ESL Conversation About Travel Problems

1. Warm Up Questions

- What's the worst part about traveling someplace?
- Do you get stressed or feel frustrated sometimes when you travel? Explain.
- Talk about your last trip.

2. Matching Vocabulary

Match the words and expressions on the left with the meanings on the right.

1. exhausted
2. snore
3. frustrating
4. smooth
5. disgusting
6. barely
7. stuck
8. layover
9. to say the least
10. receipt

a. extremely unpleasant
b. unable to move from a particular place or location
c. used to suggest that a situation is much worse or more extreme than you say it is
d. almost not
e. a piece of paper that you are given which shows that you have paid for something
f. extremely tired
g. no problems; as planned
h. something that annoys you or makes you angry because you cannot do anything about it
i. to breathe in a noisy way through your mouth and nose while you are asleep
j. a short stay between parts of a journey, especially a long plane journey

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3. Watch the following YouTube video and answer the questions below:

Listening Questions

- Where did Johnny go?
- How was his trip?
- How many modes of transportation did he have to take to get there?
- What did he do as soon as he arrived at his hotel in Brazil?
- What was the first bad thing that happened to him?
- Why couldn't Johnny just show them the receipt?
- How long were they stuck on the runway?
- How were the movies and food on the plane?
- Why couldn't he sleep on the airplane?
- What was so bad about the train?
- Why couldn't he sleep on the second plane?
- What happened with the bus that he had to take once he arrived in Brazil?

4. Listen to the conversation again and fill in the gaps with the missing words:

Shelly: Hey, Johnny! How was your trip to Brazil? Did you have fun?

Johnny: Oh, hi Shelly. Yeah, Brazil was great. I _____ so much fun. But the travel was anything but.

Shelly: Oh? What do you mean?

Johnny: Well, it was a long journey to say the least. The way there was everything but smooth. I had to take two buses, a train, and two airplanes. I was so tired that when I finally got to my hotel in Brazil, I _____ straight to sleep.

Shelly: Oh, no! What happened?

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Johnny: Well, first I had to get on a bus to get to the airport. I had bought a ticket for the bus the day before, but then I _____ it! I looked everywhere for it, but I _____ find it. It must have fell of my pocket somewhere.
So, finally I had to buy a new one.

Shelly: Oh, that sounds frustrating. You mean they wouldn't just give you a new one when you showed them the receipt?
Johnny: I _____ have the receipt, I lost that too! It was a complete waste of money.
Anyways, I got on the plane. Then we were stuck on the runway for about an hour.
The movies were terrible and the food on the plane was disgusting. I couldn't sleep because the guy that _____ next to me was snoring the entire flight. I _____ to use earplugs, but they didn't work. It was really stressful.
Then, when we _____, I had to get on a train to another terminal for my next flight. Well, the layover was really short … since the plane arrived later than scheduled, so I had to run as fast as I could.

Shelly: Oh no! Did you have your ticket for the train?

Johnny: Yes, but the train was jam-packed! I couldn't find anywhere to sit down!

Shelly: How terrible!

Johnny: Yes. I _____ and walking so much. My feet were killing me. I couldn't sleep on the plane at all. The food was terrible, and I could barely keep my eyes open at that point.

Shelly: Did you get to sleep on your next plane?

Johnny: No. NOT AT ALL! I was sitting next to a mother with her baby, and the baby cried the whole time.

Shelly: It sounds like a nightmare Johnny! Did anything else happen?

Johnny: Well, when I finally arrived in Brazil, I had to take another bus to my hotel.

Shelly: Well, that should have been easy.

Johnny: Right, it should have been. Unfortunately, the bus _____ an hour late! I was completely exhaus

Shelly: At least it's all over now.

Johnny: Yes, except I have to travel there again next month!

Shelly: Oh, no!

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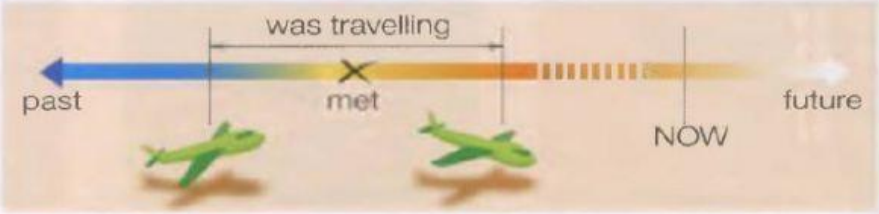
Grammar

Study the rules:

- We use the Past Continuous to talk about an action that was in progress when another (shorter) action happened. The action in the Past Continuous might continue after this point.



*I **was travelling** back from China and we **met** on the plane.*
was travelling = longer action (Past Continuous)
met = short action (Past Simple)

POSITIVE
I/he/she/it + **was** + **verb+*ing***
you/we/they + **were** + **verb+*ing***

We first met when she was renting a room in my sister's flat.
We were standing at a bus stop and he said hello.

NEGATIVE
I/he/she/it + **wasn't** + **verb+*ing***
you/we/they + **weren't** + **verb+*ing***

My father wasn't waiting for me when I got there.
They weren't watching TV, they were in bed.

verb+*ing*: spelling rules	examples
most verbs: add ***-ing***	go → go**ing** wait → wait**ing**
verbs ending in **-e**: take off **-e** and add ***-ing***	live → liv**ing** write → writ**ing**
verbs ending in consonant + vowel + consonant: double the last consonant and add ***-ing***	get → get**ting** stop → stop**ping** travel → travel**ling**

We can also use Past Continuous to talk about the activity we were doing at a specific time in the past. It means we were in the process of doing something at the specific time or when something else happened:

I was watching TV show at 6 pm yes

I was watching TV when you came.

We use Past Continuous to talk about 2 long continuous actions happening at the same time in the past.

I was cooking when my mother was washing sishes.

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4 **a** Helen is talking about how she met Simon. Choose the correct verb forms.

1 I first *met/was meeting* Simon when *we waited/were waiting* for a bus.

2 It *rained/was raining* and he *offered/was offering* me his umbrella.

3 While we *sat/were sitting* on the bus, he *gave/was giving* me his business card.

4 But when I *got/was getting* home I couldn't find the card anywhere.

b Complete Helen's story. Put the verbs in brackets in the Past Simple or Past Continuous.

5 A week later I was *walking* (walk) to the bus stop after work and I _____ (see) him in the street.

6 He _____ (talk) to a woman so I _____ (not say) hello.

7 But while I _____ (wait) for my bus, a car _____ (stop) next to me. It was Simon.

8 He _____ (offer) to drive me home and I _____ (invite) him in for a coffee. That _____ (be) 22 years ago!

Discussion Questions to talk about Travel Problems

Have you ever been stuck on the runway? For how long?
How do you feel about crowded trains?
Have you ever lost a ticket for travel or anything else?

Use the following flashcards to talk about travel problems.

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