

CONSISTENT VERB TENSE

INTRODUCTORY PROJECT

See if you can find and underline the three mistakes in verb tense in the following passage:

An only child, Jaime was a growing nine-year-old boy in my fourth-grade class. At home, his diet consisted of cold cereal and bologna sandwiches. His dad was a single parent who works the second shift in a local factory welding semi trailers. As I was going through the lunch line one day, I noticed Jaime requesting an additional portion of pizza for his school lunch which the cooks deny. When I asked the cooks about it, one of them said, "That kid is always hungry." That settled it. Without his knowing who furnished it, there was an extra lunch for Jaime every day for the rest of the year. I feel good knowing that Jaime wasn't going hungry, even though my meager beginning teacher's salary was barely enough for me to pay my bills and repay my college loans.

Now try to complete the following statement:

Verb tense should be consistent. In the previous passage, three verbs have to be changed because they are mistakenly in the (present, past) tense while all of the other verbs in the passage are in the (present, past) tense.

KEEPING TENSES CONSISTENT

Do not shift tenses unnecessarily. If you begin writing a paper in the present tense, do not shift suddenly to the past. If you begin in the past, do not shift without reason to the present. Notice the inconsistent verb tenses in the following selection:

As a teacher, I knew that Jaime could not learn with hunger foremost in his mind. For him, the purpose of school is not only to learn the three Rs of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but it was also to serve as a social function. Since Jaime was an only child, he is also starved for interaction with other children his age.

The verbs must be consistently in the present tense:

As a teacher, I know that Jaime can not learn with hunger foremost in his mind. For him, the purpose of school is not only to learn the three Rs of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but it is also to serve as a social function. Since Jaime is an only child, he is also starved for interaction with other children his age.

Or the verbs must be consistently in the past tense:

As a teacher, I knew that Jaime could not learn with hunger foremost in his mind. For him, the purpose of school was not only to learn the three Rs of reading, writing, and arithmetic, but it was also to serve as a social function. Since Jaime was an only child, he was also starved for interaction with other children his age.

PRACTICE 1

In each item below, one verb must be changed so that it agrees in tense with the other verbs. Cross out, underline, or highlight the incorrect verb and write the correct verb tense form on the blank line (_____) provided.

Example found In recent years, many individuals who took advantage of what their schools had to offer and went on to obtain good positions with established companies ~~find~~ themselves out of jobs.

_____ 1. Opponents of the functionalist view stress that we do not live in a static society and, thus, there were no guarantees of job security.

_____ 2. Thus, the capitalists, who owned businesses and industry, are opposed by the working class, which provides the labor needed to make the products and provides the services offered by the businesses and industries.

_____ 3. Marx advocated in his work The Communist Manifesto (1848) that the working class is suppressed by capitalists, who readily took advantage of them.

_____ 4. School provides an efficient means of formally educating the young. While children learn from members of their immediate families, school as an institution provided a more uniform, balanced, and shared curriculum.

_____ 5. Each school has a curriculum, a program that indicated what material teachers will cover. Each teacher is expected to follow the curriculum and facilitate the learning process for students.

_____ 6. Some parents become very sensitive about what is in the local school curriculum or believed that the school provides an inadequate education for their child.

_____ 7. There are more private K-8 schools than there are private schools for grades 9-12, so many students who attend private grade school went on to attend a public high school.

_____ 8. By working with children when they are young and formable, religious leaders believe that their beliefs were more apt to be instilled in them for a lifetime.

_____ 9. Another criticism is that private high schools recruited outstanding athletes from outside of their immediate area and place them on scholarships so that they avoid paying tuition to attend.

_____ 10. Many homeschooled children enter either a private or a public school when they are of upper elementary or junior high/middle school age because the subject matter they need became increasingly difficult for their parents to teach them.

PRACTICE 2

Change verbs where needed in the following selection so that they are consistently in the past tense. Cross out, underline, or highlight each incorrect verb and write the correct verb tense form next to it, as shown in the example. You will need to make eight corrections.

For example, when thirteen-month-old Kurtis was playing peek-a-boo, he believed that he couldn't be seen whenever a blanket was placed over his head or that whenever his mother leaves him at day care she completely "disappeared" until she picks him up later that same day. By the time Kurtis moved into the preoperational stage, he is aware that people and things existed even though they are out of his line of vision.

During the preoperational stage, Kurtis's vocabulary expanded more than any other time in his life. During this period he also spends a lot of time classifying things. He made pictures of race cars for a race car book and strong men for a protector of the universe book. Kurtis spent numerous hours placing baseball, basketball, and football cards in various categories he makes up – jets, Astros, and Supersonics in his "space" category; Cowboys, Broncos, Spurs, 49ers, and Rangers in his "cowboy" category; and Bears, Dolphins, Marlins, Seahawks, Lions, Timberwolves, Hornets, and Bulls in his "animals" category.

As Kurtis passed into the concrete operations stage, he still manipulates things, just as he had done during the previous two stages, but now he concentrated on the size, number, and weight of objects. Abstract thinking and cause-and-effect relationships, two aspects of critical thinking that he would use in the formal operations stage, are still too difficult.

APPLICATION

Now, proofread your most recent essay (Summary-Reaction Essay 3) for inconsistent verb tense. If you find errors, enter in the space below up to two complete paragraphs that contain the verb tense errors. **Highlight** each incorrect verb tense. Afterwards, correct each paragraph.

Paragraph 1 with verb tense errors:

Correction:

Paragraph 2 with verb tense errors:

Correction:

If you have no incorrect verb tenses in your most recent essay, then find two paragraphs with examples of correct verb tense usage from the current textbook reading, enter the paragraphs in the space below, and **highlight** the correct verbs.

Paragraph 1:

Paragraph 2:

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PRACTICE 1

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Example found In recent years, many individuals who took advantage of what their schools had to offer and went on to obtain good positions with established companies ~~find~~ themselves out of jobs.

ARE 1. Opponents of the functionalist view stress that we do not live in a static society and, thus, there were no guarantees of job security.

OWN 2. Thus, the capitalists, who owned businesses and industry, are opposed by the working class, which provides the labor needed to make the products and provides the services offered by the businesses and industries.

WAS 3. Marx advocated in his work The Communist Manifesto (1848) that the working class is suppressed by capitalists, who readily took advantage of them.

PROVIDES 4. School provides an efficient means of formally educating the young. While children learn from members of their immediate families, school as an institution provided a more uniform, balanced, and shared curriculum.

INDICATES 5. Each school has a curriculum, a program that indicated what material teachers will cover. Each teacher is expected to follow the curriculum and facilitate the learning process for students.

BELIEVE 6. Some parents become very sensitive about what is in the local school curriculum or believed that the school provides an inadequate education for their child.

- GO 7. There are more private K-8 schools than there are private schools for grades 9-12, so many students who attend private grade school went on to attend a public high school.
- ARE 8. By working with children when they are young and formable, religious leaders believe that their beliefs were more apt to be instilled in them for a lifetime.
- RECRUIT 9. Another criticism is that private high schools recruited outstanding athletes from outside of their immediate area and place them on scholarships so that they avoid paying tuition to attend.
- BECOME 10. Many homeschooled children enter either a private or a public school when they are of upper elementary or junior high/middle school age because the subject matter they need became increasingly difficult for their parents to teach them.

PRACTICE 2

Change verbs where needed in the following selection so that they are consistently in the past tense. Cross out, underline, or highlight each incorrect verb and write the correct verb tense form next to it, as shown in the example. You will need to make eight corrections.

For example, when thirteen-month-old Kurtis was playing peek-a-boo, he believed that he couldn't be seen whenever a blanket was placed over his head or that whenever his mother leaves **LEFT** him at day care she completely "disappeared" until she picks **PICKED** him up later that same day. By the time Kurtis moved into the preoperational stage, he is **WAS** aware that people and things existed even though they are **WERE** out of his line of vision.

During the preoperational stage, Kurtis's vocabulary expanded more than any other time in his life. During this period he also spends **SPENT** a lot of time classifying things. He made pictures of race cars for a race car book and strong men for a protector of the universe book. Kurtis spent numerous hours placing baseball, basketball, and football cards in various categories he makes **MADE** up – jets, Astros, and Supersonics in his "space" category; Cowboys, Broncos, Spurs, 49ers, and Rangers in his "cowboy" category; and Bears, Dolphins, Marlins, Seahawks, Lions, Timberwolves, Hornets, and Bulls in his "animals" category.

As Kurtis passed into the concrete operations stage, he still manipulates **MANIPULATED** things, just as he had done during the previous two stages, but now he concentrated on the size, number, and weight of objects. Abstract thinking and cause-and-effect relationships, two aspects of critical thinking that he would use in the formal operations stage, are **WERE** still too difficult.