Grammar in context

Look at this sentence from the audio in the listening lesson and answer the questions.

*Last year while we **were sailing** someone **fell** into the water.*

a) **What are the two action verbs in the sentence?** _____ and _____

b) **Which action was the longest?** _____

c) **Which action happened in the middle of another action?** _____

REMEMBER

- We use the past simple to say what we did and when:
  *I **played** a video game **last night**.*
- We use the past continuous to describe continuous actions that were happening before and after a particular time in the past:
  *What **were** you **doing** at 8 o'clock last night?*
  *I **was watching** a film.*
- We use the past continuous to talk about what was happening when another action happened. We use the past simple for the other action:
  *I **was listening** to music **when** my mobile phone **rang**.*
- In stories, we use the past continuous to describe the situation and the past simple for the main things that happened:
  *The sun **was shining**, so we **decided** to go for a long walk.*

▶ **See Grammar reference, Unit 4,** page 148

1 **Choose the correct verb form to complete each sentence.**

1 When I **arrived** / **was arriving** at the barbecue, everyone **had** / **was having** a good time.
2 I **was listening** / **listened** to my favourite song when you **called** / **were calling**.
3 How **did you break** / **were you breaking** your arm? **Were you running** / **Did you run** at the time?
4 I **rode** / **was riding** my bike very fast and I **fell** / **was falling** off.
5 Last week the police **stopped** / **were stopping** a man because he **was driving** / **drove** his car at 135 kilometres an hour.
6 While I **shopped** / **was shopping** this afternoon, I **lost** / **was losing** my backpack.

2 **Complete the sentences using the past simple or past continuous form of the verbs in brackets.**

1 I _____ (**say**) hello to the tourists, but they didn't answer me because they _____ (**look**) at the sights.
2 When we _____ (**walk**), we _____ (**see**) Maria. She _____ (**shop**).
3 I _____ (**not want**) to get up today. It _____ (**rain**) outside.
4 They _____ (**drive**) through the countryside when the car suddenly _____ (**stop**).
5 The traffic lights _____ (**change**) when we _____ (**chat**) to each other.

3 **Complete the travel blog using the past simple or past continuous of the verbs in brackets.**

Sorry I (**1**) _____ (**not post**) any blogs last week while Mum, Dad and I (**2**) _____ (**stay**) on the Uyuni Salt Flats in Bolivia. There were beautiful night skies – but there wasn't any wi-fi! I (**3**) _____ (**not stream**) any videos either, so I'm posting these pictures instead. We (**4**) _____ (**not camp**) – we stayed in an old-fashioned caravan, in the middle of the salt flats. Our guide, Arturo, (**5**) _____ (**take**) us outside when it (**6**) _____ (**begin**) to get dark, so we could see the stars. I (**7**) _____ (**look**) up at the sky when at least 20 shooting stars (**8**) _____ (**fly**) past. While we (**9**) _____ (**take**) lots of photos, Arturo (**10**) _____ (**start**) a fire. Soon there was hot chocolate for everyone, which (**11**) _____ (**keep**) us warm. We stayed up all night. I (**12**) _____ (**stand**) looking at the sky when the sun came up. It was amazing!

THINK | RESEARCH | CULTURE | LEARN | ME

Work with a partner. Take turns to tell each other about the things you and your family were doing:

- last Friday evening / Saturday morning / Sunday

▶ **Workbook Unit 4:** Grammar 2, page 31, exercise 1

LIVEWORKSHEETS