

Activity Type

Reading, writing and speaking activity, group work

Language Focus

Past continuous

Past simple

Story expressions

Aim

To make past continuous sentences from picture cards and then write a story about a dream using the past continuous and past simple.

Preparation

Make one copy of the cards for each group of four and cut as indicated. If you have a group of three, remove one card in the first activity.

Level

Intermediate

Time

40 minutes

Introduction

In this intriguing group activity, students practice making past continuous sentences from picture cards. The students then write a story about a dream using the past continuous and past simple.

Procedure

Divide the class into groups of four and give each group a set of picture cards.

Tell the students to shuffle the cards and deal them out evenly. Each student should place their cards face down in a pile in front of them.

Write the following on the board:

What were you doing at 3 o'clock yesterday afternoon?

The first student in each group starts by asking the second student the question on the board.

The second student picks up the top card from their pile and responds by making a past continuous sentence using the card as a prompt. The student does this by thinking of an activity associated with the picture.

Example: picture of a door

I was painting a door.

I was repairing a door.

I was drawing a picture of a door.

The second student then asks the third student the question on the board, and so on, until all the cards have been used. Encourage the students to be imaginative in their answers.

When the groups have finished, write the following text on the board:

I was watching TV late one night when I fell asleep and had a strange dream. In the dream, I was... (Where were you? What were you doing?)

All of a sudden... (What happened?)

Then, to my surprise... (What happened next?)

Unfortunately... (What happened?)

In the end... (What happened in the end?)

"Continue on the next page"

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Procedure continued

Tell the groups that they are going to write a story about a dream by completing the text in the past continuous and past simple.

Appoint one student in each group to do the writing.

Tell the groups to shuffle all their picture cards together and spread them out face down on the desk.

Each student chooses three picture cards and turns them over so they are face up.

Each group must include all the things in the pictures in their story.

Set a time limit and have the groups write their stories.

When all the groups have finished, ask the students to read out their stories to the class.

After the groups have finished reading their stories, have the class vote for the strangest or funniest one.

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