PDF 2: Parallel Actions & Conversational Excuses.



PAST CONTINUOUS (PAST PROGRESSIVE)

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Parallel Actions & The Alibi Game

The Parallel Action Rule

Use **while** to show two continuous actions happening at the exact same time in the past.

- **Example:** "While Mark *was cooking* dinner, his sister *was studying* for her exam."

Exercise 1: Meanwhile at the Office... (Simultaneous Actions)

Connect the actions occurring simultaneously at 3:00 PM yesterday using **while**.

1. (Manager / write reports) & (Intern / make coffee) →

   _____

2. (IT guy / fix the server) & (Sales team / celebrate a deal) →

   _____

3. (Accountant / count money) & (Cleaners / wash the windows) →

   _____

🕵️ Pair Activity: The Great Diamond Heist (Alibi Game)

- **Situation:** The museum's diamond was stolen yesterday at 8:30 PM!
- Partner A is Detective Sterling
- Partner B is the Primary Suspect.
- Dialogue Guide:
  - **Detective:** "Where were you at 8:30 PM yesterday, and what were you doing?"
  - **Suspect:** "I was at home! While my wife was making pizza, I was watching football."
  - **Detective:** "Aha! But the power was out in the whole city at 8:30 PM! What were you REALLY doing?"

Teacher Tip:
Let students form pairs and create 1 detail in their alibi that is obviously false to test their partner's detection skills!

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Exercise 2: Why Didn't You Answer My Call?

Complete the excuses with realistic Past Continuous or Past Simple forms.

1. **A:** "I called you three times last night!"
   B: "Sorry! I _____ (listen) to music with headphones, so I _____ (not hear) the phone."
2. **A:** "Why were you late for the morning meeting?"
   B: "While I _____ (drive) to work, my car _____ (run) out of gas!"
3. **A:** "Did you catch the news at 10:00?"
   B: "No, at 10:00 I _____ (put) the kids to bed."

Exercise 3: Quick Dialogue Construction

Write a 3-line mini dialogue between two friends who bumped into each other during an unexpected situation.

- **Friend A:** "Hey! What were you doing at the airport yesterday at 6:00 AM?"
- **Friend B:** _____
- **Friend A:** _____

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Answer Key

Exercise 1:

1. While the manager was writing reports, the intern was making coffee.
2. While the IT guy was fixing the server, the sales team was celebrating a deal.
3. While the accountant was counting money, the cleaners were washing windows.

Exercise 2: 1. was listening / didn't hear | 2. was driving / ran | 3. was putting

Exercise 3 (Sample): Friend B: "I was waiting for my brother's flight to land!" / Friend A: "Oh, I was dropping off my parents for their holiday!"

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