Lesson 2: Present and Past Tenses

Present and Past Tenses

Welcome to Lesson 2.

In this lesson, you will learn how to use four important English tenses:

- **Present Simple**
- **Present Continuous**
- **Past Simple**
- **Past Continuous**

These tenses are especially useful when Speech-Language Pathology students describe:

- a client's usual behavior;
- what is happening during an assessment;
- previous clinical experiences;
- developmental history;
- therapy sessions;
- observations made during assessment.

Think about these sentences

The child **attends** therapy twice a week.

The therapist **is assessing** the child's language.

The child **attended** therapy last year.

The therapist **was observing** the child when the mother arrived.

The verbs are different because the situations occur at different times or have different meanings.

Continue to discover why.

Present Simple

When do we use the Present Simple?

We commonly use the **Present Simple** to talk about:

1. Habits and routines

The child attends therapy twice a week.

The therapist meets the child every Monday.

2. General facts

Language develops throughout childhood.

Speech therapists assess communication skills.

3. Repeated actions

The child frequently uses gestures.

4. Permanent or relatively stable situations

The child lives with his parents.

Form

Affirmative

I/You/We/They + base verb

They attend therapy.

He/She/It + verb-s

The child attends therapy.

Negative

do not / does not + base verb

The child does not attend therapy every day.

The children do not attend therapy every day.

Questions

Do/Does + subject + base verb?

Does the child attend therapy?

Do the children attend therapy?

Important rule

After **does/doesn't**, use the **base form** of the verb.

Correct:

Does the child **speak** clearly?

Incorrect:

Does the child **speaks** clearly?

Correct:

The child **speaks** clearly.

Incorrect:

The child **speak** clearly.

Question 1 – Quick Check

Choose the correct answer.

The child _____ therapy twice a week.

A. attend
B. attends
C. attending
D. attended

Feedback:

Correct. "The child" is singular, so the Present Simple verb takes **-s**: *attends*.

Present Continuous

When do we use the Present Continuous?

The Present Continuous describes an action that is:

1. Happening now

The therapist is assessing the child's speech.

2. Happening around the present time

The child is receiving speech therapy this month.

3. Temporary

The child is staying with his grandparents this week.

Form

Subject + am/is/are + verb-ing

Examples

I **am observing** the child.

The therapist **is assessing** language.

The children **are playing** a communication game.

Negative

The child **is not producing** complete sentences.

Question

Is the child **producing** complete sentences?

Question 2 – Quick Check

The therapist _____ the child's language at the moment.

A. assesses
B. assessed
C. is assessing
D. assess

Feedback:

Correct. "At the moment" indicates an action happening now, so the Present Continuous is appropriate.

Past Simple

When do we use the Past Simple?

We use the **Past Simple** for:

1. Completed actions in the past

The child attended therapy last year.

2. Past events

The therapist conducted the assessment yesterday.

3. A sequence of completed actions

The therapist interviewed the mother, assessed the child, and recorded the results.

Form

For regular verbs:

assess → assessed
attend → attended
observe → observed

Some verbs are irregular:

go → went
have → had
come → came
write → wrote
see → saw

Negative

The child **did not attend** the session.

Question

Did the child **attend** the session?

Important

After **did/didn't**, use the **base form**:

Correct:

Did the child **attend** therapy?

Incorrect:

Did the child **attended** therapy?

Question 3

Choose the correct sentence:

A. The child attend therapy yesterday.
B. The child attends therapy yesterday.
C. The child attended therapy yesterday.
D. The child is attend therapy yesterday.

Feedback:

"Yesterday" refers to a completed past event, so the Past Simple *attended* is appropriate.

Past Continuous

When do we use the Past Continuous?

The Past Continuous describes an action that was **in progress at a particular time in the past**.

Form

was/were + verb-ing

The child **was playing**.

The therapists **were observing**.

Example

The therapist was assessing the child when the mother arrived.

Two events occurred:

Longer/background action:

The therapist **was assessing** the child.

Shorter event:

The mother **arrived**.

Practice – Complete the Sentences

1.

The child usually _____ therapy twice a week.

Answer: attends

2.

The therapist _____ the child now.

Answer: is assessing

3.

The child _____ therapy last year.

Answer: attended

4.

The therapist _____ the mother when the child entered.

Answer: was interviewing