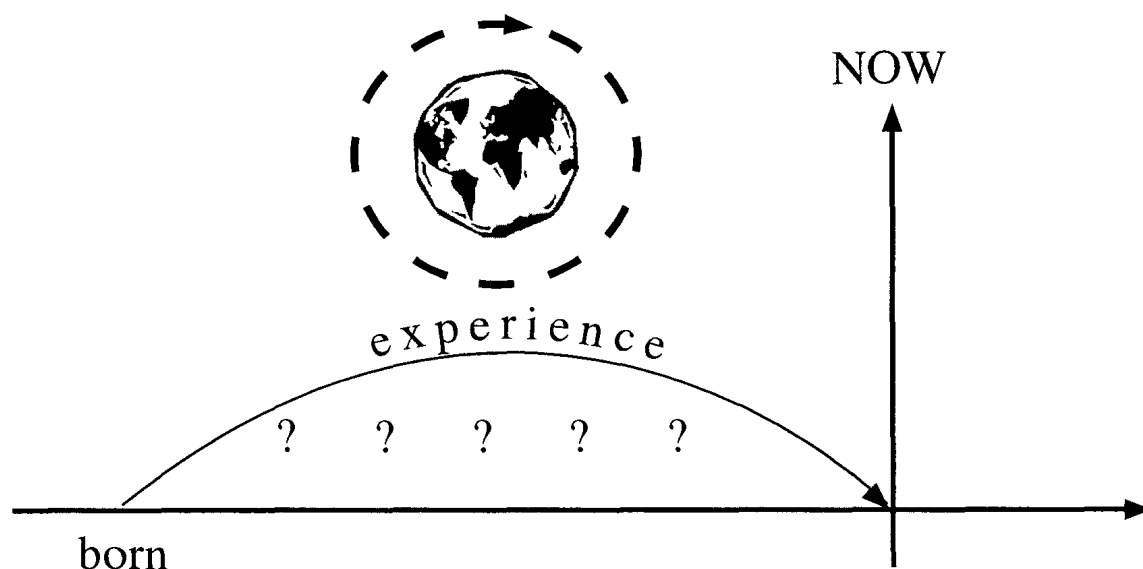
Concept

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about experiences people have had at some time in their lives. When it happened is not specified. It can be used with *ever* and *never*, eg "Have you ever...?" "I've never...".

Concept Questions

1   Did he travel round the world at some time in his life? (Yes)
2   Do we know when he did this? (No)
3   Is he still alive? (Yes)
4   So is this experience still with him in the present? (Yes)
5   What do we say when he is no longer alive? (He travelled)

See Practice Materials E(i), E(ii), G, H(i), H(ii), I

Present Perfect Continuous
Unfinished Past
duration of activity use

He *has been* drinking since 8 o'clock.
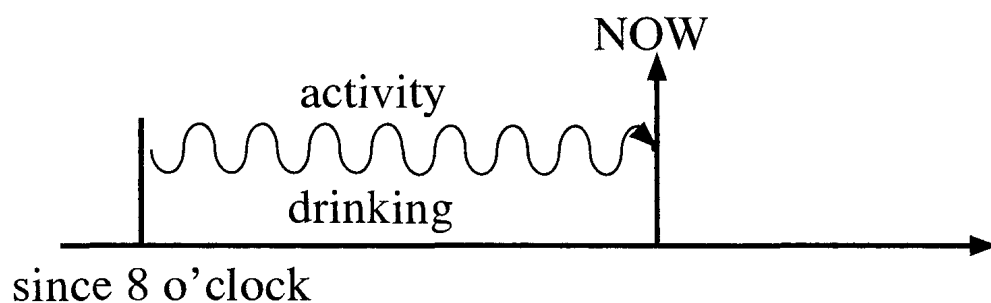
activity

NOW

drinking

since 8 o'clock

Concept

The Present Perfect Continuous is used to talk about the duration of an activity that started in the past and continues up to and includes the present. It is often used with *for* and *since*. To ask questions we use "How long have you ....?"


Concept Questions

1   Do we know when the activity started? (Yes)
2   Does the activity continue up to and include the present? (Yes)
3   Is the action still continuing? (Yes)
4   What are we interested in? (The duration of the activity)

See Practice Materials J(i), J(ii), K

Present Perfect Continuous
Indefinite Past
result of a recently stopped activity

He *has been* repairing the car. He's filthy.
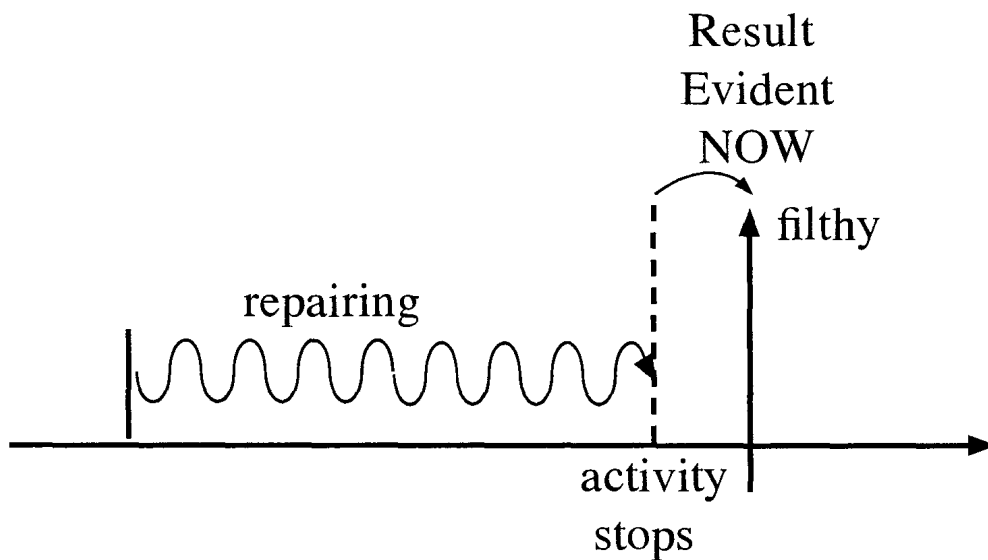
Result
Evident
NOW

repairing

filthy

activity
stops

Concept

The Present Perfect Continuous is used to talk about the result of a recently stopped activity. The result of the activity is evident in the present.

Concept Questions

1   Does the car now work? (Maybe yes, maybe no. We don't know)
2   Is the man repairing the car now? (No)
3   Did he stop repairing the car a short time ago? (Yes)
4   How do we know? (He's filthy)

See Practice Materials J(i), J(ii), K

Past Continuous
an action in progress at a past point in time

I *was watching* TV at 8 o'clock.

NOW
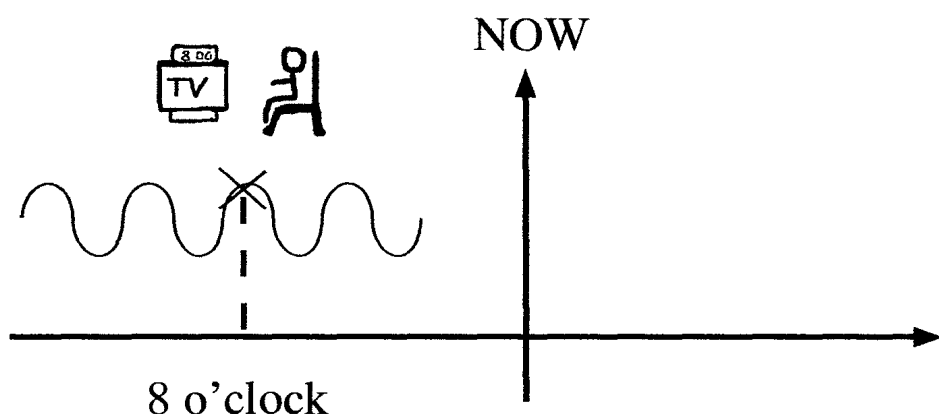
8 o'clock

Concept

The Past Continuous is used to talk about an action that was in progress at a past point in time.

Concept Questions

1   Did I start watching TV before 8 o'clock?   (Yes)
2   Was I still watching TV after 8 o'clock?   (Yes)
3   So was this action in progress at 8 o'clock? (Yes)

Interrupted Past Continuous
interrupted past activity

I *was watching* TV when the phone *rang*.
The phone *rang* while I *was watching* TV.

NOW
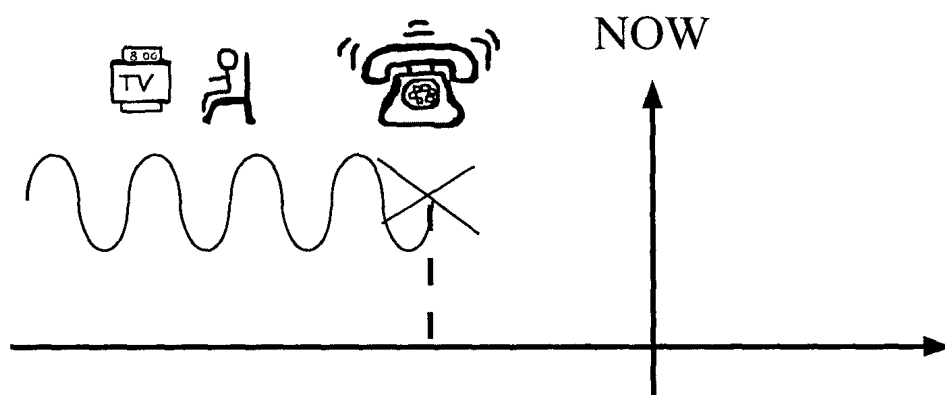
Concept
The Interrupted Past Continuous is used to talk about an activity that was in progress and interrupted by a single complete action in the past. It is made with the Past Continuous, the Past Simple and the words *when* or *while*.

Concept Questions
1   Did I start watching TV before the phone rang? (Yes)
2   Was the action in progress when the phone rang? (Yes)
3   Did I stop watching TV? (Yes)
4   Why? (To answer the phone)

Past Perfect
sequencing two past actions

She *had left* when he arrived.

she left   he arrived
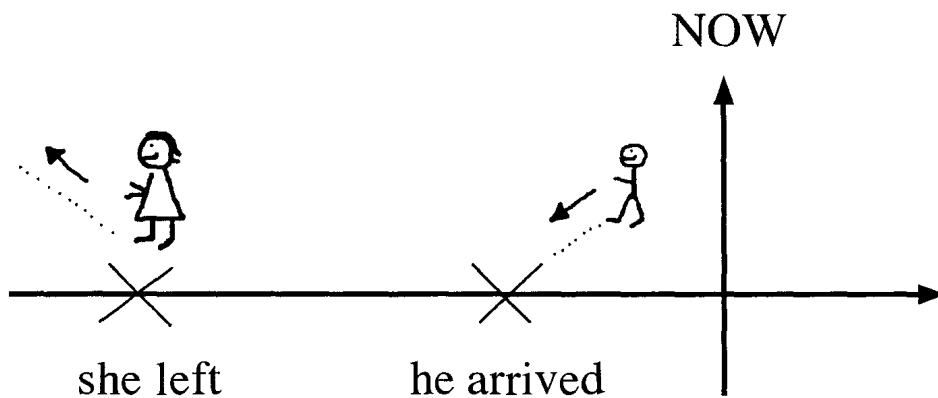
Concept

The Past Perfect is used to talk about two actions in the past and to make clear the sequence of events. It shows that one action happened before the other.

Concept Questions

1	Are we talking about the past?	(Yes)
2	How many actions are there in the past?	(Two)
3	Did both actions happen at the same time?	(No)
4	So did one action happen before the other?	(Yes)
5	Which action happened first?	(She left)

Past Perfect Continuous
duration of an activity up to a past point in time

They *had been swimming* in the water
for 2 hours when they were rescued.
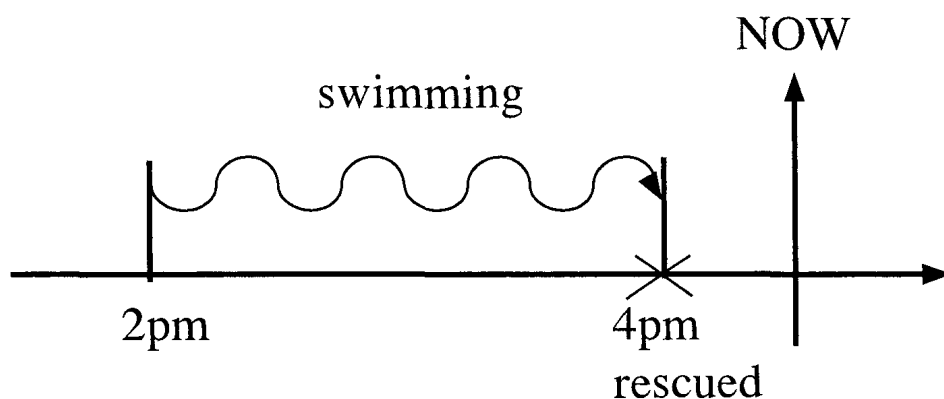
Concept

The Past Perfect Continuous is used to talk about the duration of an activity that continued up to a specified point in time in the past. The words *for* and *since* are used to talk about the duration of the activity. The word *when* is often used to introduce the past time reference.

Concept Questions

1   When did they start swimming? (2pm)
2   What time did they stop swimming? (4pm)
3   How long were they swimming? (2 hours)
4   Did they stop swimming when they were rescued? (Yes)

used to
discontinued past habit

He *used to* play football.

NOW

stopped
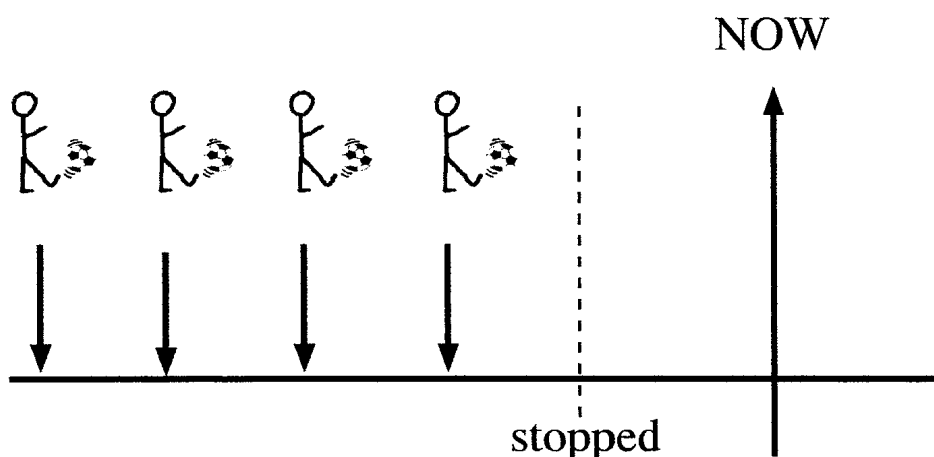
Concept

used to expresses a discontinued past habit. It highlights the fact that the person does not do this any more in the present.

Concept Questions

1	Does he play football now?	(No)
2	Did he play football in the past?	(Yes)
3	Did he play once or many times?	(Many times)

by
meeting deadlines

You must finish the work *by* Friday.

NOW

Friday

? ? ? ?
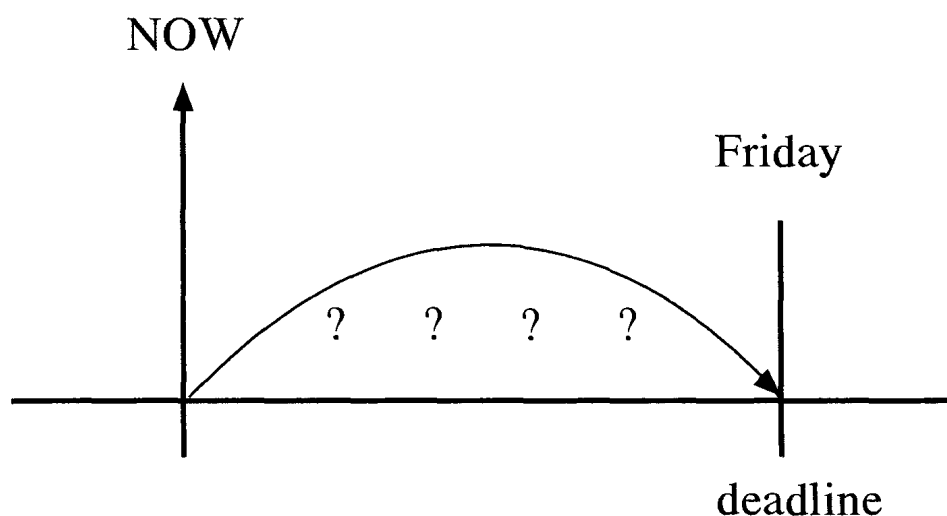
deadline

Concept
by is used to say something will happen at or before a certain time. There is a *deadline*.

Concept Questions

1 Is the work finished? (No)
2 Is it OK to finish the work after Friday? (No)
3 Is there a deadline? (Yes, Friday)
4 Is the work finished some time between now and Friday? (Yes)

until
saying when the action stops

You can stay in my flat *until* Sunday.

NOW

stay in flat   Sunday

action stops
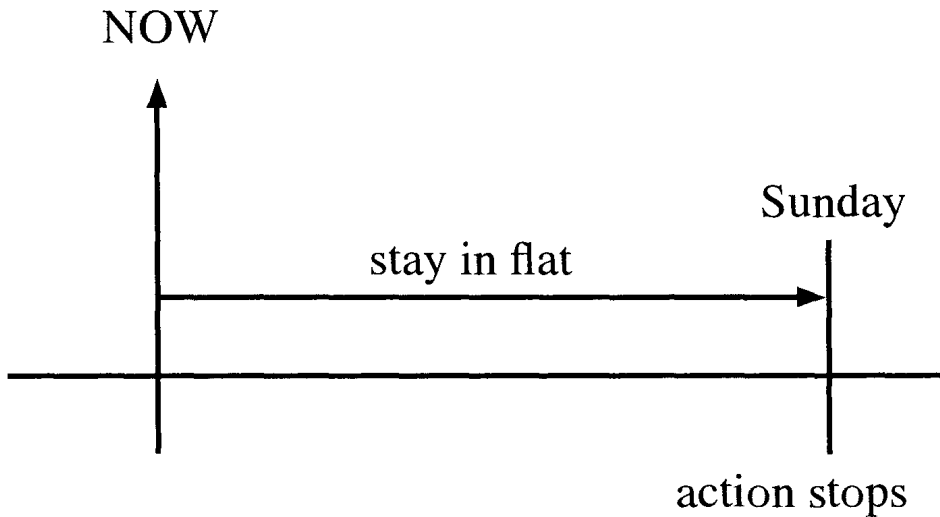
Concept

until is used to say that something will
continue up to a certain time and then stop.

Concept Questions

1   Can she stay in my flat between now and Sunday? (Yes)
2   What happens on Sunday? (She leaves the flat)

remember to do
remembering before the action

I remembered *to post* the letter.

NOW

I must
post it!

post letter
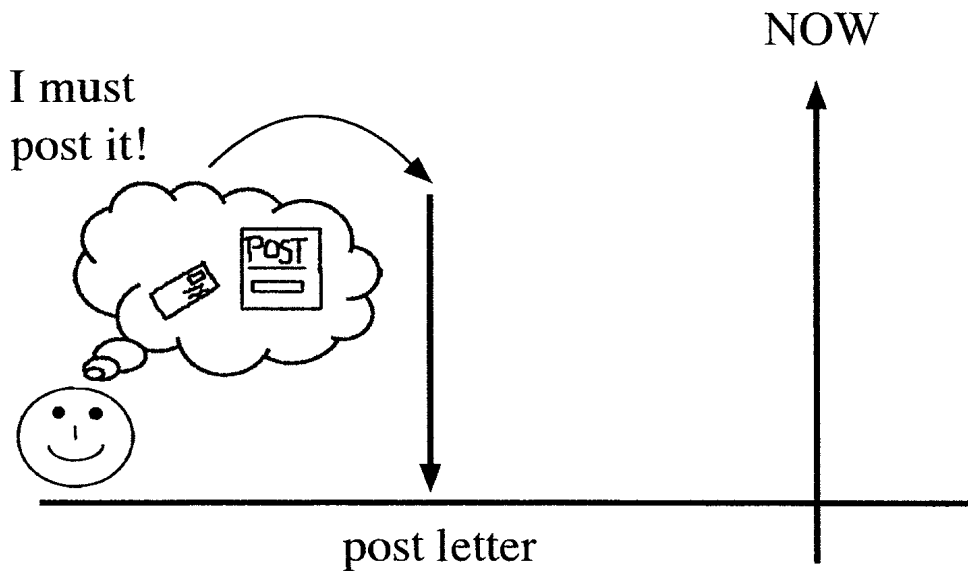
Concept

We use *remember* + *infinitive* to show we remembered *before* the action and then did it. In other words, we did not forget to do something.

Concept Questions

1   Did I remember before or after posting the letter? (Before)
2   What did I think when I remembered? (I must post the letter!)

remember doing
remembering after the action

I remember *posting* the letter.

NOW

I've posted it!

post letter
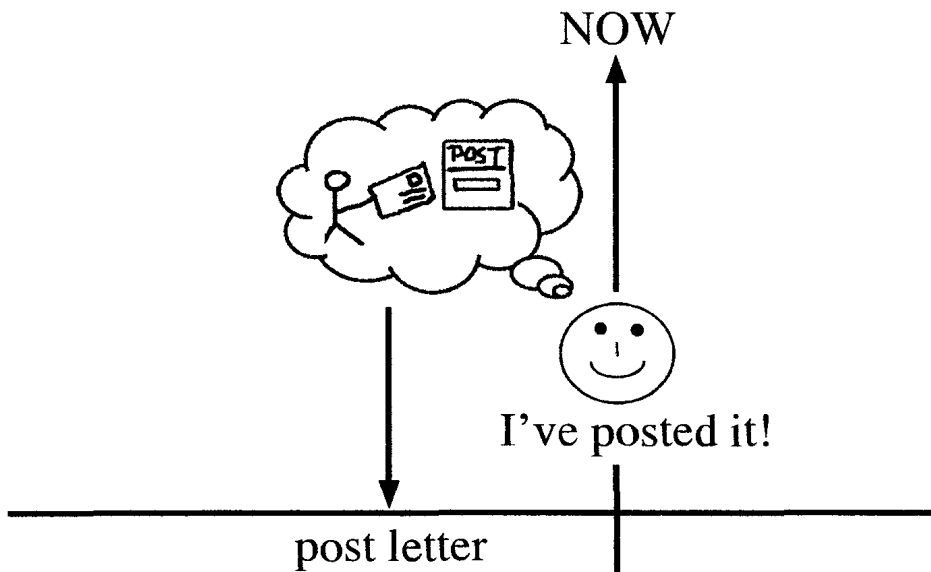
Concept

We use *remember + -ing* to show we remember *after* doing the action. In other words, we look back at things that happened in the past.

Concept Questions
1   Do I remember before or after posting the letter? (After)
2   What do I think when I remember? (I've posted the letter!)

---

stop to do
stopping one action in order to do another

He stopped *to play* with his children.
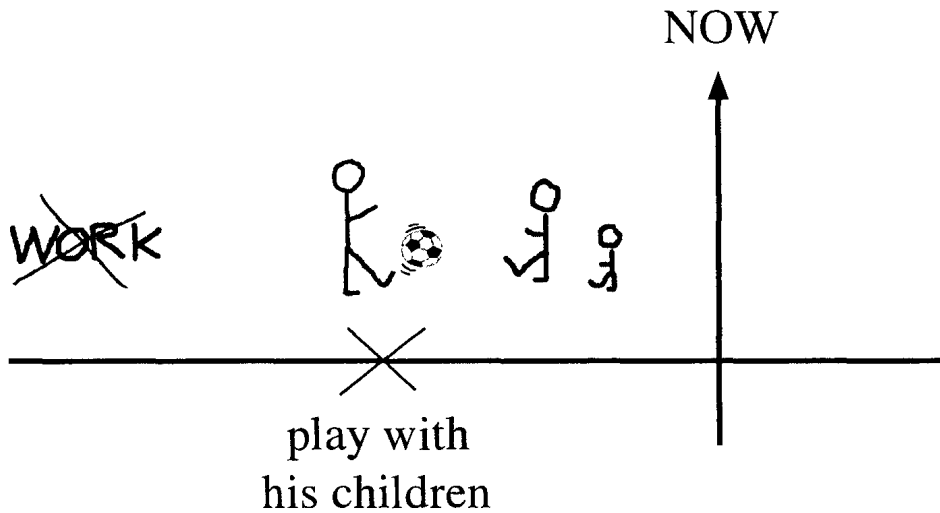
Concept
We use *stop* + *infinitive* to show we stop one action in order to do a different action.

Concept Questions
1   Was he doing something before he played with his children? (Yes)
2   Did he stop that action? (Yes)
3   Why? (In order to play with his children)

stop doing
stopping an action

He stopped *playing* with his children.

PAST   NOW
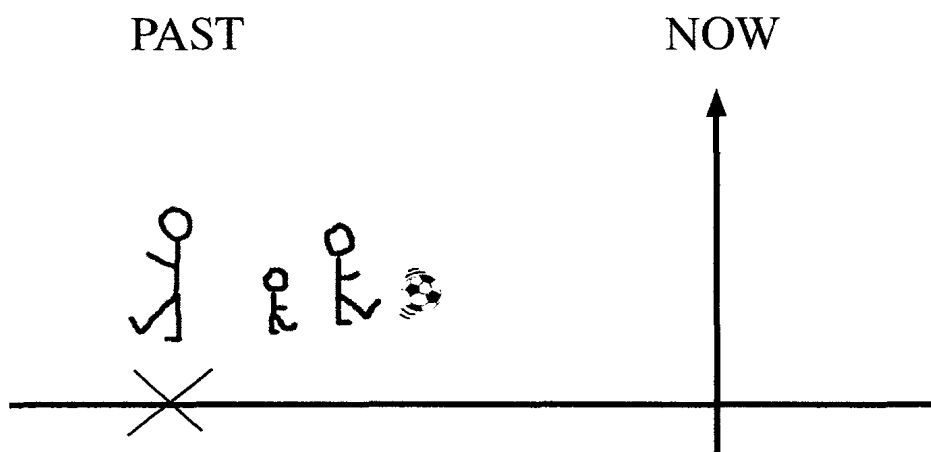
Concept

We use *stop* + *-ing* to show that an action stops.

Concept Questions

1   Was he playing with his children? (Yes)
2   Did he stop this action? (Yes)

wish + Past Simple
present dissatisfaction

I wish I *had* a car.

NOW
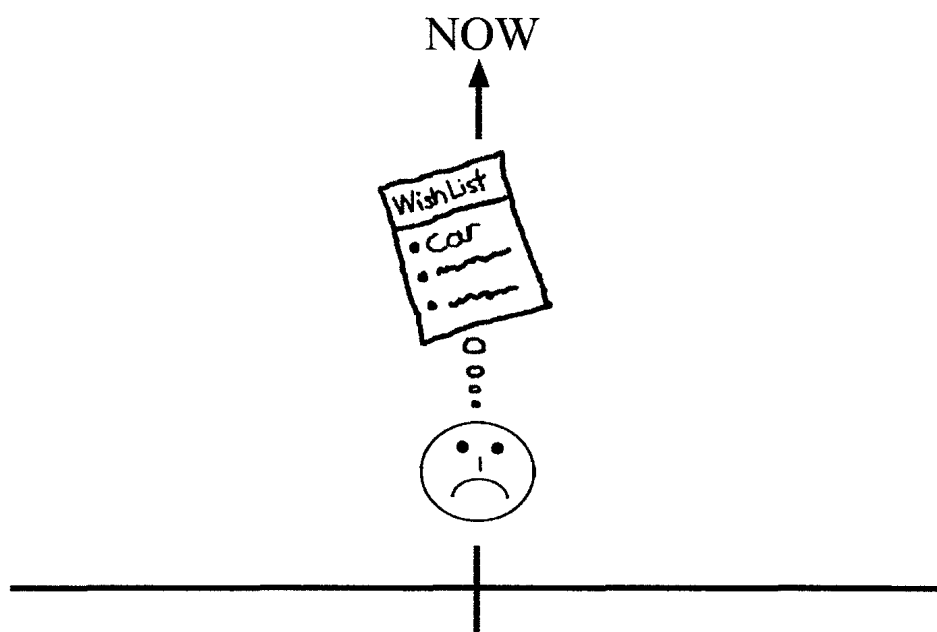
Concept
We use *wish* + *past simple* to express our dissatisfaction with something in the present.

Concept Questions
1   Are we talking about the past, present or future? (Present)
2   Do I have a car? (No)
3   Would I like to have a car? (Yes)
4   How do I feel about this situation? (Dissatisfied)

wish + *Past Perfect*
expressing regret

I wish I *had studied* harder.

NOW

PAST

EXAM

Failed!
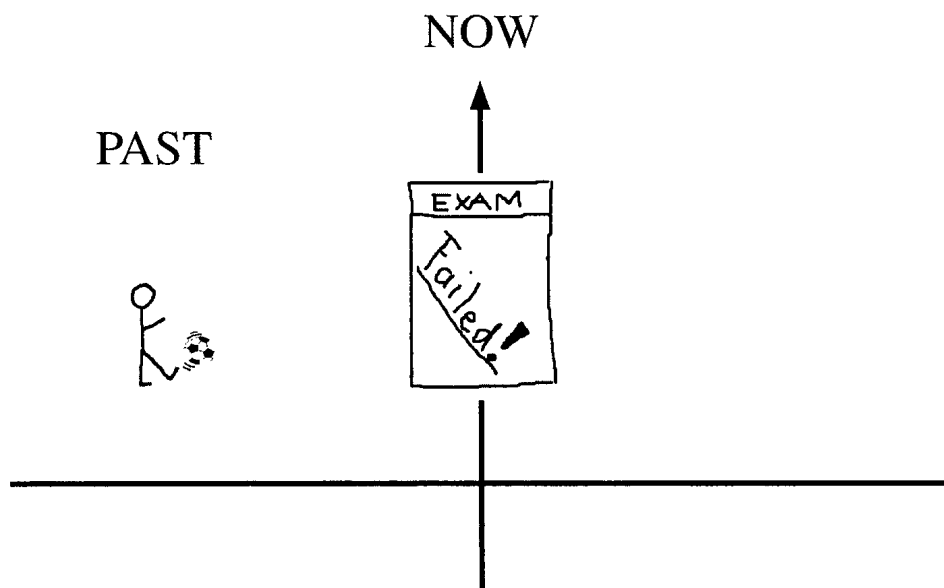
Concept
We use *wish* + *past perfect* to express our regret about something we did or did not do in the past.

Concept Questions
1   Are we talking about the past, present or future? (Past)
2   Did I study hard? (No)
3   How do I feel about the situation? (Regretful)
4   Why? (Because I failed the exam)

wish + *would* / *wouldn't*
expressing annoyance
wanting change in the future

I wish you *wouldn't* smoke in here.

NOW
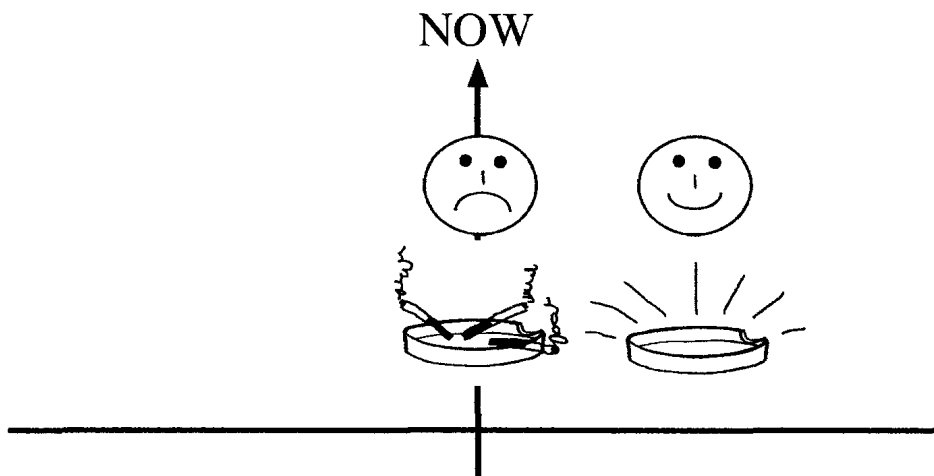
Concept
We use *wish* + *would* / *wouldn't* to express our irritation and annoyance, and to say we want something to change in the future.

Concept Questions
1   Are we talking about the past, present or future? (Future)
2   Is the person smoking now? (Maybe yes, maybe no - not important)
3   How do I feel about this situation? (Irritated, annoyed)
4   Do I want something to change in the future? (Yes)
5   What do I want to happen in the future? (The person stops smoking in here)

to have something done

Example Situation

My car was not working properly. I had problems starting it in the mornings. I took it to the garage. They repaired it. I paid the bill.

I *had* my car *repaired.*

> ## Concept
>
> *to have something done* is used to talk about something we cause to happen, ie we arrange for someone else to do something for us.

Concept questions

1   Did I repair my car? (No)
2   Did someone else repair it? (Yes)
3   So did I arrange for someone else to do something for me? (Yes)
4   Why? (Because I couldn't do it or I didn't want to do it)

---

have to / don't have to / mustn't

What is the difference in meaning between *have to*, *don't have to* and *mustn't* in these three sentences?

1 I *have to* start work at 7.00am.
2 I *don't have to* get up early on Sunday mornings.
3 You *mustn't* smoke in class.

Concept

have to means that something is necessary, you have no choice.

don't have to means that something is not necessary, you have a choice, you can do it if you want.

mustn't means that something is prohibited, it is essential you do *not* do something.

Concept questions

I have to start work at 7.00am.

1	Is it necessary to start work at 7.00am?	(Yes)
2	Is there a choice?	(No)

I don't have to get up early on Sunday mornings.

1	Is it necessary to get up early on Sunday?	(No)
2	Is there a choice?	(Yes)
3	Can I get up early on Sunday if I want to?	(Yes)

You mustn't smoke in class.

1	Can I (Am I allowed to) smoke in class?	(No)
2	Do I have a choice?	(No)
3	Is it prohibited / forbidden?	(Yes)
4	Is there a rule against it?	(Yes)

must be / can't be / could be

Example Situation

I see a man in the street. He is not walking straight, he smells of beer and he is singing loudly.

He *must* be drunk.

Concept

must be / can't be / could be are used to make a deduction about something.

must be and *can't be* show we are 99% sure.

could be shows we are 50% sure.

Concept questions

1   Do I think he is drunk? (Yes)
2   How sure am I? (Very sure, 99% sure)
3   Why am I so sure? (He isn't walking straight, etc)
4   Am I making a deduction? (Yes)
5   What do I say if I am 100% sure? (He is drunk)

---

must have / can't have / could have
+ past participle

Example Situation

Last night I saw a man in the street. He was not walking straight, he smelled of beer and he was singing loudly.

He *must have been* drunk.

Concept

must have / can't have / could have + past participle are used to make a deduction about something in the past.

must have / can't have +past participle show we are 99% sure.

could have + past participle shows we are 50% sure.

Concept questions

1   Do I think he was drunk? (Yes)
2   How sure am I? (Very sure, 99% sure)
3   Why am I so sure? (He wasn't walking straight, etc)
4   Am I making a deduction about something in the past? (Yes)
5   What do I say if I am 100% sure? (He was drunk)

---

should have **+** *past participle*

Example Situation
Jane left her house and did not lock the door. When she returned she found that someone had stolen her money.

She *should have locked* the door.

Concept

should have **+** *past participle* is used to express criticism of past actions.

Concept questions
1   Did she lock the door? (No)
2   Was it a good idea to lock the door? (Yes)
3   Why? (Because someone stole her money)
4   Am I criticising her? (Yes)

It's time + past tense

What is the difference between these two sentences?

1   It's 9 o'clock. It's time for us to leave.
2   It's getting late. It's *time* we *left*.

Concept

It's time +past tense is used to express the idea that something should have happened before now.

It can also be used to criticise someone or something, eg "It's time you found a job."

Concept questions
It's time for us to leave.
1   Is now the correct time to leave? (Yes)

It's time we left.
1   Are we talking about the past or the present?(Present)
2   Do I think we should have left before now? (Yes)
3   Why? (Because it is late, etc)

---

needn't have done / didn't need to do

What is the difference between these two sentences?

1   She *needn't have got up* early.
2   She *didn't need to get up* early.

Concept
We use *needn't have done* to talk about things which were done but were not necessary.
We use *didn't need to do* to talk about things which were not necessary and did not do or chose to do.

Concept questions
She needn't have got up early.

1	Did she get up early?	(Yes)
2	Was it necessary?	(No)
3	Did she know that before?	(No)
4	Did she think it was necessary?	(Yes)

She didn't need to get up early.

1   Was it necessary to get up early?   (No)
2   Did she know that before?   (Yes)
3   Did she get up early? (No, because it wasn't necessary)
      OR (Yes, because she wanted to)

Present Perfect Simple + already

Example Situation

The postman delivers my letters every day at 7.00am. One morning he delivers the letters at 6.00am. I say:

"The postman has *already* delivered the letters."

What does the word *already* mean?

Concept

already is used to show that something is earlier than expected.

Concept questions

1   What time does the postman usually deliver the letters? (7.00am)
2   What time does he deliver the letters on this day? (6.00am)
3   Is this earlier than expected? (Yes)
4   So why do we use the word *already*?
      (To show that something has happened earlier than expected)

Present Perfect Simple + yet

Example Situation

The postman delivers my letters every day at 7.00am. One morning it is 9.00am and he still has not delivered the letters. I say or ask:

"The postman has not delivered the letters *yet*."
"Hasn't the postman delivered the letters *yet*?"

What does the word *yet* mean?

Concept
yet is used to show that something is later than expected.

Concept questions

1   What time does the postman usually deliver the letters? (7.00am)
2   Is the delivery time on this day later than expected? (Yes)
3   So why do we use the word *yet* ?
     (To show that something is later than expected)

Future Continuous

"Is now a good time to call Jane?"
"No, don't ring now. She*'ll be eating.*"

Concept

The Future Continuous can be used to make deductions about activities happening in the present.

Concept questions

1   Are we talking about the present or the future? (The present)
2   Do I think she is eating now? (Yes)
3   How sure am I? (Very sure, 99%)
4   Why am I so sure?   (Because she usually eats at this time)
5   Am I making a deduction? (Yes)

---

in case

I'll take my umbrella *in case* it rains.

Concept

in case is used to talk about being prepared for things that may happen in the future.

Concept questions

1	Is it raining now?	(No)
2	Is there a possibility it will rain in the future?	(Yes)
3	Do I want to be prepared if it rains?	(Yes)

should

"Jane has studied very hard."
"Yes, she *should* pass the exam in June."

Concept
Concept We can use *should* to express our belief about the probability of a future event, based on our knowledge of the situation or circumstances.

Concept questions
1   Do I think she will probably pass the exam? (Yes)
2   Why do I think this? (Because she has studied very hard)
3   Am I expressing a belief about the future? (Yes)
4   What is this belief based on? (My knowledge of Jane and the exam, ie the circumstances)

try to do / try doing

What is the difference between these two sentences?

1   The door was locked so I *tried to open* the window.

2   The room was hot so I *tried opening* the window.

Concept
We use *try* + *infinitive* to say we make an effort to do something difficult.
We use *try* + *-ing* to say we do something as an experiment to see what will happen, perhaps to solve a problem.
We often use it to make suggestions, eg
"Why don't you try ... ing?" or "Have you tried ... ing?"

Concept questions

The door was locked so I <u>tried to open</u> the window.

1	Did I make an effort to do this?	(Yes)
2	Was it difficult?	(Yes)
3	Did I open the window?	(Maybe yes, maybe no, probably not)

The room was hot so I <u>tried opening</u> the window.

1	Did I open the window?	(Yes)
2	Did I do it as an experiment?	(Yes)
3	Did I do it to help solve a problem?	(Yes)
4	What was the problem?	(The room was hot)
5	Did it solve the problem?	(Maybe yes, maybe no, probably not)

(don't) mind + -ing

"I know you're busy, but can you help me in the kitchen?"
"OK. I *don't mind doing* the washing up."

Concept

We use *don't mind + -ing* to say that we feel OK about doing something and it does not annoy or upset us. We use "*Do you mind ... ?*" to ask politely if something is OK with someone else.

Concept questions

1	Do I especially like doing the washing up?	(No)
2	Do I especially dislike doing the washing up?	(No)
3	Do I feel OK about doing the washing up?	(Yes)
4	Is it a problem for me?	(No)

be used to doing

I*'m used to working* late at night.

> **Concept**
> We use *be used + -ing* to say that something is not difficult for us because it is familiar to us.

Concept questions
1   Am I talking about the past or present? (Present)
2   Do I find it easy to work late at night? (Yes)
3   Why? (Because I have done it many times)
4   So am I accustomed to it? (Yes)

get used to doing

I*'m getting used to driving* on the left.

Concept

We use *get used + -ing* to say that something was difficult for us at first but now it is becoming familiar to us.

Concept questions

1   Do I usually drive on the right?   (Yes)
2   Is driving on the left new and strange for me?   (Yes)
3   Is it becoming more familiar and easier?   (Yes)
4   Why?   (Because I have done it many times)
5   So am I becoming accustomed to it?   (Yes)

Zero Conditional

If you *heat* ice, it *melts*.

Concept

The Zero Conditional is used to express a general rule or scientific fact that is always true.

Concept questions

1   Is this always true?   (Yes)
2   So are we talking about a single event or a general truth?
                                                    (A general truth)
3   How certain is the result clause?   (100% certain)

First conditional

If it *rains*, I *will stay* at home.

Concept

We use the First Conditional to talk about a situation that we see as possible in the future. It is called the "Possible Conditional". It can be used to express a variety of functions, eg an offer, a threat, a warning, a consequence.

Concept questions

1   Are we talking about the present or the future? (Future)
2   Is it possible this will happen in the future?   (Yes)
3   How probable is the if-clause?   (50/50)
4   How certain is the result clause?   (100%)

Second conditional

If I *won* a lot of money, I *would buy* a big house.
If I *were* you, I *would stop* smoking.

Concept

We use the Second Conditional to talk about a situation we see as improbable or unreal.

It is called the "Improbable Conditional." It can be used to give advice, make offers, and talk about a variety of hypothetical situations.

Concept questions

1   Are we talking about the past, present or future? (Future or present)
2   Is this a real or imagined situation? (Imagined)
3   How probable is the if-clause? (Improbable or unreal)
4   How certain is the result clause? (100%)

Third conditional

If I *had studied* harder, I *would have passed* the exam.

Concept

The Third Conditional is used to speculate about the consequences of something that did not happen in the past. It is called the "Impossible Conditional". It can be used to express regret or relief.

Concept questions

1   Are we talking about the past, present or future? (Past)
2   Is it a real or imagined past? (Imagined)
3   Did I study hard? (No)
4   Did I pass the exam? (No)
5   How certain is the result clause? (100%)
6   What do I feel? (Regret)
7   What am I doing? (Speculating about a different past)

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Futures - Grammar Reference Sheet

Will + Shall

1 Spontaneous decision	eg *OK, I'll see you at 7.00.*
2 Making Requests	eg *Will you let me know as soon as possible?*
3 Expressing a prediction, belief or opinion about the future	eg *I don't think they'll win the match.*
4 Inevitable future fact	eg *John will be thirty next week.*
5 Promise or threat	eg *I'll give you the money tomorrow.* eg *I'll punch you on the nose.*
6 Making an offer	eg *I'll carry that for you.* eg *Shall I open the window for you?*
7 Making a suggestion	eg *Shall we go out tonight?*
8 First Conditional	eg *If it rains, I'll stay at home.*

Going to

1 Plan or intention - *not* a definite arrangement. Decision made in the past.	eg *I'm going to book a holiday in Greece.*
2 Making a prediction based on evidence in the present	eg *I feel terrible. I think I'm going to faint.* eg *Look at those clouds. It's going to rain.*

Present Continuous

Definite future arrangement (sometimes called the "diary future"). A specific time is given.	eg *I'm meeting Paul at 3 o'clock.*

Present Simple

The "timetable future"	eg *My plane leaves at 7.00 in the morning.*

Exercise 1

Complete these sentences with *will* or *going to*. Compare your answers with your partner.

1   A: Poor Elizabeth went to hospital yesterday.
       B: Oh dear! I'm sorry to hear that. I _____ send her some flowers.

2   A: The room's too cold.
       B: Yes, you're right. It isn't very warm in here, is it? I _____ turn on the heater.

3   A: I hear you're having difficulty with your wife these days.
       B: Yes, I _____ divorce her.

4   A: Oh dear! I can't do this homework.
       B: Don't worry. I _____ help you.

5   A: Did you remember to book seats for the theatre?
       B: Oh no, I forgot. I _____ telephone for them now.

6   A: Do you love Jane?
       B: Yes, I love her and we _____ get married.

7   A: It's John's birthday tomorrow.
       B: Is it? I haven't got any money for a present but I _____ send him a card.

8   A: What are your plans for the summer?
       B: We _____ travel around Europe.

9   A: Dave is very angry with you.
       B: Is he? I didn't realise. I _____ ring him and apologise.

10   A: Why are you leaving so early?
       B: Because the teacher gave us a lot of homework, and I _____ do it very carefully.

Exercise 2

Work with your partner. All the sentences below have the wrong future form.
Put the <u>correct</u> future form in the sentences and explain your choice.

1   I feel terrible. I think I'll faint.

2   I'm afraid I can't come to the cinema because I'll have a party tonight.

3   Don't worry. I help you.

4   Next year I'll take the Proficiency exam, but I haven't enrolled in a class yet.

5   Look at the timetable. The train is going to leave at 8 o'clock.

6   "I don't know how to use this machine."
        "OK, I'm explaining how it works."

7   All the tickets for Friday are sold out? OK, then I'm taking two tickets for
        Saturday.

8   I listened to the weather forecast this morning. They say it's raining tomorrow.

9   I've got an appointment at the dentist's. I'll go this afternoon.

10   It's no good. You can't stop me! I'll jump. (standing on top of the Eiffel Tower)

Exercise 3

Discuss the different uses of the Future Continuous in the sentences below.

1 This time tomorrow we'll be lying on the beach.
2 In tonight's programme we'll be talking to the Prime Minister.
3 Will you be passing the post office on your way home?
4 Don't ring now – she'll be sleeping.

Exercise 4

Match the sentences above with the descriptions of the different uses of the Future Continuous below.

A To talk about or ask about future activities that have been planned.
B To talk about an activity in progress at a future point in time.
C To make a deduction about a present activity based on knowledge of someone's routine or what normally happens at this time.
D To introduce polite requests.
   (If the activity has already been planned or will take place in the natural course of events, no inconvenience is being imposed on the person who is being asked to do something.)

Exercise 5

Match the sentences below with the different uses of the Future Continuous (A, B, C, D) above.

1 Don't ring now – she'll be putting the children to bed.
2 Will you be going to the party on Saturday?
3 Will you be going to the shops today?
4 In America it's 8.00am, so children everywhere will be getting ready for school.
5 Will you be making any more films?
6 The sun will be setting in a minute.
7 We'll be arriving around 6.00.
8 Will you be staying long?
9 It's 6 o'clock in Miami now so their plane will be landing at this moment.
10 Don't ring me at 1 o'clock because I'll be having lunch at that time.
11 Will you be driving home in my direction? My car isn't working.

Two things are always true about all uses of the Present Perfect:
(i)   there is always a connection with the present.
(ii)   if we talk about an action in the past, we do not know when the action happened.


The Present Perfect simple has two main categories of use called the *Unfinished Past* and the *Indefinite Past*. Each category has two sub-categories.

1   Unfinished Past

(i)   Unfinished Period of Time Use

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about things which have happened in an unfinished period of time that includes the present. It is used with expressions such as *this morning, this week, this month, this year*.
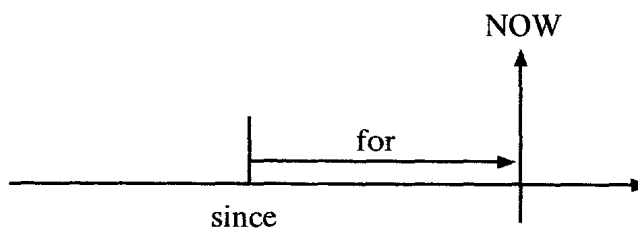
eg I've visited Paris twice this year.
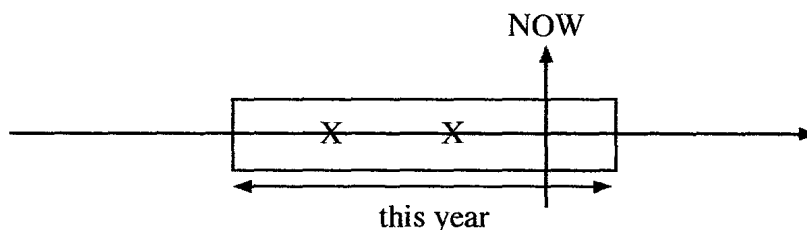
(ii)   Duration Use

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about the duration of an action that started in the past and continues up to and includes the present. It is often used with *for* and *since*. To ask questions we use "How long have you ...?"

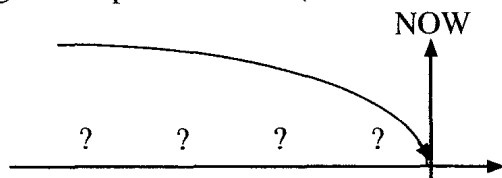eg I've worked here for 10 years (and I still work here).

2 Indefinite Past

(i) Result Use

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about the present result of an action completed at an unspecified time in the past.

eg I've repaired the car (so it now works)

This use of the Present Perfect is often used to give news:
eg Six people have been rescued.
Sometimes the result of the past action is evident in the present:
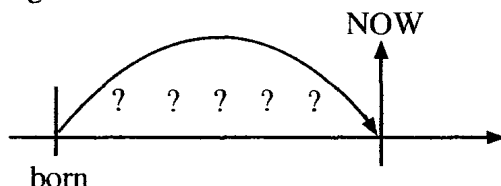eg Oh, you've dyed your hair!
To highlight that something has happened in the very recent past, we can add the word *just:*
eg They've just arrived.

(ii) Experience Use

The Present Perfect Simple is used to talk about experiences people have had at some time in their lives. When the action happened is not specified and is not important.

eg He has been all round the world.

It is used with *ever* and *never* to ask questions and give answers about experiences:
eg   "Have you ever ...?" "No, I've never ..."
eg   Have you ever driven a racing car?
eg   I've never eaten frogs legs.
It is also used with superlatives and expressions such as "This is the first time ...":
eg You're the most wonderful person I've ever met.
eg This is the first time I've drunk champagne.

Present Perfect with adverbs
The Present Perfect can be used with adverbs such as *already* and *yet*.
Note: *already* = earlier than expected
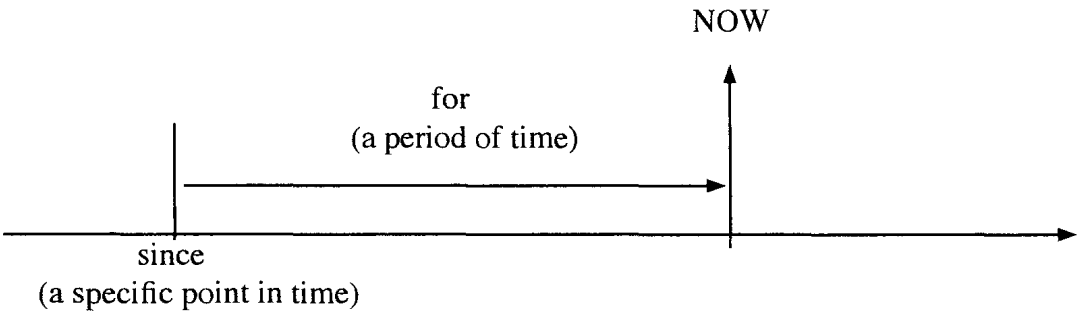   *yet*   = later than expected
eg There's no need to introduce us – we've already met.
eg Haven't you finished yet? I did it in five minutes!
eg We asked her to be here at six o'clock but she hasn't arrived yet.

Look at the following sentences:

       I've known her <u>for 8 years</u>.
       I've known her <u>since   </u>.

> **FOR** is used to talk about *a period of time*, eg 8 years.

> **SINCE** is used with *a specific point in time*, eg 1997.

Exercise 6
Put the words in the box below with **FOR** or **SINCE**.

Christmas	2001	10 minutes
ages	last year	years	a long time
October	I left school	June 12th
3 o'clock	2 months	four days
5 weeks	I arrived	a fortnight	he kissed me

FOR	**SINCE**

Below are the different categories of use for the Present Perfect Simple:

1   The Unfinished Past
   (i)   Unfinished Period of Time Use
   (ii)   Duration Use

2   The Indefinite Past
   (i)   Result Use
   (ii)   Experience Use

Further information on these categories is given on the "Present Perfect Simple Grammar Reference Sheet". Use this to help you do the exercise below.

Exercise 7
Look at the sentences below and decide which category of use they belong to.

<div align="right">CATEGORY OF USE</div>

1   Have you seen her latest film?   _____

2   I haven't seen him for ages.   _____

3   I've visited my aunt twice this year.   _____

4   I see you've painted the room.   _____

5   I've loved you since I first met you.   _____

6   We've decided to get married.   _____

7   This is the first time I've tasted caviar.   _____

8   We've lived here as long as I can remember.   _____

9   You're the most wonderful person I've ever met.   _____

10   I've never been to America.   _____

Now think of your own example sentences to test your partner.

Student A

Ask your partner questions. Start your questions with: **Have you ever .... ?**

Find out if your partner has ever:

- had an accident   - got drunk and been sick

- killed an animal   - stolen from a hotel/restaurant

- asked someone to marry him/her   - hitch-hiked alone

- slept on a mountain   - been robbed

- driven a very expensive car   - broken a bone

You can also think of your own questions to ask.

Listen to your partner's story and decide if it is TRUE or FALSE

If you are not sure, you can ask questions using the Past Simple, eg
        When did you ... ?
        What did you ... ?
        Why did you ...?

Take turns asking and answering questions.

Remember that when your partner asks you a question, you must always answer "Yes, I have," and then describe what happened.

Student B

Ask your partner questions. Start your questions with: **Have you ever .... ?**

Find out if your partner has ever:

- spoken to a famous person   - had a terrible experience in a plane

- stayed in hospital   - had more than one boy/girlfriend
                                       at the same time

- travelled up a river   - slept on a beach

- been in a hot-air balloon   - made a speech in front of a lot of people

- lost a lot of money   - won a sports competition

You can also think of your own questions to ask.

Listen to your partner's story and decide if it is TRUE or FALSE

If you are not sure, you can ask questions using the Past Simple, eg
        When did you ... ?
        What did you ... ?
        Why did you ...?

Take turns asking and answering questions.

Remember that when your partner asks you a question, you must always answer "Yes, I have," and then describe what happened.

Exercise 8

Put the verbs in brackets in the correct tense. Use either the Present Perfect Simple or Past Simple.

1   Giovanni _____ (come) to London four months ago. When
     he _____ (arrive), he _____ (go) to stay with some friends
     who _____ (live) in London since 1996.

2   A: I'm looking for Susan. _____ you _____ (see) her?
     B: I _____ (see) her yesterday, but I _____ (not see) her today.

3   Helen Smith is one of the most interesting people I _____ (met).
     She is only twenty-five, but she _____ (travel) to over fifty different
     countries. Five years ago she _____ (be) a bank clerk in Brighton, but
     she _____ (decide) to give up her job and see the world. Since then,
     her life _____ (change) completely.

     The first time she _____ (go) abroad was seven years ago, when
     she _____ (be) just eighteen. She _____ (take) a boat to
     France and _____ (hitch-hike) around Europe for five weeks.
     She _____ (visit) Europe many times since that first trip, of course, but
     that first holiday _____ (be) the one which _____ (make) her
     start travelling. However, it was not all enjoyable. When she _____(be)
     in Madrid, somebody _____ (steal) her purse. She _____(lose)
     all her money, so she _____ (work) in a restaurant for a fortnight.
     She _____ (make) some good friends there, and _____(return)
     several times since then.

     How did she find the money to visit all these different countries? After her first trip abroad,
     she _____ (go) home and _____ (work) for two years,
     saving all the time. Now she travels continually, finding work when her money gets
     low. "I _____ (make) a lot of friends," she says, "and
     I _____ (learn) to speak several languages. I _____(have)
     some difficulties, and I _____ (often be) sick, but
     I _____ (never think) of giving up my travels. The first time
     I _____ (go) abroad _____ (change) my life, and I
     _____ (want) to travel ever since."

There are two uses of the Present Perfect Continuous.

1   Unfinished Past – duration of activity use

The Present Perfect Continuous is used to talk about the duration of an activity that started in the past and continues up to and includes the present. It is often used with *for* and *since*. To ask questions we use "How long have you …?"

eg He's been drinking since 8 o'clock.

NOW

8 o'clock
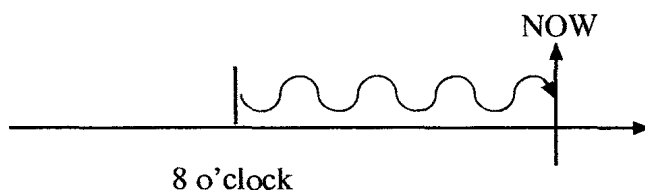
Note that we are interested in the *duration of the activity*. If we are interested in completed actions, we use the Present Perfect Simple, eg "He has drunk 10 pints of beer".

2   Indefinite Past – result of a recently stopped activity

The Present Perfect Continuous is used to talk about the result of a recently stopped activity. The result of the activity is evident in the present.

eg He's been repairing the car. He's filthy.

Result
Evident
NOW

repairing car

activity
stops
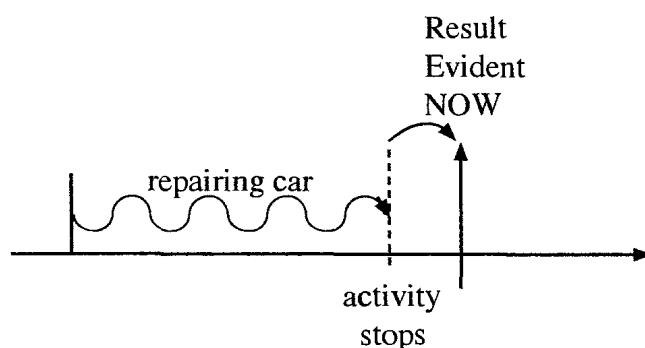
In contrast, if we say "He's repaired the car" we are interested in a completed action and the sentence tells us the car now works. Look, for example, at these sentences:

I've written three letters.
I've drunk four pints of beer.
I've bought six Christmas presents.

These sentences show we are interested in completed actions. We cannot say,
for example:

> X I've been writing three letters. X
> X I've been drinking four pints of beer. X
> X I've been buying six Christmas presents. X

If the meaning of a sentence implies a short, completed action, we cannot put the verb
into the continuous form. For example, we cannot say:

> X I've been losing my pen. X
> X I've been breaking my leg. X

The action of breaking a leg is a short, complete action. However, the sentence "I've
been breaking rocks" is correct because "breaking" in this sentence is an activity and
not a single complete action.

Note also that some verbs do not usually take the continuous form (eg stative verbs
such as *believe, know, love*) so they would not normally be used in the Present Perfect
Continuous. For example, it would be incorrect to say:

> X I've been knowing him since April. X

Exercise 9

Discuss with your partner the difference in meaning between these sentences.

1　　a)　　I've lived in London for 10 years.
　　b)　　I've been living in London for 10 years.

2　　a)　　He's drunk 10 pints of beer.
　　b)　　He's been drinking since 8 o'clock.

3　　a)　　He's repaired the car.
　　b)　　He's been repairing the car. He's filthy.

What conclusions can you draw about the way the Present Perfect Simple and Present Perfect Continuous are used?

Exercise 10

Look at the sentences below. Discuss if you can put them into the Present Perfect Continuous or not and explain why.

1　　I've broken my leg.

2　　I've cut some bread.

3　　I've started the car.

4　　I've known her for 5 years.

5　　I've loved him since I first met him.

6　　I've written three letters.

7　　I've caught a cold.

8　　I've lost my ticket.

Exercise 1:   1C; 2E; 3A; 4F; 5B; 6H, 7G; 8D

Exercise 2

1   She <u>had left</u> when I <u>arrived</u>.
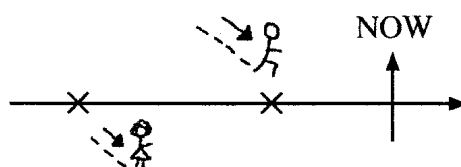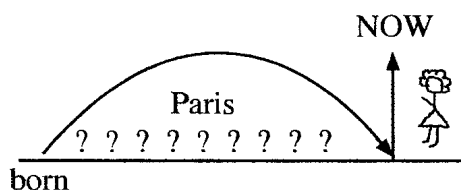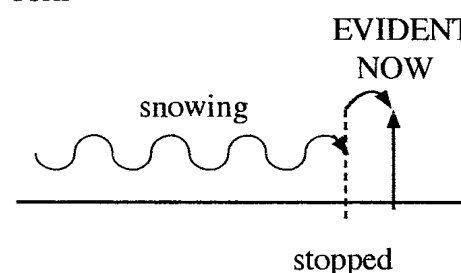
2   She<u>'s been</u> to Paris.

3   Oh look! It<u>'s been snowing</u>.
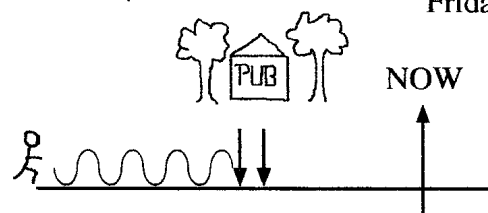
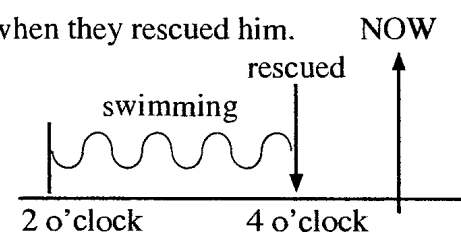4   She<u>'ll be having</u> dinner at 8 o'clock.
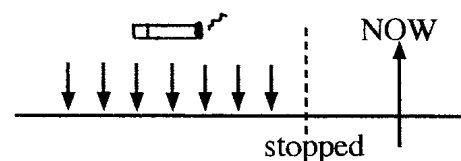
5   <u>I'll have finished</u> the book by Friday.

6   He <u>stopped to have</u> a drink.

7   He<u>'d been swimming</u> in the sea for two hours when they rescued him.

8   He <u>used to</u> smoke.

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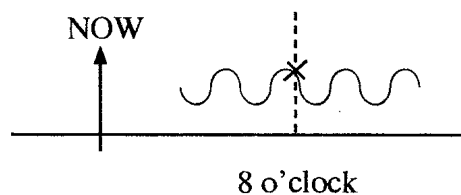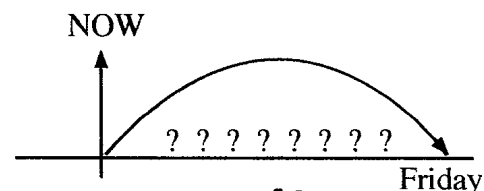
Exercise 3

1a)   Irrelevant to the concept of the Present Continuous when used to express future meaning.
1b)   It will create confusion if you use one future form to check the meaning of a different future form.
1c)   Same as 1b).
1d)   Same as 1a).
1e)   It depends on your relationship with the doctor! The word "appointment" is more suitable.

2a)   Irrelevant question.
2b)   You cannot use "will" in the concept question because this is the form you are trying to check learners have understood.

3a)   The language is too complicated and more difficult than the target item.
3b)   Again, this is confusing. Simpler language is needed.

4   Questions a), b) and c) do not check understanding of the non-literal meaning of the expression, ie to fall dead, especially in combat.

5   All of the questions a), b) and c) fail to deal with the idiomatic meaning of the expression. They are asking questions about the literal meaning of the words rather than the non-literal meaning of the whole utterance.

6a)   This is an example of poorly graded language as it is unnecessarily complex. Remember the **KISS** principle: **K**eep **I**t **S**hort and **S**imple.
6b)   This is too long and complicated, and sounds like a badly-written definition from a grammar book.

7   Turning the example sentence into a question does not check understanding. Also it is not possible to check understanding of an item by using it in this way in a question.

8a)   This is too philosophical to work as a concept question.
8b)   Like the philosophical question "When is a table not a table?", this is somewhat existential and is probably unanswerable.

9a)   Checking the meaning of something can sometimes involve checking what it does not mean, eg if it is similar to another word or easily confused with it, but in this case there is no relationship whatsoever between the two items.
9b)   This does not check if the learner has understood the word "wardrobe", and it is not possible to know if the learner has one in their house or not.

10   As teachers we often want to reject what learners say in a positive way that is not discouraging, but with concept questions the answers have to be clear and unambiguous, so the answer is a clear "No, a wardrobe is not a kind of fish."

Exercise 4

1   Learners may think they have understood correctly but are in fact mistaken. Secondly, learners may not feel comfortable about saying they have not understood something in front of other learners.

2   The teacher is making the assumption that everyone understands the word, when this may not be the case. Little opportunity is given to the learners to say "no".

3   There is the danger here that if just one learner answers the questions correctly, the teacher may make the assumption that everyone in the class has understood. The teacher needs to be careful not to move on too quickly before checking all the learners have understood.

Exercise 5

1   <u>floor</u>
1a)   This is slightly ambiguous and may be better for eliciting the word rather than checking understanding. It might be better to say "What am I standing on?"
1b)   Fine.
1c)   Perhaps it is better to say "Is there a floor outside?"

2   <u>chest of drawers</u>
2a)   The question needs to be more specific.
2b)   Fine. (Answer: usually in the bedroom)
2c)   Good. (Answer: clothes)

3   This water <u>is boiling</u>.
3a)   A good question to elicit the word "boiling" but it does not check understanding of the meaning.
3b)   Good
3c)   Good.

4   This meat <u>is tough</u>.
4a)   OK, but it could be simplified, eg "Is it easy or difficult to eat?"
4b)   Irrelevant question.
4c)   Good.

5   <u>kettle</u>
5a)   OK if it is in contrast to a *teapot.*
5b)   OK
5c)   Good.

6   She felt <u>embarrassed</u>.
6a)   OK if the answer to the question is "No" and in contrast to the meaning of *ashamed.* Better to ask "Did she think she had done something silly/stupid?" (Answer: yes)
6b)   Good. You could also ask "Did she feel comfortable?" (Answer: yes)
6c)   There is possible confusion here with the difference in meaning between *embarrassed* and *ashamed.*

Exercise 6

1   *I'm seeing the doctor on Monday.* (Present Continuous as future – the definite arrangement use)

      1   Are we talking about the present or the future?   (The future)

      2   Is it a definite arrangement?   (Yes)

   3   Is it in my diary?   (Yes)
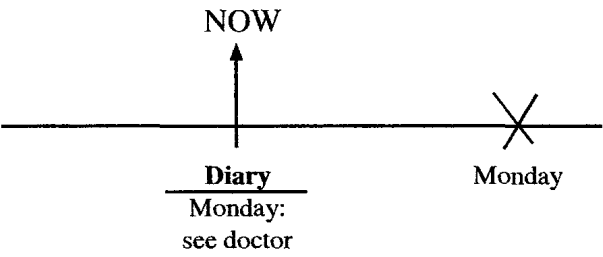
2   *I'm going to see him on Monday.* ("going to" – future intention, decision made in the past)

      1   Is this an intention/plan?   (Yes)

      2   Did I decide now or in the past?   (In the past)

      3   Is it a definite arrangement?   (No, it's only an intention/plan)
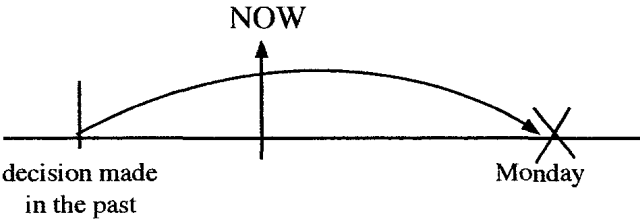
3   *I'll see him on Monday.* ("I'll" – future as spontaneous decision)

      1   Did I decide now or in the past?   (Now)

      2   So is it a spontaneous decision?   (Yes)
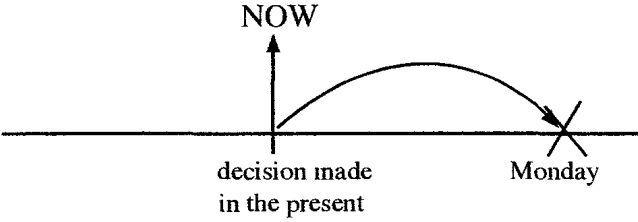
4   *Look at those dark clouds. It's going to rain.* ("going to" – future prediction based on evidence)

      1   Is this a prediction about the future?   (Yes)

      2   What is the evidence? How do I know?   (Dark clouds in the sky)
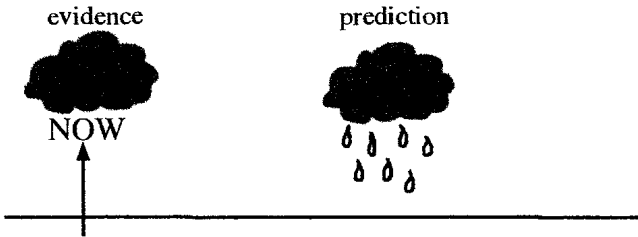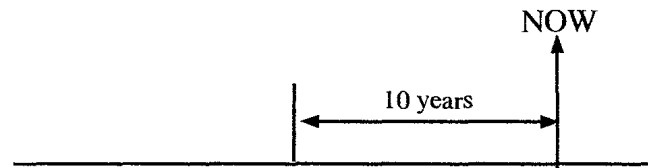
5a)   *I lived in London for ten years.*

|		
1	Do I live in London now?	(No)
2	Did I live in London in the past?	(Yes)
3	So are we talking about a finished action in the past?	(Yes)
4	Is there any connection with the present?	(No)
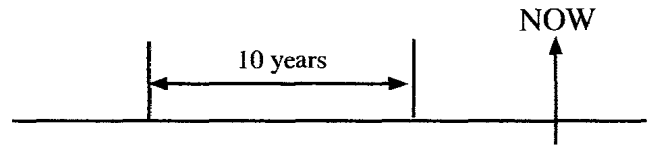
5b)   *I've lived in London for ten years.*

|		
1	Do I live in London now?	(Yes)
2	When did I start living there?	(Ten years ago)
3	Is there a connection with the present?	(Yes)

6a)   *The students were leaving when the bell rang.*

|		
1	Did the students start to leave before the bell rang?	(Yes)
2	Did they finish leaving before the bell rang?	(No)
3	Was the action in progress when the bell rang?	(Yes)
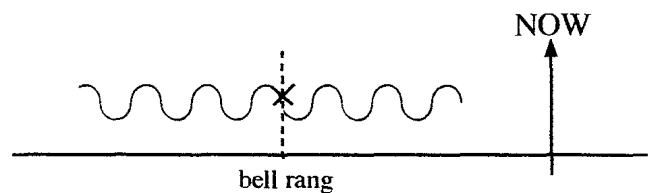
6b)   *The students left when the bell rang.*

|		
1	Did the students start to leave before the bell rang?	(No)
2	Did these two actions both happen at the same time?	(Yes)
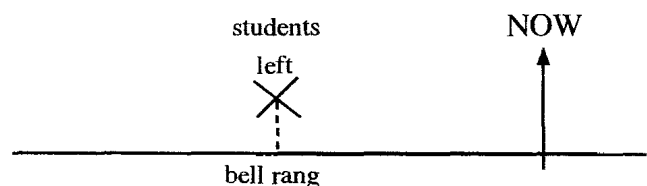
6c)   *The students <u>had left</u> when the bell <u>rang</u>.*

     1   Did the students start to leave before the bell rang?   (Yes)
     2   Did the students finish leaving before the bell rang?   (Yes)
     3   Did these two actions happen at the same time?   (No)
     4   Was one action completed before the other?   (Yes)
     5   Which action was completed first?   (The students left)
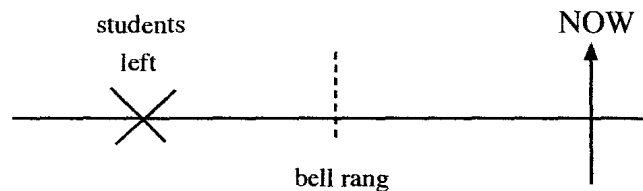

7   *I've been painting the kitchen.* (Present Perfect Continuous – evidence in the present of a recently stopped activity)

     1   Have I finished painting the kitchen?   (We don't know. Maybe yes, maybe no)
     2   Am I painting the kitchen now?   (No)
     3   Did I stop a short time ago?   (Yes)
   4   How do you know?   (Because I'm covered in paint)
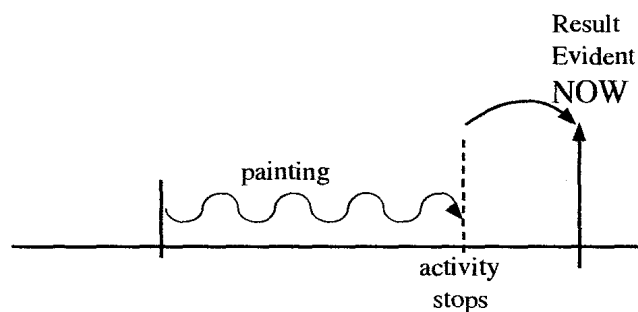
8a)   *She'll be having dinner at 8.00pm.*

     1   Does she start having dinner before 8.00pm?   (Yes)
     2   Is she still having dinner after 8.00pm?   (Yes)
   3   So is the action in progress at 8.00pm?   (Yes)
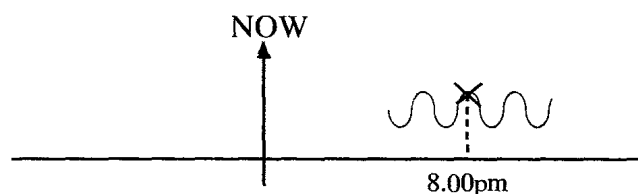
8b)   *I'll have finished the book by Friday.*

|		
1	Imagine it is Friday. Is the book finished?	(Yes)
2	Is the action completed between now and Friday?	(Yes)
3	Do we know exactly when?	(No)

NOW

?   ?   ?

Friday
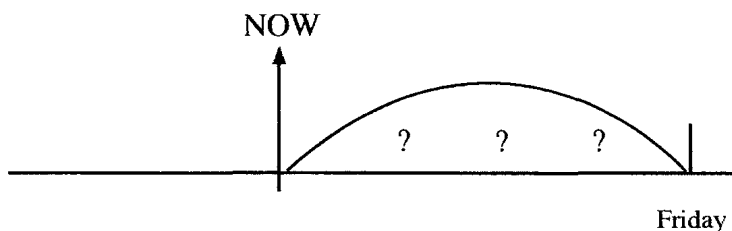
9a)   *I wish I had a car.* ("wish" + past simple – expressing dissatisfaction with the present)

|		
1	Are we talking about the past, the present or the future?	(The present)
2	Do I have a car?	(No)
3	Would I like to have a car?	(Yes)
4	How do I feel about this situation?	(Dissatisfied)

NOW
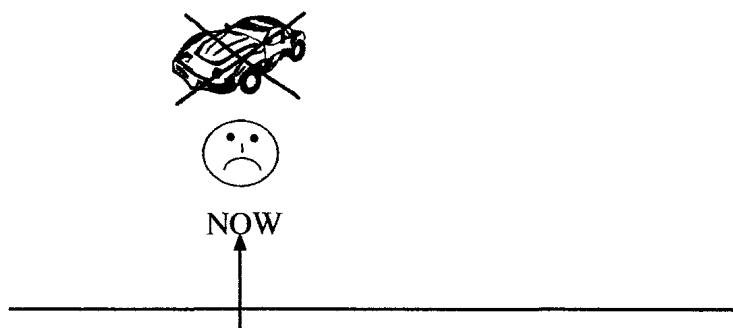
9b)   *I wish I had studied harder.* ("wish" + past perfect – to express regret about the past)

|		
1	Are we talking about the past, the present or the future?	(The past)
2	Did I study hard?	(No)
3	How do I feel?	(Regretful)
4	Why?	(Because I failed the exam)

EXAM

NOW
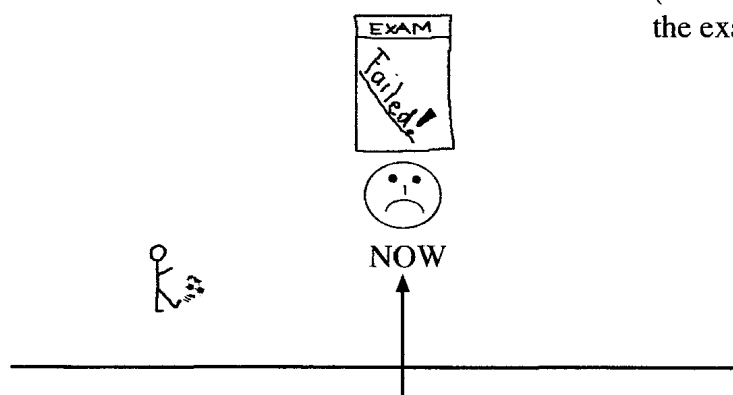
9c)   *I wish you <u>wouldn't smoke</u> in here.*   ("wish" + would – desiring change in the future)

|		
1	Are we talking about the past, the present or the future?	(The future)
2	Is the person smoking now?	(Maybe yes, maybe no)
3	How do I feel about this situation?	(Irritated, annoyed)
4	Do I want something to change in the future?	(Yes)
5	What do I want to happen in the future?	(The person stops smoking in here)
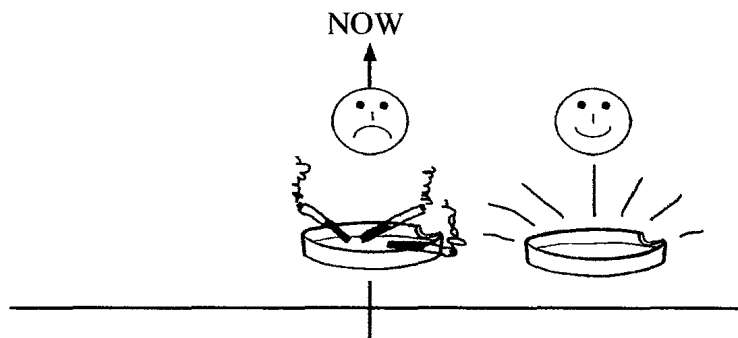
10a)   *I <u>remembered to pay</u> the bill.*

1	Did I remember <u>before</u> I paid the bill?	(Yes)
2	What did I think when I remembered?	(I must pay the bill! I mustn't forget to pay the bill!)
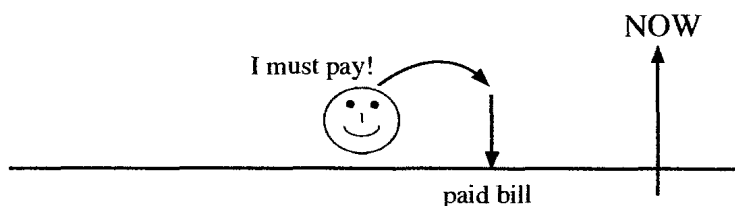
10b)   *I <u>remembered</u> paying the bill.*

1	Did I remember <u>after</u> I paid the bill?	(Yes)
2	What did I think when I remembered?	(I've paid the bill!)
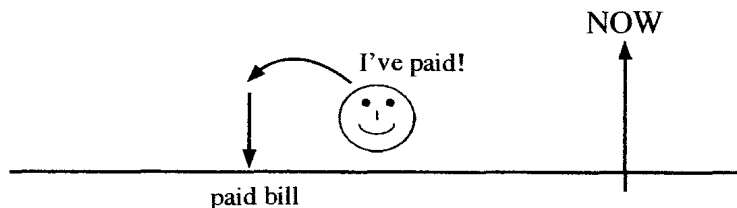
Exercise 7

1   *I had my car repaired.*(to have something done - the causative use of "have")
    1   Did I repair my car?   (No)
    2   Did someone else repair it?   (Yes)
    3   So did I arrange for someone else to do something for me? (Yes)
    4   Why? (Because I couldn't to it or didn't want to do it)

2a)   *I have to start work at 7.00am.* (have to – to express obligation/necessity)
    1   Is it necessary to start work at 7.00am?   (Yes)
    2   Is there a choice?   (No)

2b)   *I don't have to get up early on Sunday mornings.* (don't have to – absence of necessity/
                                                obligation)
    1   Is it necessary to get up early on Sunday?   (No)
    2   Is there a choice?   (Yes)
    3   Can I get up early on Sunday if I want to?   (Yes)

2c)   *You mustn't smoke in class.* (mustn't – to express prohibition)
    1   Can I (Am I allowed to) smoke in class?   (No)
    2   Do I have a choice?   (No)
    3   Is it prohibited / forbidden?   (Yes)
    4   Is there a rule against it?   (Yes)

3   *She should have locked the door.* ("should have" + participle – criticism of a past action)
    1   Did she lock the door?   (No)
    2   Was it a good idea to lock the door?   (Yes)
    3   Why?   (Because someone stole
                                     all her money, etc)
    4   Am I criticising her?   (Yes)

4   *He must be drunk.* (must be – to express deduction)
    1   Do I think he is drunk?   (Yes)
    2   How sure am I?   (Very sure, 99% sure)
    3   Why am I so sure?   (Because he isn't walking
                                     straight, etc)
    4   Am I making a deduction   (Yes)
    5   What do I say if I am 100% sure?   (He is drunk)

5a)   *I saw him swim across the river.*
    1   Did I see him get into the river and start swimming?(Yes)
    2   Did I see him get out of the river the other side?   (Yes)
    3   Did I see all or part of the action?   (All of the action)

5b)   *I saw him swimming across the river.*
    1   Did I see him get into the river and start swimming?(No)
    2   Did I see him get out of the river the other side?   (No)
    3   Did I see all or part of the action?   (Part of the action)

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6   *Don't ring now. She'll be eating.* (Future Continuous – deduction about present activity)
        1   Are we talking about the present or the future?   (The present)
        2   Do I think she is eating now?   (Yes)
        3   How sure am I?   (Very sure, 99% sure)
        4   Why am I so sure?   (I know she usually eats at this time)
        5   Am I making a deduction?   (Yes)

7a)   *He needn't have got up early.* (needn't have – absence of past necessity/obligation)
        1   Did he get up early?   (Yes)
        2   Was it necessary?   (No)
        3   Did he know that before?   (No)
        4   Did he think it was necessary?   (Yes)

7b)   *He didn't need to get up early.* (didn't need to – absence of past necessity/obligation)
        1   Was it necessary to get up early?   (No)
        2   Did he know that before?   (Yes)
        3   Did he get up early? (No, because it wasn't necessary, OR Yes, because he wanted to)

8   *She should pass the exam.* (should – expressing future probability based on knowledge)
        1   Do I think she will probably pass the exam?   (Yes)
        2   Why do I think this?   (Because she has studied very hard, etc)
        3   Am I expressing a belief about the future?   (Yes)
        4   What is this belief based on? (Her and the exam, ie. my knowledge of the circumstances)

9   *I'm getting used to driving on the left.* (get used to doing – become accustomed to something)
        1   Do I usually drive on the right?   (Yes)
        2   Is driving on the left new and strange for me?   (Yes)
        3   Is it more familiar and easier now?   (Yes)
        4   Why?   (Because I have done it many times)
        5   So am I becoming accustomed to it?   (Yes)

Exercise 8

1   *It's a <u>cosy</u> room.*

    1   Is the room warm and comfortable?   (Yes)

    2   Is it large or small?   (Small)

    3   Do I like being in the room?   (Yes)

2   *The play was a <u>flop</u>.*

    1   Was the play a success or a failure?   (A failure)

    2   Was it a big failure?   (Yes)

    3   Is this a formal or informal expression?   (Informal)

3   *<u>I didn't know if I was coming or going.</u>*

    1   Was I very confused?   (Yes)

    2   Why?   (Because there were so many things to do, etc)

    3   Did I know what to do next?   (No)

    4   Is this a formal or informal expression?   (Informal)

4   *He <u>hesitated</u> before jumping.*

    1   Did he jump immediately?   (No)

    2   Did he wait a short time and then jump?   (Yes)

    3   Why?   (He was uncertain, frightened, worried, etc)

5   *She <u>makes do</u> with very little money.*

    1   Does she have everything she needs?   (No)

    2   Does she accept this situation?   (Yes)

    3   Why?   (She has no choice)

    4   Does she make good use of what she has?   (Yes)

6   *"You'll lose your job if you're not careful." "<u>I don't care.</u>"*

    1   Is his job important to him?   (No)

    2   Is he afraid of losing his job?   (No)

7   *She has a <u>hectic</u> life.*

    1   Does she have a busy life?   (Yes)

    2   How busy?   (Very busy)

    3   Does she have to do a lot of things quickly?   (Yes)

    4   Is she always in a hurry?   (Yes)

8   *<u>Would you mind if I smoked?</u>*

    1   Do I want to smoke?   (Yes)

    2   Am I asking for permission to smoke?   (Yes)

    3   Do I ask this before or after I smoke the cigarette?   (Before)

    4   Do I know the other person very well?   (No, probably not)

    5   Why do I ask for permission?   (Not everyone likes smoking)

    6   Am I being polite?   (Yes)

    7   How would I ask a close friend the same question?   (Is it OK if I smoke?)

Exercise 1

1 I'll; 2 I'll; 3 I'm going to; 4 I'll; 5 I'll; 6 we're going to; 7 I'll; 8 we're going to; 9 I'll;
10 I'm going to

Exercise 2

1	I think I'm going to faint. (prediction based on present evidence)
2	I'm having a party tonight. (Present Continuous for a definite arrangement)
3	I'll help you. (spontaneous decision and an offer)
4	Next year I'm going to take the Proficiency exam. (an intention, decision made in the past, no definite arrangements have been made)
5	The train leaves at 8 o'clock. (timetable future)
6	OK, I'll explain how it works. (spontaneous decision and an offer)
7	OK, then I'll take two tickets for Saturday. (spontaneous decision)
8	They say it's going to rain tomorrow. (reporting a prediction based on evidence)
9	I'm going this afternoon. (Present Continuous for a definite arrangement)
10	I'm going to jump. (an intention, decision made in the past)

Exercise 4

1B   2A   3D   4C

Exercise 5

1C   2A   3D   4C   5A   6B   7B   8A   9C   10B   11D

Exercise 6

FOR: 10 minutes, ages, a long time, 2 months, four days, 5 weeks, a fortnight
SINCE: Christmas, 2001, last year, October, I left school, June 12th, 3 o'clock, I
              arrived, he kissed me

Exercise 7

1. 2(ii); 2. 1(ii); 3. 1(i); 4. 2(i); 5. 1(ii); 6. 2(i); 7. 2(ii); 8. 1(ii); 9. 2(ii); 10. 2(ii)

Exercise 8

1.   came; arrived; went; have lived
2.   have you seen; saw; haven't seen
3.   have met; has travelled; was; decided; has changed; went; was; took;
       hitch-hiked; has visited; was; made; was; stole; lost; worked; made;
       has returned; went; worked ; have made; have learned; have had;
       have often been; have never thought; went; changed; have wanted.

Exercise 9

1   There is no significant difference between
    a)   *I've lived* in London for 10 years and
    b)   *I've been living* in London for 10 years. The same is true for other verbs such as *live, work, learn,* and *study* when they are used in the Present Perfect Simple and the Present Perfect Continuous.
2   a)   We are interested in completed actions, ie the fact that 10 pints of beer have been drunk. In contrast, in sentence
    b)   we are interested in how long the activity has been continuing up to and including the present. This is the "Unfinished Past – duration of activity use" of the Present Perfect Continuous (see OHT18).
3   a)   The Present Perfect Simple shows that the action is completed and the car now works. This is the "Indefinite Past – result use" of the Present Perfect Simple (see OHT16). In contrast, in sentence
    b)   we do not know if the car now works, but we have evidence in the present ("he's filthy") of a recently stopped activity. This is the "Indefinite Past – result of a recently stopped activity" use of the Present Perfect Continuous (see OHT19).

Exercise 10

1   We use the Present Perfect Simple in this sentence because we are describing a single, complete action. We cannot say "I've been breaking my leg" because this would describe an activity. However, we can say "I've been breaking rocks" because this is an activity and not a single, complete action.

2   Yes, it is possible to say "I've been cutting some bread" because this is an activity.

3   No, we cannot put this sentence into the Present Perfect Continuous because starting the car is a single, complete action. However, we can say "I've been trying to start the car" because this is an activity.

4   Some verbs (eg stative verbs such as *know, love,* etc) are not normally used in the continuous form, so we would not normally say "I've been knowing him" or "I've been loving him".

5   See answer to number 4 above.

6   We cannot use the Present Perfect Continuous to talk about completed actions, so we cannot say "I've been writing three letters." However, we can say "I've been writing letters" because that is an activity.

7   We can only use the Present Perfect Simple because the act of catching a cold is a single complete action and not an activity.

8   We can only use the Present Perfect Simple because the act of losing a ticket is a single complete action and not an activity.

Index

Grammar

Here is a **photocopiable book** that will help you check learners have understood the language you are teaching them. It gives you:

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- ready-made Concept Questions to use with learners
- guidance and exercises on making concept questions
- grammar reference handouts for learners
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