

THE STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

READING

- A) Look at a photo that news photographer Tom Pilston took in 2008. What do you think was happening?
- B) Read Tom's description of what happened on the night he took the photo. Were you right?



A moment in history

On November 4th, I arrived in Chicago late in the evening. I wanted to photograph Barack Obama and his family in the convention center, but when I got there I discovered that I didn't have my press pass and I couldn't go inside. I walked around the park outside the center. Although it was November, it was a warm night. The atmosphere was wonderful. When I took this photo, everybody was looking at the TV screens waiting for the election results. Some people were quietly holding hands and smiling – others were tense and nervous. They felt that it was their moment. Suddenly, I realized that this was a better place to be than inside. I was watching Obama's victory through the faces of all these people, African, Hispanic, Chinese, white. At about 11 o'clock the results were announced, and everybody went crazy. People started laughing, shouting, and crying. But when Obama made his speech they all became quiet and emotional. There was only one place to be on the planet that night – and I was there.

C) Read it again and answer the questions.

1. Why did Tom Pilston go to Chicago?
2. Why couldn't he take a photograph of Obama?
3. What was the weather like?
4. Where did he take this photo?
5. Where could the people see the election results?
6. Was he sorry that he couldn't go inside the center?
7. What happened when Obama won?

D) Why do you think the photographer thought his photo was better than a photo of Obama himself? Do you agree?

GRAMMAR

Look at the highlighted verbs in an extract from the text. Do they describe actions that happened ...?

- a. after he Took the photo
- b. at the same time as he took the photo

When I took this photo, everybody **was looking at the TV screens** waiting for the election results. Some people **were quietly holding hands and smiling** – others were tense and nervous.

- PAST CONTINUOUS -

Look at the examples and analyze the structure

At 8:45 last Saturday I was working in my office.

I wasn't doing anything important.

My friends were having breakfast. They weren't working.

A Was it raining when you got up?

B No, it wasn't.

A What were you doing at 11 o'clock last night?

B I was watching TV.

☐	I / He / She / It	was working.	You / We / They	were working.
☐	I / He / She / It	wasn't working.	You / We / They	weren't working.
☐ ☒ ☐	Was he working?	Yes, he was. / No, he wasn't.		
☐ ☒ ☐	Were they working?	Yes, they were. / No, they weren't.		

- We use the past continuous to describe an action in progress at a specific moment in the past.
- We often use the past continuous to describe the situation at the beginning of a story or narrative.

Past simple or past continuous?

Look at the examples

I **was working** in my office when the boss **walked** in.

I **was having** lunch when my sister **arrived**.

- Use the simple past for a completed action in the past.
- Use the past continuous for an action in progress at the time of the simple past action.

TIME TO PRACTICE

a) Complete the sentences with a verb in the past continuous.

I **was eating** dinner, so I didn't answer the phone. (eat)

1. I took this photo when my wife _____ in the yard.
(work)
2. He met his wife when he _____ in Japan. (live)
3. They _____ for us when we arrived. (not wait)
4. _____ she _____ a coat when she went out?
(wear)
5. The sun _____ when I left for work. (shine)
6. What _____ you _____ at 7:30 last night?
(do)
7. I _____ when you gave the instructions. (not listen)

b) Put the verbs into the simple past or past continuous.

She **arrived** when we **were having** dinner. (arrive, have)

1. I _____ my arm when I _____ soccer. (break, play)
2. _____ you _____ fast when the police _____ you?
(drive, stop)
3. It _____ when we _____ the restaurant (snow, leave)
4. I _____ the game because I _____ (not see, work)
5. When you _____ me, I _____ to my boss.
(call, talk)
6. We _____ in the library when we _____ (study, meet)

c) Do you have a favorite photo of yourself as a child? Who took it? What was happening when they took it? What were you wearing?