



DESCRIBING A PAST EXPERIENCE



 Listen again and complete the phrases.

Hi everyone, and welcome back to the 5-Minute English Podcast.

This is Jessica, and today I'd like to share a story about a volunteering experience that really changed my perspective on life.

A few months ago, I _____ at a local _____ near my neighborhood.

I've always been an animal lover, but I never truly understood how much effort and dedication it takes to care for rescued animals until I spent time there myself. The shelter housed around 50 animals — mostly abandoned dogs and cats — and the staff were doing their best to provide them with food, safety, and affection.

On my first day, I _____ a mix of _____ and _____. I didn't know anyone there, and I was worried that I might not be helpful enough. But the staff welcomed me warmly and patiently explained my tasks — feeding the animals, cleaning their cages, and spending time with them so they could learn to trust people again.

At first, it _____ physically _____ and _____. Some of the animals were frightened or aggressive because of their past experiences. But gradually, I began to see how small acts of kindness could make a huge difference. There was one dog named Max — a small brown terrier — who had been very shy and scared. After a few days of gentle care and attention, he started to approach me and wag his tail. That moment _____ me with an incredible sense of _____ and _____.

During the three weeks I _____ there, I _____ more than I ever _____. It wasn't just about helping animals; it was about developing empathy, patience, and teamwork. I also built friendships with other volunteers who shared the same passion. Together, we supported each other through long days, messy cleanups, and even rainy mornings when everything felt harder.

What surprised me most was how deeply fulfilling the experience turned out to be. Every time I left the shelter, I felt lighter, happier, and more connected to something bigger than myself. It _____ me realize that volunteering isn't only about _____ — it's also about _____.

Since then, I've tried to stay involved in community work, like organizing donation drives and joining environmental clean-ups. These experiences have reminded me that true happiness often comes from serving others and contributing to the well-being of our communities.