Write one word in each gap.

The pencil

Because the pencil (**1**) ..... become such a fundamental part of our lives, it's difficult to remember that people (**2**) ..... not been using them forever. Like other products of human ingenuity, pencils had to be invented.

Before the first half of the sixteenth century, people (**3**) ..... to use pens to write with and brushes to paint with. It (**4**) ..... also possible to use a metal stick to make faint marks on paper. However, up to that point no one (**5**) ..... found an easy way to make marks that could be erased. Then, some time before 1565, a large deposit of the chemical, graphite, (**6**) ..... found near Borrowdale in Cumbria, England. The locals (**7**) ..... use this graphite (a kind of soft black rock) to mark sheep. Soon, tales of this unusual soft substance (**8**) ..... spread to artists around the world, who were eager to use it to produce works of art.

Graphite is soft and dirty, and in order to write or draw with it, it (**9**) ..... to have to be covered in something, such as sheepskin or string. People had (**10**) ..... trying to improve the pencil for some time before manufacturers in Italy came up with the idea of enclosing the graphite in a wooden case. The modern pencil was born.

Choose the correct answer.

1 How long ..... before Val finally turned up?
A have you been waiting C you waited
B are you waiting D had you been waiting

2 You ..... be so good at backgammon, did you?
A never used to C are used to
B got used to D wouldn't

3 Could you tell me, sir, what you ..... in the park at three in the morning?
A have done C were doing
B have been doing D had done

4 I was angry when you saw me because I ..... with my sister.
A have been arguing C had been arguing
B argued D would argue

5 *The Black Pirate* ..... over a million copies already this year.
A had sold C had been selling
B has sold D was selling

6 Don't throw the paper away because I ..... it yet.
A haven't read C haven't been reading
B hadn't read D hadn't been reading

7 By the time we arrived, the film ..... .
A has already started C already started
B would already start D had already started

8 We had to walk home in the end because Jimmy ..... his car keys.
A has been losing C was losing
B had lost D had been losing

9 It took Edward a long time to ..... living in Canada.
A be used to C get used to
B used to D be used

10 I'd love to have lived in the old days, when people ..... to market by horse and carriage.
A have been travelling C got used to travelling
B would travel D had been travelling

11 I much preferred it when we ..... to Wales every summer on holiday.
A used to go C had gone
B were used to going D have been going

12 Your teacher called me today and said that you ..... in the playground again.
A had been fighting C have fought
B used to fight D would fight

LIVEWORKSHEETS