

I. Complete the text. Use the past simple or past continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

Understanding what is important in life:

Rio Elias was born in San Juan, Puerto Rico in 1967. As a child, he _____ (speak) Spanish at school. After he _____ (graduate) from high school, he _____ (move) to the United States to attend Boston College. While he _____ (study) he also improved his English a lot, though it was hard work. In his first year, he _____ (take) classes that were mainly about maths, and in 1989 he _____ (get) a degree in accounting. He _____ (complete) an MBA from Harvard Business School in 1994. After that, he _____ (have) jobs with several different companies. While he _____ (work) for a marketing company he _____ (meet) Dan Feldstein. Together, in 1999, they _____ (start) an online shopping discount company called Red F. In 2005 Feldstein and Elias _____ (sell) Red F, because they _____ (develop) Red Ventures, a marketing and sales service company, and they _____ (want) to concentrate on it completely. In 2009, while he _____ (travel) for work, Elias _____ (be) on a plane that crashed. He _____ (not die) and said that the experience _____ (help) him to understand what's really important in life.

II. Choose the correct options to complete the conversation:

A: When *did you first play* / *were you first playing* the guitar?

B: It *was being* / *was* when I was about six years old. At that time, my father was learning / learned to play the guitar, and I *was asking* / *asked* if I could try it. He *was* / *was being* happy about that.

A: *Did he play* / *Was he playing* well?

B: No, not at all. He *had* / *was having* a very successful business, and at that time, he *tried* / *was trying* to find a hobby - something to help him relax.

A: How quickly *did you become* / *were you becoming* better than him at playing the guitar?

B: It *took* / *was taking* about a week - maybe two.

A: Wow. That fast?

B: Yes.

A: Was he happy when your band finally *became* / *was becoming* famous?

B: He *loved* / *was loving* it!

III. Use the past simple or the past perfect form of the verbs *STUDY, FINISH, NOT GO, DECIDE, SPEND, START, CHOOSE, FEEL, LIVE, GET, APPLY, RECEIVE, GO* to complete the sentences:

1) When I _____ high school, I _____ directly to university. I _____ enough, I thought.

2) I _____ four years learning the piano when I _____ to give it up and _____ playing the drums.

3) By the time I was 18, I _____ in six different countries and I _____ tired of moving. That was when I _____ to stay in Tokyo.

4) I _____ for about twenty jobs before I _____ one invitation for an interview. It _____ well and I _____ the job!

IV. Match the questions with the answers (a-f).

1 Before you moved to California, had you lived in the USA before?

- 2 Did you apply for more than one job?
- 3 Were you living in London when you heard about the job in Beijing?
- 4 Had your visa application been approved before you accepted the job?
- 5 Did the application process take a long time?
- 6 Was your job causing you a lot of stress when you decided to leave?

A Yes, I was. **C** No, it wasn't. **E** No, it hadn't.
B No, I hadn't. **D** Yes, it did. **F** Yes, I did.

V. Read the conversation. Match the expressions in bold with the correct meanings (a-d):

A: Do you have a minute? I (1) **was hoping** to discuss our plans for next week's presentation.

B: OK. What's on your mind?

A: I (2) **was thinking** we should start the meeting with an informal discussion. I (3) **was wondering** if that might make everyone feel more relaxed.

B: How long (4) **were you expecting** the informal discussion to last?

A: Maybe just fifteen minutes or so.

a It's my opinion that

b do you want

c want

d think

VI. Complete the conversation. Use the expressions (1-4) in Exercise 5:

A: I _____ I could talk to you about something?

B: Sure.

A: P _____. We should hire someone like Joachim de Posada to speak at our conference.

B: That's a good idea. But how _____ we would pay for it?

A: That's what I _____ to discuss with you.

VI. Listen to a man (track 33) with a degree in French describing his career path. Complete the sentences:

1 When _____ university, I _____ what job I _____ to do.

2 I _____ French for three years, and _____ it well.

3 I _____ moving to France
but I _____ any friends or family there.

4 _____ studying a lot, so in the end _____ to go for a Master's degree.

5 After my Master's, _____ a PhD and then _____ at university - as a teacher.