



Chapter 5

Review of Verb Tenses

CHAPTER SUMMARY

OBJECTIVE: To review the verb tenses taught in detail in Chapters 1–4.

APPROACH: Chapter 5 provides practice with all the verb tenses previously presented. As a result, this is the only chapter in the book which does not contain any charts.

When students have to pick the appropriate tense(s) according to context and meaning, it is important that they have opportunities to discuss their choices and explore misunderstandings. One of your many roles is to help students become sensitive monitors and effective editors of their own English use.

Now that the foundation for verb tense usage has been laid, the students need both guided and free practice and, most important, lots of out-of-class language experiences as the complex process of language acquisition proceeds. You may wish to tell your students that they shouldn't expect to become instant experts in verb-tense usage after studying these first five chapters, but that you expect their development to be excellent and their ultimate goal easily reachable. Sometimes students equate second language learning with other academic pursuits. They may feel that once they study a chapter in mathematics or chemistry, they are masters of the information it contains — and expect the same results in a language class. You may wish to discuss with your students the many ways in which the study of a language is different from other courses of study.

EXERCISE 1. What do I already know?
Page 76
Time: 10–15 minutes

This exercise can be done individually, in small groups, or as a whole class. It can also be used as a quick pretest to assess students' strengths and weaknesses.

EXERCISE 3. Let's talk. Page 78
Time: 10–15 minutes

Short answers are natural in conversations. However, in this exercise students are practicing verb tenses, so they should answer in complete sentences.

If this exercise is teacher-led, approach each item conversationally; add extra words, expand upon topics, rephrase questions, and put the questions in relevant contexts. These questions are in the text merely to suggest ideas as you engage the students in an oral review of verb tenses.

In items where there are several related questions, ask a question and wait for the response, then follow that answer with the next question to the same student. Don't stop for corrections or explanations until the item (the conversation) is completed.

If the exercise is used for pairwork or group work, the students can simply monitor each other and check with you as necessary.

EXERCISE 4. Listening. Page 78
Time: 10 minutes

Be sure students have their books closed when you play the audio for Part I. This will help them concentrate on listening for the meaning.

EXERCISE 5. Let's talk and write. Page 79
Time: 5–10 minutes to relate story; 20 minutes to write

Assign this task as homework the day before. Ask students to think about the sequence of events and the tenses required to tell their story successfully.

This is not a dictation exercise, so Student A should listen to Student B's complete story and then report it in a written paragraph. Student A can take notes but should not try to write everything down word for word.

- After putting students in pairs, announce a time limit (perhaps 5 minutes) so that the stories are not too long.
- Tell students that they should both tell their stories first. Then they can both write at the same time.

Expansion: This assignment can be turned into a group discussion and writing project. It may help students if you ask them to begin their story with an opener such as *I have never been so embarrassed / confused / scared / annoyed as the time I . . .*

In groups of three or four, students share their anecdotes in class and decide which one would work best as a written narrative to share with the entire group. Together, the members of the small group work on writing the story using the first person singular narrator (“I”) and adding in detailed and descriptive language to engage the reader or listener. You may discuss whether the account should be 100 percent accurate or whether embellishments are welcome.

Collect the group-written narratives and redistribute them so that each group has another group’s story. One member of each group reads the story aloud, and the whole class has to guess which class member is the real narrator.

□ EXERCISE 6. Looking at grammar.

Page 79

Time: 10–15 minutes

This exercise is intended as a model for the writing assignment that follows in Exercise 7.

Optional Vocabulary

botanical gardens	balloon race
barely	time to breathe

□ EXERCISE 7. Let’s write. Page 80

Time: 10–20 minutes

It may help to co-write a letter together as a class on the board first. You can either use yourself as subject, and have students help you put your own activities into the proper tenses and sequence, or you can choose to author the letter as one class member.

You may wish to require students to use each of the twelve tenses at least once. This may result in forced sentences, but students usually find it challenging and fun. If you choose to do this, refer them to Chart 1-5 so they can review which verb forms they need to use.

- Put students into small groups to brainstorm what they want to say.
- Help them define their topic by writing some specific questions on the board and having students answer these questions first. For example:

What have you been doing recently?

What do you do every day?

What have you done since the last time you contacted the person you are writing to?

What are you planning to do this weekend?

What are you going to achieve or complete this coming month?

- Tell students to respond to the questions and then elaborate on them in order to write a letter.

□ EXERCISE 9. Looking at grammar.

Page 80

Time: 15–20 minutes

This exercise is ideal for students to work through alone. Remind students to pay attention to the context and look for any time cues they can find. In addition, there are a number of vocabulary items for you to review with students.

- After students have completed the exercise, ask various students to read a few sentences at a time aloud so that the whole class hears the passage as a cohesive text.
- Discuss any sentences that have produced varying responses.
- Ask general comprehension questions about the passage as a whole. For example:

What is the main topic of the passage?

What are some of the mythical explanations for earthquakes discussed in the text?

What countries do these mythical explanations come from?

According to scientists, what do catfish do before an earthquake happens?

What animals appear to be sensitive and able to predict earthquakes?

How could these animals help humans?

- Ask students if their culture(s) has / have similar mythical explanations for natural phenomena, and use this as a discussion springboard.

Optional Vocabulary

ancient	wave	predict
estimates	strike	instruments
trembles	brick	sufficiently
catfish	concrete	

□ EXERCISE 10. Let’s talk: pairwork.

Page 82

Time: 20–25 minutes

Decide on famous people for students to role-play beforehand. Be prepared with a list of enough famous living people that you can assign one to each pair.

- Before beginning the activity, discuss what a “nosy” reporter is. As a class, generate a list of nosy questions a reporter might ask.
- If there is time, have students read their articles aloud. Invite classmates to correct grammar and usage. After they read their articles, students can reveal the identity of the famous person interviewed.

□ **EXERCISE 11.** Let's talk: small groups.

Page 82

Time: 10–15 minutes

This exercise gives students a chance to use the target grammar to talk about the class and its members. Encourage students to be somewhat dramatic and humorous in describing the class, its members, and activities to date.

- Bring in a few copies of news releases to distribute to students beforehand.
- Ask students what a news release contains, and, using the samples you have brought in, explain that news releases contain easily understandable information.
- Tell students that the news release shouldn't be longer than a few paragraphs and that students should use the specific bulleted points listed in the text to guide their discussion and writing.

Expansion: Use the most descriptive sentences created by the small groups in order to co-create one news release for the whole class on the board. You may want to copy this down and make photocopies to distribute to everyone in the class.

□ **EXERCISE 12.** Let's talk and write.

Page 82

Time: 5–10 minutes, over multiple days

This activity is designed to be spread out over a period of days with only a few students giving speeches each day. Students who are not speaking should take notes in order to practice listening skills. They can also note (1) questions to ask for additional information and (2) problems with verb tenses or pronunciation. These notes can be used for discussion after each speech.

As a preparation for this exercise, you may wish to bring a newspaper article to class and have the class work together to make a two- or three-minute summary so that the students understand exactly what you expect.

□ **EXERCISE 13.** Check your knowledge.

Page 82

Time: 10–15 minutes

- If you decide to use the expansion below, don't let students look through Exercise 13 in advance.

Expansion: Put students into two teams for this error-correction exercise. You will need a watch with a second hand in order to give each team a suitable amount of time (45 seconds). Teams keep their books closed. Write the incorrect sentence on the board and assign it to one team. As a group, the team whose turn it is has to identify the problem and correct it completely within 45 seconds or whatever amount of time you allot. If the team successfully does both, it gets two points. If the team identifies the problem but does not provide a corrected version, the team earns only one point. The correction phase then goes to the other team, which now has the opportunity to gain an extra point by providing a grammatical correction. The team with the most points at the end of the competition wins.