

Activity Type

Reading and writing activity

Language Focus

Present simple vs. present continuous

Aim

To practice the present simple vs. the present continuous.

Preparation

Make one copy of the two-page worksheet for each student.

Level

Pre-intermediate

Time

30 minutes

Introduction

Here is a story-based worksheet to help students practice the present simple vs. the present continuous.

Procedure

Give each student a copy of the two-page worksheet.

Students begin by reading the first part of the story and then answering questions about it using the present simple.

Exercise A - Answer key

1. They eat breakfast at the kitchen table.
2. She drives her sons to school.
3. She goes grocery shopping on Mondays.
4. They do their homework and then play games.
5. She goes to bed at 11 p.m.

Students then read the next part of the story and write present continuous questions for a set of answers.

Exercise B - Possible answers

1. What is Nicole putting in the dishwasher?
2. What is Nicole listening to?
3. Why is Nicole dancing?
4. What is Nicole thinking about?
5. Is the music playing loudly or softly?

Next, students complete the following part of the story with the present simple or present continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

Exercise C - Answer key

- | | | | |
|-----------|----------------|-------------------|----------------|
| 1. makes | 4. makes | 7. isn't cleaning | 10. is staying |
| 2. spends | 5. are eating | 8. goes | |
| 3. are | 6. are resting | 9. isn't going | |

In the last exercise, students put words in the correct order to complete the story.

Part D - Answer key

1. It is now Monday afternoon. The power has gone out. The dishwasher and TV aren't working.
2. Nicole usually goes grocery shopping on Mondays, but she is staying home because her sons are sick.
3. Nicole usually washes the dishes in the dishwasher, but the power is out, so she is washing the dishes in the sink.
4. The children often watch TV when they are sick, but they aren't watching TV because it isn't working. It isn't a normal day.

Note: This is an editable PDF. To edit the document, select the Edit PDF tool in Acrobat.

A. Read the first part of the story and then answer the questions in the present simple.

Nicole is a stay-at-home mum with two young sons. Every day, she makes them breakfast, which they eat together at the kitchen table. After they eat breakfast, she drives her sons to school. When she comes home, she puts the dishes in the dishwasher and does the housework. On Mondays, she goes grocery shopping. After she picks up her sons from school, the sons do their homework and then play games. Afterwards, she cooks dinner and the sons set the table. The children go to bed at 9 p.m. After that, she watches TV with her husband. They go to bed at 11 p.m.



1. Where do Nicole and her sons eat breakfast?

.....

2. After Nicole and her sons eat breakfast, what does she do?

.....

3. When does Nicole go grocery shopping?

.....

4. What do her sons do after school?

.....

5. When does Nicole go to bed?

.....

B. Read the next part of the story and then write present continuous questions for the answers.

It is Monday morning. Nicole is putting the dirty breakfast dishes in the dishwasher. She is listening to music on the radio. A song by her favourite singer, Katy Perry, is playing. Nicole is dancing to the music while she is moving from the kitchen table to the dishwasher. She is thinking about what to buy when she goes grocery shopping. Her phone is ringing, and she almost doesn't hear it because the music is playing so loudly.

1.?

She is putting the dirty breakfast dishes in the dishwasher.

2.?

She is listening to music on the radio.

3.?

She is dancing because a song by her favourite singer, Katy Perry, is playing on the radio.

4.?

She is thinking about what to buy when she goes grocery shopping.

5.?

The music is playing loudly.

C. Read about Nicole's typical Monday activities and the activities she is doing today. Then, complete the text with the present simple or present continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

The phone call was the school telling Nicole that her sons are sick. Her sons are home with her now.

Nicole's typical Monday activities: make her shopping list, make lunch for herself, clean the children's bedrooms, go grocery shopping.

Nicole's activities today: stay home, make lunch for her sons, take care of her sick sons.

Nicole usually (1) (make) her shopping list on Monday mornings. She (2) (spend) Monday mornings alone, but today, her sons (3) (be) at home. She usually (4) (make) lunch just for herself, but today, her sons (5) (eat) lunch at home. Her sons (6) (rest) in bed, so she (7) (not / clean) their bedrooms today. She usually (8) (go) grocery shopping on Monday afternoons, but today, she (9) (not / go) out. She (10) (stay) home to take care of her sick sons.

D. Put the words in the correct order to complete the story.

1. the dishwasher / it is now / the power / and TV / Monday afternoon / aren't working / has gone out

.....

2. on Mondays / her sons / but / because / Nicole / staying home / grocery shopping / she is / are sick / usually goes

.....

3. in the dishwasher / so / the power / the dishes / but / the dishes / is washing / Nicole / in the sink / usually washes / is out / she

.....

4. they aren't / often / isn't working / a normal day / they are sick / it isn't / the children / but / when / watching TV / it / watch TV / because

.....
