

LANGUAGE IN ACTION

Past perfect with *never*, *already*, *by (then)*, *by the time*



1 Read the sentences and underline the action that happened first.

- I had already had lunch when my sister arrived.
- My sister had already got married by the time she was 20.
- Dan wasn't happy because I had turned down his invitation.
- By the time the match finished, we had scored five goals!
- We had walked a very long way by the time we found the river.



2 Match the beginnings of the sentences (1-5) with the ends (a-e).

- I had never seen snow
 - We had only been at the hotel a few minutes when
 - Had you ever run more than 5 km
 - By the time my granddad settled in England,
 - We had already been to six different shops
- a by the time Clara decided to buy something.
b before today?
c before I went to Sierra Nevada.
d he'd lived in six different countries.
e the storm started.



3 Put the words in the correct order to make sentences.

- car / seen / had / the / already
I had already seen the car.
- had / then / back / by / come
Jack came back by then.
- rang / woken up / you / I / when / already / ?
Had I already woken you up when he rang?
- abroad / never / year / had / last / been / I
Before I had been abroad last year.
- then / a snake / ever / you / before / seen / ?
Had you ever seen a snake before then?

4 Complete the sentences with the past simple or the past perfect.

- Pablo had never had (never / have) guitar lessons before he gave (give) his first concert.
- Had (Sean / ever make) lasagne before today?
- School started (already / start) when I arrived (arrive).
- By the time Sara left (leave) England, she had learned (learn) to speak English very well.
- I had never felt (never / feel) real terror until I saw (see) that film!
- Had (everyone / already / go) to bed by the time the fire started (start)?



5 Complete the text with the past simple or the past perfect.

Emma ¹ moved (move) to a new school last year. By the time she ² was (be) there a couple of weeks, she ³ had settled (already / settle) down very well. And now things are going even better! Last week she ⁴ became (become) the captain of the school football team. She ⁵ was (be) very happy about this because she ⁶ always wanted (always / want) to be the team captain. And yesterday she ⁷ received (receive) her exam results. More good news! She ⁸ had got (never / get) all top marks before!



6 Complete the sentences with your own ideas. Use the past perfect.

- Before this year, I had never been to a concert.
- We didn't win the match because we hadn't practiced enough.
- I signed up for karate lessons because I had always wanted to.
- By the time Ella finished university, she had already found a job.
- Max was going through a hard time because he had lost his dog.

WRITING

An opinion essay

- 1 Look at the essay quickly. Does the writer think that life used to be better in the past?

- 2 Read the essay and answer the questions. Tick (✓) and circle the correct answers.

1 In which TWO paragraphs does the writer give ideas to support their opinion?

A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐

2 In paragraph A, the writer *asks a question / gives their opinion*.

3 In paragraph D, the writer *repeats their opinion / asks the reader a question*.

- 3 Complete the essay with the *Useful language phrases* in the box.

firstly in addition in conclusion
secondly therefore
this means that

- 4 What different words or expressions does the writer use to avoid repeating items 1–4 below?

1 in the past (paragraph B)

2 better (paragraph B) _____

3 situation (paragraph B)

4 look at (paragraph D) _____

- 5 Complete the sentence.

In paragraphs B and C, to describe life in the past, the writer uses the past simple, _____ and _____.

Did life use to be better?

A Older people often say that, in the past, life used to be better. However, in my opinion, this is simply not true.

B ¹ Firstly _____, let's look at the situation of women. In the old days, many men (and some women) used to think that a woman's role in life was to be a mother and to do the housework and the cooking. Fortunately, attitudes have changed a lot since then! ² _____ women today are in a much more favourable position.

C ³ _____, the number of very poor people around the world has decreased significantly in the last 20 or 30 years.
⁴ _____, many children in poor countries would die when they were still very young. This happens far less often now.
⁵ _____ we can talk about huge change in two very important areas.

D ⁶ _____, the world today is a much better place. If we examine the facts, no one would want to go back to a 'golden past'. This past only exists in some people's imagination. It never existed in reality.

