



PSLE English Mastery
Synthesis /
Transformation
The Write Tribe

Time & sequence



5

Time and Sequence

when, while, as

- You use **when** to talk about things that happen at the same time or at almost the same time. When they happen at almost the same time, you put **when** in front of the thing that happens first.
 - Sam almost caused an accident. He failed his driving test.
 - Sam failed his driving test **when** he almost caused an accident.
happened first
 - Dad hit the roof. He saw the bill for the damage.
 - When** Dad saw the bill for the damage, he hit the roof.
happened first
- You can also use **when** to join an ongoing (longer) action to a shorter action happening in the past. The connector **when** is placed in front of the shorter action.
 - The storm broke. We were travelling home.
 - We were travelling home **when** the storm broke.
ongoing/longer action shorter action
 - We were having our English lesson. The fire alarm went off.
 - We were having our English lesson **when** the fire alarm went off.
ongoing/longer action shorter action
- You use **while** to talk about things that happen at the same time.

happened at the same time

 - Billy played ball with his mother. His father had a sleep.
 - Billy played ball with his mother **while** his father had a sleep.

- You can also use **while** to join an ongoing or longer action to a shorter action. The connector **while** is placed in front of the ongoing or longer action.

- Dad found his missing screwdriver. He was tidying the garage.
 - **While** Dad was tidying the garage, he found his missing screwdriver.
- ongoing/longer action shorter action

- The connector **while** can be followed by the **ing**-form of a verb.

- **While** Dad was tidying the garage, he found his missing screwdriver.
 - **While** tidying the garage, Dad found his missing screwdriver.
- verb in ing-form

- Carol felt very nervous. She was waiting for her exam results.
- Carol felt very nervous **while** she was waiting for her exam results.
- Carol felt very nervous **while** waiting for her exam results.

- You use **as** to talk about one thing that happens at the same time as another, sometimes by chance.

happened at the same time



- I walked on the floorboards. They creaked.
- The floorboards creaked as I walked on them.
- The magician pulled out cards from his mouth. The audience watched in disbelief.
- **As** the magician pulled out cards from his mouth, the audience watched in disbelief.

- You can also use **as** to join an ongoing or longer action to a shorter action. The connector **as** is placed in front of the ongoing or longer action.

- Unlike **while**, **as** cannot be followed by the **ing**-form of a verb.

- John was walking home from school. He remembered he had left his homework under his desk.
- John remembered he had left his homework under his desk **as** he was walking home from school.
- My brother hummed to himself. He was watering the plants.
- **As** my brother was watering the plants, he hummed to himself.

Practice 1

Rewrite the given sentence(s) using the word(s) provided. Your answer must be in ONE sentence. The meaning of your sentence must be the same as the meaning of the given sentence(s).

- 1 Tom was eating his sandwich. He noticed a small red spot on his arm.

While _____

- 2 The colours fade. They turn pale.

When _____

- 3 We walked towards the deer. They showed no sign of fear.

_____ as

- 4 Alan kept watch. His friend climbed over the wall into the neighbour's garden to retrieve the ball.

_____ while

- 5 Maria started speaking. James listened attentively.

_____ when

- 6 Ken noticed the tap water was a little murky. He was washing his hands.

As _____

as soon as, no sooner

- You use **as soon as** to say one thing happens immediately before another. You put **as soon as** before the thing that happens first.

Do not include words used to show that something is done without delay e.g. "immediately", "straight away" and "at once" as well as words that indicate sequence e.g. "after", "when" and "then" in the rewritten sentence.

- The guests left immediately after they finished their dessert.
 - As soon as the guests finished their dessert, they left.
- ↓ ↓
happened first

- Peter promised to come to my party straight away when he finished his homework.
- Peter promised to come to my party **as soon as** he finished his homework.

- You can also use **no sooner** to say one thing happens immediately before another. You put **no sooner** before the thing that happens first.
- No sooner** is used with **than**. You often use the past perfect tense in the part of the sentence that contains **no sooner**. When **no sooner** is in the middle of the sentence, you put it between **had** and the past participle.

- As soon as the guests finished their dessert, they left.
 - The guests had **no sooner** finished their dessert **than** they left.
- ↓ ↓
past perfect tense "had ... finished"

- When **no sooner** is at the beginning of the sentence, you invert the order of the helping verb **had** and the subject.

- The phone rang as soon as we sat down to eat.
 - No sooner** had we sat down to eat **than** the phone rang.
- ↓ ↓

helping verb of the past subject
perfect tense "had ... sat"

- The actress got out of her car and the cameras clicked furiously.
- No sooner** had the actress got out of her car **than** the cameras clicked furiously.

Practice 2

Rewrite the given sentence(s) using the word(s) provided. Your answer must be in ONE sentence. The meaning of your sentence must be the same as the meaning of the given sentence(s).

- 1 I turned the machine off immediately when I heard the strange noise.

_____ as soon as

- 2 The children got home. They dashed into their room to play computer games straight away.

As soon as _____

- 3 James and Sally squealed with delight when they saw the new puppy.

As soon as _____

- 4 The police followed the suspect as soon as he left his hideout.

_____ no sooner

- 5 Mum put the washing out. It started to rain.

No sooner _____

- 6 The students stood up at once when they saw the principal.

No sooner _____

until, since

- You use **until** to talk about the time between two actions or events. You put **until** in front of the later point in time.

Do not include "will" in the combined sentence.



- Don't open your eyes. I will tell you to do so.
- Don't open your eyes **until** I tell you to do so.

Do not include "only" in the rewritten sentence.



- You can only leave when the show ends.
- You cannot leave **until** the show ends.

Change the positive "can" to the negative "cannot" so that the meaning of the rewritten sentence is the same as the meaning of the original sentence.

- The farmers work in the field. They stop work when the sun sets.
- The farmers work in the field **until** the sun sets.
- The farmers work in the field **until** sunset.

You can sometimes rewrite the words after "until" as a noun or noun phrase.

- You use **since** to talk about the time between the present and a point in the past. You put **since** in front of the past time or event.
- You use the present perfect tense for the main clause. You use the simple past tense for the part of the sentence that begins with **since** if **since** is followed by a clause.
- Uncle Mike works in Beijing. He was posted there in 2014.
- Uncle Mike has worked in Beijing **since** he was posted there in 2014.
- Alice has suffered from asthma. She first had asthma in January last year.
- Alice has suffered from asthma **since** January last year.
- I have not seen my cousins. They migrated to Australia three years ago.
- Since** my cousins migrated to Australia three years ago, I have not seen them.

Practice 3

Rewrite the given sentence(s) using the word(s) provided. Your answer must be in ONE sentence. The meaning of your sentence must be the same as the meaning of the given sentence(s).

- 1 No one has seen the missing man. He was last seen three days ago.

_____ since

- 2 Carol has not ridden her bike. She had an accident.

Since _____

- 3 You can watch television after you have finished your homework.

_____ until

- 4 Mum has been teaching in this school after she graduated in 2000.

Since _____

- 5 The farmer did not allow his helpers to leave. They had to finish packing the vegetables.

_____ until

- 6 The people waited patiently outside the entrance for the ticket office to open.

_____ until

Practice 4

Rewrite the given sentence(s) using the word(s) provided. Your answer must be in ONE sentence. The meaning of your sentence must be the same as the meaning of the given sentence(s).

- 1 The results were announced. The spectators cheered loudly.

_____ when

- 2 Jason was watering the plants when he saw a snake hiding under some bushes.

While _____

- 3 The teacher asked for a volunteer. Mike put up his hand at once.

No sooner _____

- 4 You cannot go out with your friends before you finish your homework.

_____ until

- 5 The residents have complained about the insects. The insects appeared two weeks ago.

_____ since

- 6 Dad's plane landed. He called Mum without delay.

As soon as _____
