Grammar Practice

Narrative Tenses

Read the theory and solve.

24a Circle the correct answer.

It (0) *happened* / *was happening* in June 1985. It was summer and we (1) *relaxed* / *were relaxing* in the garden. My mother (2) *read* / *was reading* a book and my uncle (3) *dozed* / *was dozing* peacefully in the sun. We children (4) *looked* / *were looking* for worms and insects. And then he (5) *arrived* / *was arriving*. He was a handsome man with piercing eyes and he (6) *looked* / *was looking* straight at my mother. Her face (7) *went* / *was going* pale.

'Arthur, I (8) *thought* / *was thinking* you were dead!' she said.

Jussi and I (9) *met* / *were meeting* while we (10) *lived* / *were living* in London. I (11) *rented* / *was renting* a room in a house in North London and he (12) *stayed* / *was staying* with friends who'd offered to put him up. We both (13) *had* / *were having* temporary jobs – at one time he (14) *waited* / *was waiting* on tables in a café and I (15) *washed* / *was washing* dishes in a small restaurant. Anyway, we (16) *got on* / *were getting on* really well and before long we (17) *planned* / *were planning* to go on a long holiday together. That (18) *was* / *was being* before the accident.

I (19) *sat* / *was sitting* in my taxi reading the morning newspaper when the alarm in the bank across the street (20) *went off* / *was going off*. I (21) *looked* / *was looking* up and (22) *saw* / *was seeing* two masked men running towards me. There was confusion everywhere. Police cars (23) *raced* / *were racing* towards the bank while pedestrians (24) *ran* / *were running* away from it. I (25) *turned* / *was turning* the key in the ignition when the masked men (26) *forced* / *were forcing* their way into my taxi and (27) *told* / *were telling* me to drive off. It was the scariest thing that had ever happened to me.

24b Complete the extract from a story. Use the past simple or continuous of the verbs in brackets. Sometimes both tenses are possible.

As I (0) ..... *was going* ..... (go) to sleep, I (1) ..... (tell) myself that I would avoid the man who was sharing the room.
I (2) ..... (sleep) deeply when I was suddenly woken by a loud noise. To judge from the sound, my companion must have jumped down from the upper berth to the floor in a single movement.
I (3) ..... (hear) him trying to open the door; it (4) ..... (open), and then I (5) ..... (hear) him running at full speed down the passage, leaving the door open behind him. The ship (6) ..... (roll) a little and I (7) ..... (expect) to hear him fall but he (8) ..... (run) as though for his life. The door (9) ..... (swing) open and shut with the movement of the ship and the sound (10) ..... (annoy) me.
I (11) ..... (get up) and (12) ..... (close) it and (13) ..... (find) my way back to my berth in the darkness. I (14) ..... (go) to sleep again but I have no idea how long I slept.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

25a Circle the correct answer.

0 It was only four o'clock but everyone *already left* / *had already left* the office.

1 He *was* / *'d been* in hospital for days before I *heard* / *'d heard* about the accident.

2 I could tell they *did* / *'d done* something wrong because they were looking guilty.

3 By the time she *was* / *'d been* ten years old, she *already appeared* / *'d already appeared* in a West End play.

4 The performance *just started* / *had just started* when we *arrived* / *'d arrived*.

5 Max *never left* / *had never left* home before without telling me where he was going.

6 By nine that evening, most of the guests *already left* / *had already left* the party.

25b Complete the sentences. Use the past simple or past perfect continuous of the verbs in brackets.

0 Everyone ....*felt*.... exhausted because they ....*'d been working*.... all day. (feel, work)

1 She ..... paint on her hands because she ..... the kitchen. (have, decorate)

2 After they ..... for several hours, they ..... to stop for a rest. (drive, decide)

3 We ..... there for many months before we ..... to notice the problems. (not live, begin)

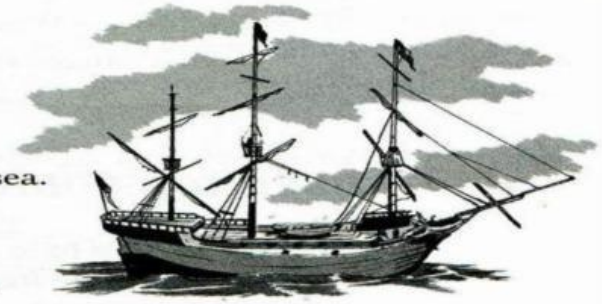
4 ..... long before the train ..... ? (you / wait, arrive)

5 I ..... for months but I still ..... enough money to buy a new car. (save, not have)

6 We ..... them to arrive for several hours when they finally ..... into the drive. (expect, pull)

25c Complete the first part of an article. Use the past simple or past perfect simple of the verbs in brackets.

Pirate of the Caribbean



Black Sam Bellamy was an original pirate of the Caribbean. In 1984 Black Sam's ship, the *Whydah*, (0) ....*became*.... (become) the first pirate ship ever recovered from the sea. According to experts, Sam was probably a democratic leader because divers (1) ..... (find) gold ornaments on the ship which were cut into pieces so they could be shared with the crew.

Black Sam (2) ..... (leave) England and (3) ..... (sail) to America in the early 1700s. We don't know much about the life he (4) ..... (leave) behind. We do know that he was dark and handsome and that he (5) ..... (wear) his long black hair tied in a ponytail.

By 1715 Black Sam (6) ..... (already / meet) his lover, Maria Hallett, in Cape Cod, Massachussetts. While living in Cape Cod, Black Sam (7) ..... (hear) of a fleet of Spanish treasure ships which (8) ..... (sink) in the Caribbean earlier that year. He (9) ..... (decide) to look for the sunken treasure but he (10) ..... (need) a ship to do so. He (11) ..... (persuade) a friend, Palgrave Williams, to buy him one. Black Sam (12) ..... (go) looking for the lost treasure but when he (13) ..... (not find) it, he (14) ..... (turn) to piracy.

Teacher Daniela. LIVEWORKSHEETS