

The first time/ last time past tenses extended speaking activities

Part One: The first time/ last time mini-presentations

Worksheet A – The person speaking

Talk about the first time that or the last time that you (really) did something, e.g. one of the things in the table below, for as long as you can. You can choose any topic you like, including first time/ last time topics which are not below. Your partner will listen and ask you for more details when you have finished speaking. Switch roles and do the same thing again, then take turns doing the same until your teacher stops the activity.

Possible topics for monologues about the past

The	first last	time I	
			ate...
			attended...
			bet...
			borrowed...
			bought...
			broke...
			changed...
			cooked...
			drank...
			drove...
			flew...
			gave...
			got...
			heard about...
			hurt...
			injured...
			listened to...
			lost...
			made...
			met...
			moved...
			phoned...
			read...
			received...
			rode...
			saw...
			spoke...
			studied...
			tried (to)...
			visited...
			used...
			went to...
			won...
			wore...

Worksheet B – The person listening

Listen to your partner speaking about their topic without interrupting. When they have finished speaking, ask for more details using questions like those below. If you are playing for points, you get one point for each question about something related they didn't say.

Possible questions for the person listening to ask about past experiences

Past tense wh- questions

- How did you feel about... (after it finished)?
- What did you do then/ next/ after that?
- How did he/ she/ they/ you react (to...)?
- When did it start/ finish?
- How long did it take?/ How long did you...?
- How many times had you been there before?
- What was happening (around you) at that time?
- What was happening when you...?
- What was he/ she doing while you were ...ing (...)?
- Why hadn't you... before/ for such a long time?
- When had you last... (before that)?
- Was it fun/ interesting/ expensive/...?
- What was the best/ worst thing about...?
- What were you doing when...?
- What...?
- When...?
- How many times...?
- How many...?
- How much...?
- How long...?
- How...?
- Where...?
- Who...?
- Whose...?
- How far...?
- Which...?

Past tense Yes/ No questions

- Had you already met that person when...?
- Had you already... when...?
- Had you ever heard of that before?
- Had you ever... before?
- Did you agree with...?
- Had you planned to...?
- Had you done something similar before?
- Had any of your friends/ family done the same thing before?
- Was it raining/ snowing/ cloudy/ hot/ sunny/... (at that time)?
- Was/ Were...?
- Did...?
- Had...?

When your teacher stops the activity, ask about any topics or questions above which you don't understand, couldn't use, couldn't talk about, etc.

Past tenses presentation

Regular and irregular Past Simple forms presentation

Without looking above, put each of the verbs below into their Past Simple form (“needed” etc). Some are irregular, including some which are the same in the present and in the past.

eat	attend	bet on	borrow	buy
break	change	cook	drink	drive
fly	give	get	hear about	hurt
injure	listen to	lose	make	meet
move	phone	read	receive	ride
see	speak	study	try	visit
use	go to	win	wear	

Hint: The verbs above are arranged in alphabetical order by Past Simple form

Check your answers with the previous page.

Past Simple, Past Continuous and Past Perfect meaning presentation

Without looking above, write past questions using the subject and verb given in brackets below. Usually only one past tense is correct for each. There are three different past forms in total. All of the forms have more than one question each below.

Past tense wh- questions

- How _____ (you feel) about... after it finished?
- What _____ (you do) then/ next/ after that?
- When _____ (it finish)?
- How many times _____ (you be) there before?
- What _____ (happen) around you at that time?
- Why _____ (you not do that) before/ for such a long time?

Past tense Yes/ No questions

- _____ (you already meet) that person before when...?
- _____ (you ever hear) of that before?
- _____ (it rain) at that time?

What three different forms can go in this sentence and how are their meanings different?

- What _____ (you do) when...?

What does “when” mean with each of the three different forms?

With which past tense form above does “when” have each of these meanings?

- before
- after
- while/ during

What are the names of the different past tenses above? How are their meanings/ uses different from each other?

Check your answers as a class or with the next page.

Suggested answers

- What **did you do** when...? – Past Simple – “when” means “after” – tense means past actions in order
- What **were you doing** when...? – Past Continuous – “when” means “while/ during” – tense means something in progress (= started before and might continue) at a particular point in time/ when another action happened
- What **had you done** when...? – Past Perfect – “when” means “before” – tense means the past before the past