

ENGLISH LESSON 3

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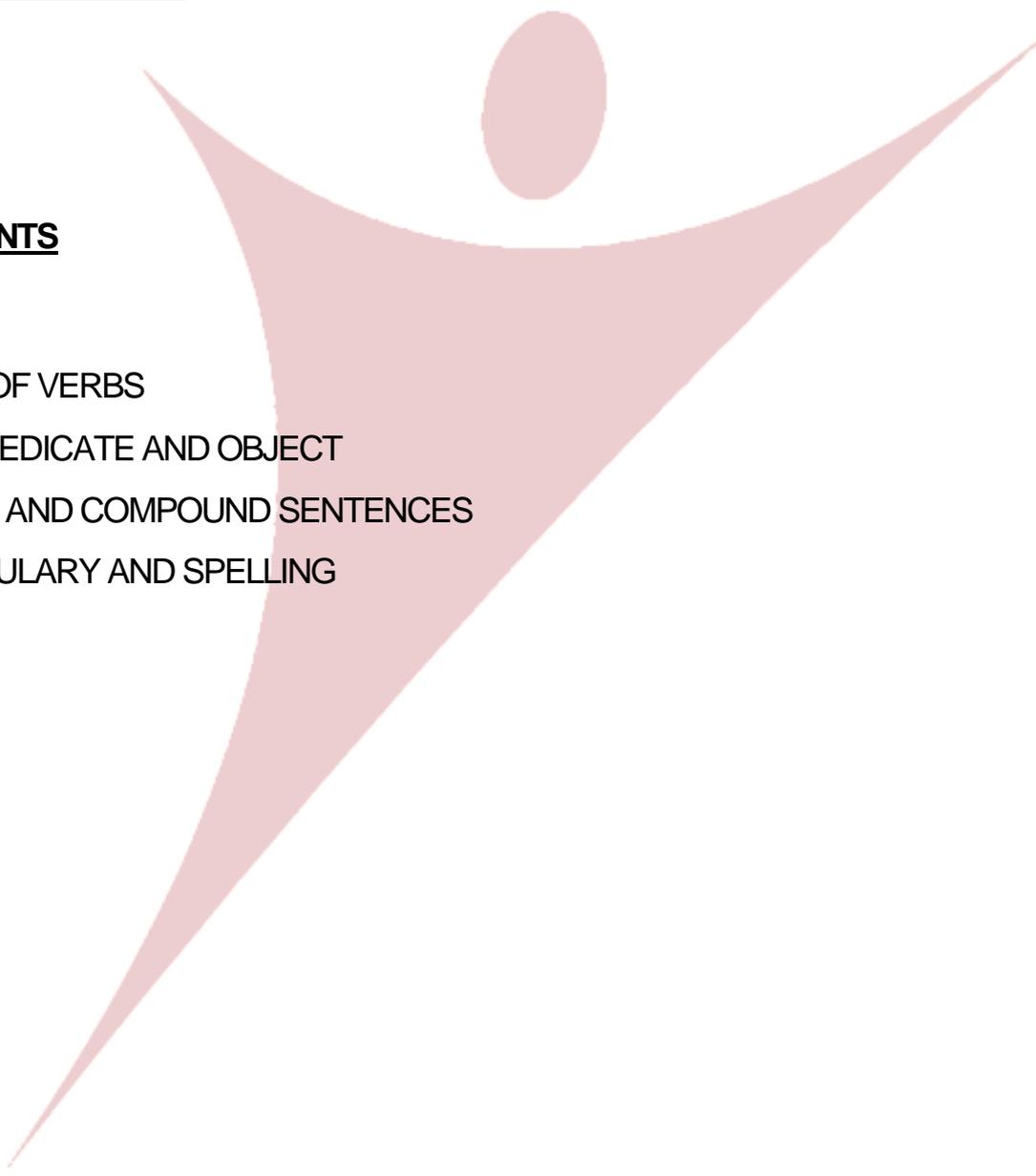
TENSE

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TENSE

In this lesson, we are going to learn some more about verbs. So far you have learnt that there must be a verb in every sentence to make it understandable and that the verb has to agree with the subject of the sentence in both person and number. We have seen that verbs are generally the "doing" words; ie. they tell us what the subject does. We are now going to learn that verbs also tell us about the "time" an action takes place. The time indicated by the verb is called the **Tense**.

Before we study the meaning of this word "Tense", let us just consider what we understand about the word "time". You already know that there are three main kinds of "time": the past, which refers to an event that has already happened, the present which refers to an event that is happening now, and the future which refers to some event that will happen at some later time. Now, when we come to study English grammar, we realise that the tense of verbs means exactly the same thing. The tense of verbs is divided into the same three main parts: the Past Tense, the Present Tense and the Future Tense. Tense is merely an inflection in verbs to distinguish the time of the action. If you have studied Lesson 2 properly, you will remember what is meant by "inflection". In that lesson we learnt that the infinitive form of a verb (to walk) has to be "inflected" or changed into its finite form so as to agree with the subject in both person and number. In the same way we must use the verb in its right tense to tell us when the action takes place, ie. in the past, the present or the future.

However, when we talk or write, we usually want to be more specific or exact about the time an action took place. We want to be able to express ourselves precisely. To do this we divide each of the three main tenses into four sub-divisions. These are:

- a. Past simple
- b. Past continuous
- c. Past perfect
- d. Past perfect continuous

Let us use the infinitive verb "to play" and inflect it into the four sub-divisions of the Past Tense and see what exact meanings each one gives us.

Past Simple Tense

We played football.

This sentence tells us that we did something in the past but it gives no details; it merely

states that playing football was a thing we did at a time gone by.

Past Continuous Tense

Yesterday, we were playing football.

This tells us that at a -time in the past, ie. yesterday, we were playing football. At the time, it states, the action of playing football was still going on; the playing had not ceased but was still continuing. This tense is therefore a "Continuous Tense".

Past Perfect Tense

By 4.00 pm last Friday, we had played our football match.

This sentence shows that at a certain time in the past the playing of football had taken and was finished or completed.

Past Perfect Continuous Tense

When the storm began, we had been playing football for an hour.

We see that the action of playing had been continuing for an hour until that time, in the past, when the storm broke. That is, the playing had come to a stop, or was "perfect" at that time but until that time it had been continuous. This tense is therefore called The Past Perfect Continuous Tense.

In case you are still in doubt about how these four divisions are used here they are again.

- When I was a schoolboy, I played football.

This states that at some period of time in the past, playing football was one of the things I did. (Tense: past simple).

- At teatime yesterday we were playing football.

This means that, at a stated time in the past, "teatime yesterday" we were in the process of playing football, ie. the playing was still in progress. (Tense: past continuous).

- When the accident occurred, we had played football and were on our way home.

This sentence states that at some time in the past we played football, but at the particular time, "When the accident occurred", the playing was completed or finished. (Tense: past perfect)

- We had been playing football that afternoon.

This means that on some afternoon in the past, football had been in progress but it had been completed or finished at the time on that afternoon to which the speaker is referring. (Tense: past perfect continuous).

If you have understood what each of these sub-divisions convey (tell us) in the Past Tense, you will have no difficulty in seeing how they apply to the present and future tenses. Because the explanations have already been given, we shall give examples only for the present and future tenses.

Present Tense

I play football.

Present simple

I am playing football.

Present continuous

I have played football

Present perfect. This is because something which has happened in the Past is completed or "Perfect" at this present time.

I have been playing football

Present perfect continuous

Future Tense

I shall play football

Future Simple

I shall be playing football

Future Continuous

I shall have played football

Future Perfect

I shall have been playing football

Future perfect continuous

Before we look at them, let us examine what changes the verb "to play" can make on its own. The only possible changes are:

play, plays, played, playing

Now, you can see that these changes are not enough to convey the exact meanings of the different tenses.

There are six auxiliary verbs - 'have', 'be', 'shall', 'will', 'may' and 'do'. They all help to form the different tenses of verbs. The examples printed below show how they are used.

a. The verb "**to be**"

Past

I was
you were
He, she, it was
we were
you were
they were

Past Participle: been

Present

I am
you are
He, she, it is
we are
you are
they are

Present Participle: being

Future

I shall be
You will be
He, she, it will be
We shall be
You will be
They will be

b. The verb "**to have**"

Past

I had
you had
he, she, it had
we had
you had
they had

Past Participle: had

Present

I have
you have
he, she, it has
we have
you have
they have

Present Participle: have

Future

I shall have
you will have
he, she, it will have
we shall have
you will have
they will have

Here is a table of the past, present and future tenses of the verb "to work", which sets out all that you have just learnt.

Past Tense of the Verb "to work"

Sub-division	person	Singular	Plural
<i>Simple</i>	1 st	I worked	we worked
	2 nd	you worked	you worked
	3 rd	He (she, it) worked	they worked
<i>Continuous</i>	1 st	I was working	we were working
	2 nd	you were working	you were working
	3 rd	He (she, it) was working	they were working
<i>Perfect</i>	1 st	I had worked	we had worked
	2 nd	you had worked	you had worked
	3 rd	He (she, it) had worked	they had worked
<i>Perfect Continuous</i>	1 st	I had been working	we had been working
	2 nd	you had been working	you had been working
	3 rd	He (she, it) had been working	they had been working

Present Tense of the Verb "to work"

Sub-division	Person	Singular	Plural
<i>Simple</i>	1 st	I work	we work
	2 nd	you work	you work
	3 rd	He (she, it) works	they work
<i>Continuous</i>	1 st	I am working	we are working
	2 nd	you are working	you are working
	3 rd	He (she, it) is working	they are working
<i>Perfect</i>	1 st	I have worked	we have worked
	2 nd	you have worked	you have worked
	3 rd	He (she, it) has worked	they have worked
<i>Perfect Continuous</i>	1 st	I have been working	we have been working
	2 nd	you have been working	you have been working

3rd He (she, it) has been working they have been working

Future Tense of the Verb "to work"

Sub-division	Person	Singular	Plural
<i>Simple</i>	1 st	I shall work	we shall work
	2 nd	you will work	you will work
	3 rd	He (she, it) will work	they will work
<i>Continuous</i>	1 st	I shall be working	we shall be working
	2 nd	you will be working	you will be working
	3 rd	He (she, it) will be working	they will be working
<i>Perfect</i>	1 st	I shall have worked	we shall have worked
	2 nd	you will have worked	you will have worked
	3 rd	He (she, it) will have worked	they will have worked
<i>Perfect Continuous</i>	1 st	I shall have been working	we shall have been working
	2 nd	you will have been working	you will have been working
	3 rd	He (she, it) will have been working	they will have been working

Notice the mistake in the following sentence:

I have been playing football yesterday.

This is a common kind of error. You will see that the word "yesterday" clearly indicates a time in the past, but "I have been playing" is in the present tense, actually in the present perfect continuous tense. Now, if we use a present tense to describe something which occurred in the past, the reader is almost certain to become confused. He may guess what is meant; in this case he might guess correctly and think: "He means, 'I played football yesterday'."

SELF-HELP EXERCISE 1

All the following sentences contain examples of the incorrect use of Tense. Correct each

sentence and give brief reasons for your corrections.

1. I am playing in the school team last week.
2. He met his friend by lunch time last Monday.
3. I will reach my destination by four 'o clock this afternoon.
4. Next Sunday they have left their old house.
5. The Sports are held next week.
6. Before it is dark tonight you have walked many miles.
7. They have worked all day last Friday.

KINDS OF VERBS

In the above work on tenses we used the verbs "to play" and "to work" to show how verbs are inflected into their various tenses. We saw that they were changed into their past tenses by adding "ed" to the original verb form.

A large number of verbs are changed to the Past Tense in this way, ie. by adding "-ed". Verbs of this kind are called "Regular Verbs". Such verbs also take "-ed" to form their Past Participles; that is, the part of the verb used with a helping word or auxiliary verb, to form the Perfect Tenses, such as "I have played", or "I had played", or "I shall have played".

However, there are many other verbs which form their Past Tenses and Past Participles in other ways. For example, the Present Tense of the verb, "To run" is "I run", but its Past Tense is *not* "I runned" but "I ran" and its Past Participle is "run" as shown in these sentences:

Present Tense:	I run
Past Tense:	I ran
Past Participle:	I have run

Such verbs are called Irregular Verbs because they do not follow the ordinary rule of adding "-ed" to form their Past forms. Many errors are made in using the Past Tense and the Past Participles of Irregular Verbs, so you must take the trouble to learn the correct form used in each case. To test your knowledge of these irregular verbs, we shall first study the short table below. The first column shows the verb in its Present Tense, the second column gives the Past Tense and the third column

shows the Past Participle used with "have" or, in the Singular, with "has", and with "had" in Perfect Tenses.

<i>Present Tense</i>	<i>Past Tense</i>	<i>Present Perfect Tense</i>
I run	I ran	I have run
I know	I knew	I have known
I see	I saw	I have seen
He feels	He felt	He has felt
She falls	She fell	She has fallen

Now do the following exercise.

SELF-HELP EXERCISE 2

Complete a similar table to the one above using the list of verbs given below:

think	do	shake	hear
sink	write	bite	sing
ring	smite	eat	catch
teach	fight	get	creep
make	ride	dig	beat
lie (down)	cut	hit	hurt

THE PREDICATE AND OBJECT

You have already learnt that a sentence has a subject and a predicate and that we find the verb in the predicate. We are now going to study the predicate of a sentence more carefully.

Let us look at the following sentence:

The old shepherd brought his sheep into the fold.

Often an easy way to find the subject of a sentence is to look at it and say to ourselves "who did what?" whoever "did" something will be the subject (the old shepherd) and what he "did" would be the predicate with the actual "doing" word being the verb, (brought (verb) his sheep into the

fold).

Now let us examine the words of the predicate in more detail. We know that the verb in the predicate tells us what the subject "does", but what do the other words tell us, ie. "his sheep into the fold". The Subject, shepherd, brought something, but what did he bring? He brought "sheep". The word "sheep", you must now learn, is called The Object of the sentence. We can visualise the meaning of the sentence like this:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Object</u>
Shepherd	brought	sheep

This illustrates that the Subject did something to the Object.

(Before we continue, have you understood the inflection of the verb used in this sentence? "Brought" is the finite inflection of the verb "to bring". Here it is inflected into the Past Simple Tense. Because it does not end in "ed" you know that the verb "to bring" is an irregular verb).

Now the pronoun which is the subject of a sentence, is said to be in the **Nominative Case**. The noun or pronoun which is the object or TARGET of the subject's action, is said to be in the **Objective Case**.

In English, nouns are written in the same way whether they are Nominative or Objective. The word, "sheep" would be just the same if it were the subject of a sentence or the object of a sentence. In other languages, this is not the case; nouns would be changed from their Nominative form to a different form when they were used as the object of a sentence.

However, in English we do change the form of some of our pronouns. The personal pronoun, "I", for example, is only "I" when it is the subject of a sentence. If it is placed as the Object of a sentence it must be changed to "me".

Here is a short list of some of the pronouns to show the changes which are made:

Subject (Nominative Case)

I
we
he
she
it
you
they
who

Object (Objective Case)

me
us
him
her
it (no change)
you (no change)
them
whom

Be careful when you use pronouns. Make sure that you know which is the subject and object of the sentences and then use the correct pronoun form.

Now, let us consider more sentences.

a. The author is writing another book.

Here we see that the Subject is "author" - the doer,
and the Verb is "is writing" - what he does,
and the Object is "book" - what he writes.

b. The carpenter made a cupboard.

Subject: carpenter Verb: made Object: cupboard

c. The sun shone brightly.

In this sentence the subject is, "sun" and the Verb is "shone". But what did the sun shine? Quite clearly the sun did not shine anything It is true it shone brightly, but "brightly" is not something the sun shone: it merely tell us how the sun shone, not what it shone.

This sentence, therefore has no object. So we now learn that there may be an object in a Predicate or there may not be an object, but there must always be a verb.

We are now going to do an exercise to test whether we have understood the meaning of the

object. Let us take, as an example, the following sentence:

The rider galloped his horse across the field.

Take the Subject, the Verb and the Object, if there is one, and place them under headings like this:

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Object</u>
rider	galloped	horse

If there is no object, say so, like the following example:

The rider fell from his horse.

<u>Subject</u>	<u>Verb</u>	<u>Object</u>
rider	fell	No object. He did not "fell" anything.

SELF-HELP EXERCISE 3

Analyse the following sentences into their subjects, verbs and objects in the way shown in the examples above.

1. The troops attacked the enemy in their stronghold.
2. The captain sailed his ship into harbour.
3. The engine pulled the heavy train up the steep slope.
4. The spring will be here early this year.
5. The citizens are proud of their city.
6. People admire a brave act.
7. The hunters pursued their quarry.
8. An unknown competitor took the prize.
9. Fortune favours the few.
10. The guilty man pleaded for forgiveness.

Points to remember

- a. In a sentence which contains an object, the verb is said to be **Transitive** because it carries the action it expresses over the object.

- b. If there is no object in a sentence, the verb is said to be Intransitive.
- c. Some verbs can never take an object and are always intrans: For example:
"The time will come when he will be happy".
The verb, will come, is always intransitive because it **is not** possible to "come" anything.
- d. Transitive Verbs can often be used intransitively. That means a transitive verb does not always have an object in its sentence, for example:
"He shook with fear". In that sentence, "he" did not shake anything, so there is no object and the verb "shake", in its Past Tense. "shook", is used intransitively.
In the next sentence:
"He shook the bottle", the word "bottle" is the object, because, the subject, "he" shook it. So in this sentence, the verb "shook" is transitive.

SIMPLE AND COMPOUND SENTENCES

So far in our work, we have only discussed Simple Sentences, the Predicates of which must contain a finite verb. In some of our examples, we have met a sentence of this kind:

Tom and his brother went shopping.

By this time, you should know at once that the verb in the sentence is "went shopping". The subject, however, is not one person but two persons, so together, they make a Plural subject. The verb must agree and also be in the Plural.

Instead of using the two nouns to make a plural subject, we might have said this:

Tom went shopping and his brother went shopping.

Now we have two separate simple sentences joined together by the word, "and". A joining word like "and" is used to join words or sentences of equal importance. In our example, it joins two single sentences. Joining words are called **Conjunctions** and if their function is to join equals they are called, **Co-ordinating Conjunctions**. Other conjunctions of the same kind are "but" and "so". Sometimes the word "for" acts in the same manner.

When two sentences are joined by "and" or by any other Co-ordinating Conjunction, the result is called a **Compound Sentence**.

In speaking and writing we do not use either simple or compound sentences very much. Read through the following sentences, which tell you about a boy named David and you will see why we do not use simple sentences too often.

David will soon be twenty. He hopes to pass the National Certificate then. David goes to technical college each Friday. At the end of the session he will be examined in English. He studies English, Mathematics, Commerce, Geography and Bookkeeping. Next year he hopes to start a National Certificate Course.

Each sentence in this passage is a simple sentence and is grammatically correct, but, as you should have noticed, a series of short simple sentences can be very irritating. The reading is too jerky and not pleasingly fluent as it should be.

We could, of course, join all the sentences together by using coordinating conjunctions to form a long compound sentence but that would prove to be as monotonous and wearying as the Simple Sentences.

However, you must not suppose that simple sentences are never used. Read the following passage which will illustrate that a simple sentence can be used effectively on occasions.

After a long discussion, it was decided that the whole family would go for a day-long picnic on the morrow. Everyone would rise a little earlier than usual to prepare for an early departure. Tom, the eldest boy, would attend to the family car to see that it had sufficient petrol, oil and water for the journey. Mother would cook the breakfast while the girls busied themselves cutting and packing sandwiches. Father would prepare a box to hold a kettle, the cups, saucers, plates, knives and forks, materials to light a fire and a supply of fresh water. When agreement had been reached on what needed to be done, they all went to bed feeling happy at the thought of the joys the morrow would bring.

In the morning, there was no need to rouse anyone because all were eagerly ready to start the day. By the time Mother had the family-breakfast ready, practically all the tasks given to the other members of the family had been done. The car was ready, packed and at the door. The boxes, parcels and cartons were already packed neatly in the car and checked to see that they contained all the requirements for the day. Breakfast was soon over, the house tidied and locked and everyone seated in the car.

At that moment, Father cast a gloom over the whole proceedings by saying he thought there might be rain later in the day. All scanned the sky to look for any signs of such an unwelcome

development. There was none, but because Father was usually correct in his forecasts of the weather, it was decided that they should be prepared for possible rain. Reluctantly, they all left their seats in the car; the house was unlocked again and each went in to collect raincoats, hoods and capes. Once again they took their seats in the car but their former comfort was now lost. The bulky wet-weather equipment occupied so much space that they were uncomfortably crowded and wedged in their seats. At last, with their joy in the coming outing somewhat dimmed, they set off in search of their day's pleasure. It did not rain.

You will notice that the final short simple sentence is very effective, coming as it does after the previous descriptive account of the planning and preparations for a day's picnic and of the anxiety felt concerning the weather. Remember, then, that a long series of simple sentences does not constitute good writing, but an occasional short simple sentence can be used with good effect.

Compound sentences, for the same reasons, must be used sparingly.

In Lesson 4, we shall devote time to the study of better writing and to the use of the type of sentence construction which makes better writing possible.

VOCABULARY AND SPELLING

Have you started your own Vocabulary Book yet? Are you using your dictionary to look up all the words which you have not understood? Do not let them pass by because you *think* you know them. Make *sure* you know their meanings and how to spell them. The extra time spent now will be of great benefit later on.

Here are some pairs of words which may be puzzling you because they sound alike. However they are spelt differently and have different meanings. Such words are called homonyms.

licence	road	practice	plain	wear
license	rode	practise	plane	ware

compliment	presents	prophecy
complement	presence	prophesy

Here is a little saying to learn off by heart which will help you to distinguish between these words of three of these pairs:

"c" the noun and "s" the verb.

Now look at the pairs "licence/license", "prophecy/prophecy" and "practice/practise". The word which is spelt with a "c" is the noun and the word spelt with an "s" is the verb. Look at these sentences to see how they are used.

Before a motorcar may be taken on to the road, the owner must license it. (verb)

You must buy a licence for your radio. (noun)

The guitar player practises every day. (verb)

The doctor has a big practice in Damascus. (noun)

The words of the following pair are pronounced slightly differently:

The prophecy (pronounced see) that rain would come was wrong, (noun)

The man prophesied (pronounced sighed) that it would rain. (verb)

Now look up the other pairs of words for yourself. If you have difficulty in remembering how they differ from each other, write them down in your Vocabulary Book.

SELF-HELP EXERCISE 4

1. In the following sentences words have been mistakenly used because they would sound something like the words which the writer wished to use. The wrongly used words are underlined. Rewrite the sentences, replacing the underlined words with others which you think the writer intended to use.
 - a. The map will show you that Egypt and Libya are contagious countries.
 - b. A consonant is a large piece of land surrounded by water.
 - c. He suffered from a sediment in his speech.
 - d. Well's history is a veritable mill stone on the road to learning.
 - e. An emigrant is a person who goes from one country to another.

- f. An aristocrat is a person who performs tricks on the stage.
- g. Herrings go about the sea in shawls.
- h. A contortionist is a man who takes money from people by unfair means.
- i. A receptionist is someone who receives money from others.
- j. The woman was wearing a voluble skirt.

2. Correct the spelling of the following mis-spelt words.

Harass	picturisk	alluminium
Probally	beginning	embarass
Siege	until	desparate
Accomodate	separate	reciept
Possession	theater	parliment
Double	skillful	Kediteranean
Plentiful	permission	

ANSWERS TO SELF-HELP EXERCISES

Exercise 1

1. I was playing in the school team last week.
A verb in the past tense must be used.
2. He had met his friend by lunch time last Monday.
The past perfect tense is necessary to show that the meeting had taken place at a certain time in the past.
3. I shall reach my destination by four 'o clock this afternoon.
The verb must agree with the subject, "I" in person. "I" is the first person so the verb must be in the first person. This is "shall" and not "will".
4. Next Sunday they will leave their old house.
"Next Sunday" is in the future, so the verb must be in the future tense; "have left" is the present perfect tense and cannot be used to indicate the future.
5. The Sports will be held next week.
"Next week" is the future; "are held" is the present tense and cannot be used to express the future.
6. Before it is dark tonight you will have walked many miles.

"have walked" is the present perfect; the sentence needs the future perfect, because the action will be completed in the future.

7. They worked all day last Friday.

"Last Friday" is the past, so a verb in the past tense last used; "have worked" is the present perfect tense and can be used to express the past.

Exercise 2

<i>Present Tense</i>	<i>Past Tense</i>	<i>Perfect Tense</i>
I think	I thought	I have thought
I do	I did	I have done
I shake	I shook	I have shaken
I hear	I heard	I have heard
I sink	I sank	I have sunk
I write	I wrote	I have written
I bite	I bit	I have bitten
I sing	I sang	I have sung
I ring	I rang	I have rung
I smite	I smote	I have smitten
I eat	I ate	I have eaten
I catch	I caught	I have caught
I teach	I taught	I have taught
I fight	I fought	I have fought
I get	I got	I have got
I creep	I crept	I have crept
I make	I made	I have made
I ride	I rode	I have ridden
I dig	I dug	I have dug

I beat	I beat	I have	beaten
I lie (down)	I lay (down)	I have	lain (down)
I cut	I cut	I have	cut
I hit	I hit	I have	hit
I hurt	I hurt	I have	hurt

Exercise 3

<i>Subject</i>	<i>Verb</i>	<i>Object</i>
1. troops	attacked	enemy
2. captain	sailed	ship
3. engine	pulled	train
4. spring	will be	No object
5. citizens	are	No object
6. People	admire	act
7. hunters	pursued	quarry
8. competit	took	prize
9. fortune	favours	few
10. man	pleaded	No object

Exercise 4

1. a. The map will show you that Egypt and Libya are contiguous countries.

"contiguous" means that they touch one another along a corner boundary. "Contagious" is a word used to describe diseases which are passed from person to person through their being in contact.

b. A continent is a large piece of land surrounded by water.

A "consonant" is a letter of the alphabet which is not a vowel. The word "continent"

stands for one of the great divisions of the world's land masses. It is not necessarily surrounded by water, however. Europe, one of the continents, is not surrounded by water. Islands are surrounded by water.

c. He suffered from an impediment in his speech.

An "impediment" is something which impedes or hinders such as a stutter. "Sediment" is solid matter which settles at the bottom of a container when the liquid in which was suspended does not move.

d. Wells' history is a veritable mile stone on the road to learning.

"mile" stones mark the progress along a road. Mill stones are the stones which grind corn into flour in the mill.

e. A migrant is a person who moves from one country to another.

An emigrant is a person who leaves one country for another. A person who moves about is a migrant because he migrates. When he leaves a country, he emigrates (goes out) but when he enters a new country, he immigrates (comes in).

f. An acrobat is a person who performs tricks on the stage.

An acrobat is a person who is agile and supple and able to perform difficult physical movements. A man who does tricks is usually a conjuror. An aristocrat is a person of regal birth or noble birth and has nothing to do with tricks on a stage.

g. Herrings go about the sea in shoals .

A shoal is a large number of fish forming a great party. Shawls are warm wraps which women often wear in cold weather.

h. An extortionist is a man who takes money from people by unfair means.

An extortionist is one who extorts, that is, he forces by some dishonest trick, people to give him their money.

A contortionist is someone who can entertain people by contorting or twisting his body in an unnatural manner.

i. A cashier is one who receives money from others.

It is the "Cashier" who stands at the till in a shop to receive payments of money. A "receptionist" is someone who receives people when they call to do business or to

book themselves in at a hotel.

j. The woman was wearing a voluminous skirt.

"Voluminous" means big or of great volume. "Voluble" means pouring out words at great speed.

2. The correct spelling of these words are:

harass

probably

siege

accommodate

possession

double

plentiful

picturesque

beginning

until

separate

theatre

skilful

permission

aluminium

embarrass

desperate

receipt

parliament

Mediterranean