

## FUMC ESL Intermediate Lesson

## Past Continuous Tense

### Study this example:

Yesterday Jeff and Jim played tennis. They began at 10 and finished at noon. At 10:30 they **were playing** tennis.

They were in the middle of playing. They had started playing. They had not finished playing.

This is the **past continuous tense**.

I/he/she/it	was	playing/working/eating/sleeping/running
we/you/they	were	

The action has started, but not finished.

Where were you living last summer? Last summer I **was living** in Mexico.

What were you doing yesterday during the game? I **was washing** my car during the game.

What were you looking at? I **was looking** at the cute little babies.

I saw Mother and Dad downtown. Where were they going? They **were going** to the bank.

We often use the past continuous and the past tense together to say that something happened in the middle of something else.

EX: Matt phoned while we **were having** dinner. I **was walking** home when I met Dave. Kate **was watching** TV when we arrived. They **were working** on the car while I slept.

**Fill in the blanks with past continuous and past tense. Use the verbs in parenthesis. The first one is done for you.**

- 1.(rain,get) It was raining when I got home.
- 2.(sit, see) You \_\_\_\_\_ in the park when I \_\_\_\_\_ you.
- 3.(work, hurt) I \_\_\_\_\_ on in my garden when I \_\_\_\_\_ my back.
- 4.(have, arrive) She \_\_\_\_\_ dinner when we \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5.(wait, arrive) Jerry \_\_\_\_\_ for me when I \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6.(drive, happen) How fast \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ when the accident \_\_\_\_\_?
- 7.(take, look) John \_\_\_\_\_ a photo of me while I \_\_\_\_\_ not \_\_\_\_\_.
- 8.(see, trying) When I last \_\_\_\_\_ him, he \_\_\_\_\_ to catch a cab.
- 9.(drop, wash) I \_\_\_\_\_ a plate while I \_\_\_\_\_ the dishes.
- 10.(hope, get) I \_\_\_\_\_ you \_\_\_\_\_ your test back today.

The verbs KNOW and WANT are not used in the continuous.

EX: We were good friends. We knew each other well. (not We were knowing...)

I was enjoying the party, but Christ wanted to go home. (not was wanting)

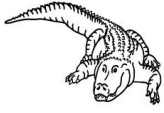
**What were you doing at these times? Write sentences using the past continuous.**

1. (at 8 in the evening) \_\_\_\_\_.
2. (at 8 in the morning) \_\_\_\_\_.
3. (an hour ago) \_\_\_\_\_.
4. (yesterday afternoon) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Use your own ideas to complete these sentences with the past continuous.**

1. The doorbell rang while \_\_\_\_\_.
2. We saw an accident while we \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Ann fell asleep while she \_\_\_\_\_.
4. The television was on, but no one \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Someone knocked on the door while \_\_\_\_\_.

**Find the alligator on page 213 of your OPD. Read this paragraph with your partner. Answer the questions together. Note: The author is the person who wrote the story.**



I went on a trip with my family. We went to Louisiana. My uncle lives there. He was a fisherman. But the oil spill last year ruined the fishing. My uncle had to sell his boat. Now he works at a zoo. He feeds the alligators. He showed us some baby alligators. He let us hold them. The babies are safe to hold because they don't have any teeth yet. They could not bite. There was one alligator fifteen feet long. My uncle fed him dead chickens. He threw them into the pen and the alligator opened his big jaws. He ate them very quickly. I am glad my uncle got a job, but I would not want to work feeding alligators.

1. Where did the author go?
2. Who went with him?
3. Who lives there?
4. What is his uncle's job?
5. What ruined the fishing?
6. What did Uncle sell?
7. Where does Uncle work now?
8. What did they hold?
9. Why are baby alligators safe?
10. What did Uncle feed the big alligator?
11. Would the author like to have his uncle's job?
12. The uncle had to sell his boat. That is different than saying he sold his boat. If he had to sell his boat, he did not want to sell it, but he was forced to.

**Find the picture of a garter snake, a lizard and a scorpion on page 213. Read this story with your partner. Answer the questions together.**



Sara was walking in the woods with her brother. She was stepping over a log when she saw a snake. She screamed. Her brother said, "Don't worry. It's just a garter snake. Garter snakes don't bite." Sara heard something moving in the bushes. She screamed again. Her brother said, "Stop screaming. That is just a little lizard. Lizards can't hurt you." Sara sat on a rock. Something crawled on her hand. She did not scream. She showed her brother the animal on her hand. Her brother screamed and knocked the animal off her hand. Her brother said, "That was a scorpion. Scorpions sting. They really hurt. You should be afraid of scorpions." Sara smiled.

1. Where was Sara walking?
2. Who was with her?
3. What did she see when she was stepping over a log?
4. What did her brother say?
5. What was moving in the bushes?
6. What did her brother say?
7. What crawled onto Sara's hand?
8. What did her brother do?
9. Why did her brother say she should be afraid?
10. Sara was happy that she didn't scream at the scorpion, but her brother did. Are you afraid of animals in the woods? Have you seen a snake up close? Have you ever been stung by a scorpion?