Complete Advanced - Verb Forms to Talk About the Past

1. THE PAST SIMPLE describes:

- actions or events in the past and things that happened over a longer period
  I **was** his teacher last year, and he 1)_____ in his studies.

- two past actions or events in the order in which they 2)_____
  He **began** to make an excuse, and I immediately **knew** he wasn't telling the truth.

2. THE PAST CONTINUOUS describes:

- an action 3)_____ at a certain time in the past
  He **was taking** a bath at 5 o'clock yesterday.

- a longer past activity that was interrupted
  While I 4)_____ to him, he just walked away.

3. THE PAST PERFECT is used:

- to talk about an event or action that happened 5)_____ another event or action in the past
  I asked him why he **hadn't given** me his essay ***yet***.

We often use the **past perfect continuous**:

- to emphasize that the action was extended or repeated
  I 6)_____
  a little worried about his progress.

4. THE PRESENT PERFECT is used:

- to describe past events or actions that 7)_____ the present
  I've been playing them every day, and I'm feeling more confident in my English.

- to focus on an activity rather than saying exactly when it happened
  8)_____
  a change in Marco's behavior? Yes, I have.

The present perfect SIMPLE is used to:

- emphasize the 9)_____
  He**'s spent** too much time playing that computer game.

- focus on an activity being complete
  I**'ve tried** to convince him to limit his screen time.

- give the idea that something is permanent
  Language learning **has never been** easy for me.

- say how many times an action has been repeated
  I**'ve tried** using different apps loads of times since I started college.

The present perfect CONTINUOUS is used to:

- emphasize the 10)_____
  He**'s been spending** too much time playing that computer game.

- focus on the action being incomplete
  I've been trying to convince him to limit his screen time.

- give the idea that something is temporary
  I **haven't been focusing** on my English studies lately.

- not state a specific duration for a repeated action
  I've been feeling more confident in my English, definitely.

5. USED TO vs. WOULD

- We use ***used to*** to describe habits, actions, 11)_____ or situations in the past (that no longer happen)
  I **used to** be terrible at French when I was at school.

- We use ***would*** to describe only habits and 12)_____ (never states or situations) that are no longer true.
  I **would** dread being asked questions in class.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

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