

Read the rule. Using the Past Simple, the Past Continuous and Past Perfect

GRAMMAR FOCUS narrative forms

- In narratives, we use the past simple for the main events in a story.

Something knocked into the boat.

1

- We use the past continuous for background events, or longer actions interrupted by a shorter event.

The sun was setting ...

We were reaching the end of the tour one evening, when something knocked into the boat.

2

- We use the past perfect for events that happened before the main past time we are talking about.

I was 27 and had been a river guide for several years.

3

Complete the story with the correct forms of the verbs in brackets.

A lucky escape

That reminds me of another story I heard about a man who had a lucky escape. He ¹ _____ (be) at a barbecue restaurant on top of a mountain, and after the meal he ² _____ (decide) not to take the cable car down with his friends, but to walk down instead. While he ³ _____ (look) for the path, he ⁴ _____ (fall) into a stream and ⁵ _____ (break) his leg. Unable to move, he ⁶ _____ (try) to phone for help, but his mobile ⁷ _____ (work) because he ⁸ _____ (drop) it in the stream. Knowing he was missing, teams of people ⁹ _____ (look) for him, but it was twenty-four days before they ¹⁰ _____ (find) him. Luckily he ¹¹ _____ (bring) a bottle of barbecue sauce with him to the barbecue, and he ¹² _____ (survive) by drinking water mixed with the barbecue sauce.