

Simple Past vs Past Continuous

B1 Intermediate · Lesson 2 · Student Worksheet

Name: _____

Date: _____

Score: _____ / 56

Exercise 1 · Which Tense? (8 points)

Read each sentence. Circle **Simple Past** or **Past Continuous**.

1. The engineers were constructing the framework when a structural fault was discovered. Simple Past / Past Continuous

2. The committee debated the proposal for three hours before reaching a decision. Simple Past / Past Continuous

3. She was examining the evidence when her colleague interrupted her. Simple Past / Past Continuous

4. The team implemented the new protocol at the start of the quarter. Simple Past / Past Continuous

5. He was analysing the data when the system crashed. Simple Past / Past Continuous

6. The inspector consulted three independent experts before filing the report. Simple Past / Past Continuous

7. While the researchers were processing the samples, the lab lost power. Simple Past / Past Continuous

8. The board investigated the complaint and issued a formal response. Simple Past / Past Continuous

Exercise 2 · Multiple Choice (8 points)

Circle the correct verb form.

1. The team ____ the framework when an unexpected complication arose.
were constructing / constructed / was constructing

2. The panel ____ the motion for most of the afternoon.
debated / were debating / was debating

3. She ____ the specimen under the microscope when the results came through.
examined / was examining / were examining

4. The organisation ____ the new guidelines across all departments last spring.
implemented / was implementing / were implementing

5. He ____ the financial records when he noticed an irregularity.

analysed / was analysing / were analysing

6. The committee ____ several specialists before making its recommendation.

consulted / was consulting / were consulting

7. While they ____ the first batch, a second set of samples arrived.

processed / were processing / was processing

8. Authorities ____ the incident thoroughly and published their findings.

investigated / were investigating / was investigating

Exercise 3 • Matching (8 points)

Match each sentence (1–8) to its meaning (a–h). Write the letter in the box.

- | | |
|---|----------|
| 1. The engineers were constructing the bridge when cracks appeared. | [____] |
| 2. The committee debated and then voted on the proposal. | [____] |
| 3. She was examining the data when the power went off. | [____] |
| 4. The agency implemented the plan and monitored its effects. | [____] |
| 5. He was analysing the results while his team was processing the raw data. | [____] |
| 6. The lawyer consulted three witnesses before the hearing. | [____] |
| 7. While they were processing the applications, the deadline passed. | [____] |
| 8. The regulator investigated and imposed a substantial fine. | [____] |

- g. An administrative task in progress was still ongoing when time ran out.
f. A completed preparatory action carried out before a specific event.
c. A detailed analytical task in progress was interrupted by a technical failure.
h. A completed investigation that led directly to a formal consequence.
e. Two separate ongoing tasks happening simultaneously.
a. A major building project in progress was interrupted by a structural problem.
d. A completed policy action followed by an ongoing review.
b. Two completed formal actions that happened in sequence.

Exercise 4 • Gap Fill (8 points)

Complete each sentence with the correct form of the verb in brackets.

- The crew _____ the temporary structure when the storm hit. (*construct*)
- The assembly _____ the amendment at length before rejecting it. (*debate*)
- She _____ the contract when she noticed an error in clause four. (*examine*)
- The school _____ the safeguarding policy at the start of the term. (*implement*)
- He _____ the survey responses when his supervisor called. (*analyse*)
- The board _____ the legal team before issuing its statement. (*consult*)

7. While the lab _____ the samples, two technicians checked the equipment.
(process)
8. The committee _____ the allegations and cleared the member of wrongdoing. (investigate)

Exercise 5 · Word Order (8 points)

Put the words in the correct order to make a sentence.

1. The / engineers / were / constructing / the / bridge / when / cracks / appeared

2. The / committee / debated / the / proposal / for / three / hours

3. She / was / examining / the / evidence / when / her / colleague / interrupted

4. The / team / implemented / the / new / protocol / last / quarter

5. He / was / analysing / the / data / when / the / system / crashed

6. The / board / consulted / three / experts / before / the / report

7. While / they / were / processing / the / samples / the / lab / lost / power

8. The / inspector / investigated / the / complaint / and / issued / a / response

Exercise 6 · Word Sort (8 points)

Write each sentence in the correct column.

The council ____ the issue for weeks and eventually reached a compromise. • The firm ____ its legal advisors before responding to the claim. • The workers ____ the new wing when a planning dispute halted progress. • The authority ____ the breach and issued a formal warning. • He ____ the figures when he identified a significant discrepancy. • The department ____ the revised policy across all sites last autumn. • While the team ____ the data, a second group prepared the final presentation. • She ____ the tissue samples when the results came through unexpectedly.

Action in progress	Completed action

Exercise 7 · Complete the Conversation (8 points)

Choose the correct word from the brackets to complete each gap.

Anna: What exactly (were you doing / did you do / was you doing) when the system (went / was going / go) down?

Marcus: I (was analysing / analysed / analyse) the latest batch of results when everything (stopped / was stopping / stop) suddenly.

Anna: (Were / Did / Was) the team (processing / processed / process) the backup data at the same time?

Marcus: Yes, while I (was analysing / analysed / analyse) the data, two colleagues (were examining / examined / examine) the secondary files.

Anna: And (did / were / was) anyone (consult / consulted / consulting) the IT team before the crash happened?

Marcus: The department head (consulted / was consulting / consult) them that morning. They (were already investigating / already investigated / already investigate) the issue when it escalated.

TEACHER ANSWER KEY — DO NOT DISTRIBUTE TO STUDENTS

Simple Past vs Past Continuous · B1 Lesson 2

This answer key is for teacher use only.

Exercise 1 · Which Tense? — Answers

1. The engineers were constructing the framework when a structural fault was discovered. → **PC**
2. The committee debated the proposal for three hours before reaching a decision. → **SP**
3. She was examining the evidence when her colleague interrupted her. → **PC**
4. The team implemented the new protocol at the start of the quarter. → **SP**
5. He was analysing the data when the system crashed. → **PC**
6. The inspector consulted three independent experts before filing the report. → **SP**
7. While the researchers were processing the samples, the lab lost power. → **PC**
8. The board investigated the complaint and issued a formal response. → **SP**

Exercise 2 · Multiple Choice — Answers

1. **were constructing**
2. **debated**
3. **was examining**
4. **implemented**
5. **was analysing**
6. **consulted**
7. **were processing**
8. **investigated**

Exercise 3 · Matching — Answers

1. The engineers were constructing the bridge when cracks appeared. → **a**
2. The committee debated and then voted on the proposal. → **b**
3. She was examining the data when the power went off. → **c**
4. The agency implemented the plan and monitored its effects. → **d**
5. He was analysing the results while his team was processing the raw data. → **e**
6. The lawyer consulted three witnesses before the hearing. → **f**
7. While they were processing the applications, the deadline passed. → **g**
8. The regulator investigated and imposed a substantial fine. → **h**

Exercise 4 · Gap Fill — Answers

1. The crew **were constructing** the temporary structure when the storm hit.
2. The assembly **debated** the amendment at length before rejecting it.
3. She **was examining** the contract when she noticed an error in clause four.
4. The school **implemented** the safeguarding policy at the start of the term.
5. He **was analysing** the survey responses when his supervisor called.
6. The board **consulted** the legal team before issuing its statement.
7. While the lab **was processing** the samples, two technicians checked the equipment.
8. The committee **investigated** the allegations and cleared the member of wrongdoing.

Exercise 5 · Word Order — Answers

1. **The engineers were constructing the bridge when cracks appeared .**
2. **The committee debated the proposal for three hours .**
3. **She was examining the evidence when her colleague interrupted .**
4. **The team implemented the new protocol last quarter .**
5. **He was analysing the data when the system crashed .**
6. **The board consulted three experts before the report .**
7. **While they were processing the samples the lab lost power .**
8. **The inspector investigated the complaint and issued a response .**

Exercise 6 · Word Sort — Answers

Action in progress	Completed action
The workers ____ the new wing when a planning dispute halted progress.	The council ____ the issue for weeks and eventually reached a compromise.
She ____ the tissue samples when the results came through unexpectedly.	The department ____ the revised policy across all sites last autumn.
He ____ the figures when he identified a significant discrepancy.	The firm ____ its legal advisors before responding to the claim.
While the team ____ the data, a second group prepared the final presentation.	The authority ____ the breach and issued a formal warning.

Exercise 7 · Conversation — Answers

Anna: What exactly **were you doing** when the system **went** down?

Marcus: I **was analysing** the latest batch of results when everything **stopped** suddenly.

Anna: **Were** the team **processing** the backup data at the same time?

Marcus: Yes, while I **was analysing** the data, two colleagues **were examining** the secondary files.

Anna: And **did** anyone **consult** the IT team before the crash happened?

Marcus: The department head **consulted** them that morning. They **were already investigating** the issue when it escalated.