

GRAMMAR PRACTICE

PAST TENSES

I. Complete with the *past simple* or the *past progressive* of the verbs in brackets.

It's a small world

Last summer, while I _____ (BE) on holiday in Rome,
something strange _____ (HAPPEN), which
_____ (MAKE) me realise how small the world is. I
_____ (FEEL) hungry so I _____
(DECIDE) to go and have a nice meal at a nice restaurant. While I
_____ (LOOK) at the menu, I _____
(NOTICE) two young women staring at me.
I _____ (FIND) it quite rude but I _____
(NO SAY) anything.
After a few minutes, a waitress _____ (COME)
over and _____ (TAKE) my order. About ten minutes
later, as she _____ (BRING) me my meal, one of

the women _____ (CALL) her to their table and
_____ (TELL) something. Then the waitress
_____ (WALK) over to my table and
_____ (INFORM) me that my meal was going to be
paid for by the women. As I _____ (WALK) over to
ask them who they _____ (BE) and why they
_____ (BUY) me lunch, one of them _____
(STAND) up and said: "Ms Smith, it's me, Alice from year 6. Do you
remember me?" I _____ (NOT CAN) believe it.
Little Alice was all grown up!

II. Choose a, b, c or d

- 1) It was almost midnight and we still _____ a place to stay.
- | | |
|------------------------|------------------|
| a) didn't find | c) hadn't found |
| b) hadn't been finding | d) wouldn't find |
- 2) He was feeling weak because he _____ properly all week.
- | | |
|-----------------|------------------------|
| a) wouldn't eat | c) hadn't been eating |
| b) didn't eat | d) wasn't going to eat |

3) I knew that I _____ staying up late the night before the exam. I was so tired the next morning that I couldn't concentrate.

a) would regret

c) regretted

b) was regretting

d) had regretted

4) _____ the match already _____ by the time you arrived at the stadium.

a) Did ...start

c) Had been starting

b) Would start

d) Had started

5) I _____ Danny, but then I remembered that he had an English lesson.

a) would call

c) had called

b) was going to call

d) called

6) Lisa _____ at the hospital for a year before she got hired.

a) volunteered

c) was volunteering

b) had been volunteering

d) was going to volunteer

III. Read the text and choose the correct alternative.

Some people put the good of the community before their own. One such example is Mr White.

Mr White **worked** / **had been working** at Kingley Secondary School for twenty years when disaster **struck** / **had struck** one Sunday

last March: the school **burnt / would burn** down because of an electrical failure. Mr White **had complained / was going to complain** several times about the state the school was in, but nobody **was going to listen / had listened**.

The nearest schools were kilometres away and one thing **seemed / had seemed** certain: the children's education **would suffer / suffered**. Mr White was very stressed because he **tried / had been trying** to find an alternative solution for days. Then on Wednesday afternoon, it **came / had been coming** to him.

He **thought / had thought** that it **had been / would be** a good idea to continue lessons somewhere else, and the only place he could find was his own house.

It **wouldn't be / hadn't been** very comfortable there was no other choice. By the end of the week he **started / had started** lessons in his living room. It became a popular idea, and before long nearly all the teachers **began / were going to begin** to follow his

example. By the time a new school was built, the students **didn't miss / hadn't missed** a single lesson and were able to continue their studies without any problem. Mr White **showed / would show** that young people's education comes before personal comfort, and he has now become a local hero.

IV. Complete with the **past simple**, the **past perfect simple** or the **past perfect progressive** of the verbs in brackets.

WHAT GENERATION GAP

I _____ (**READ**) an article in the newspaper the other day about how the generation gap is getting wider, but I totally disagree. Yesterday, when I _____ (**TURN**) on my computer, I was surprised to see that my seventy-five-year-old grandfather _____ (**SEND**) me an e-mail. It was quite a surprise because I _____ (**MEAN**) to teach him how to set up an account for ages but I _____ (**BE**) too busy to get round to it. I was so amazed that I _____ (**RING**) him up to tell him.

He said that he _____ (ASK) others for help for too long and that he _____ (DECIDE) to take the matter into his own hands. He _____ (PLAY) around with my brother's computer one morning when he _____ (DISCOVER) a video explaining how to set up an e-mail account. Within an hour he _____ (WORK) out exactly what to do. By the end of the week he _____ (JOIN) a social media site, too, and was chatting with old friends in Australia. It seems like anything that makes life easier is well-received by all ages.