***CONVERSATION CLUB***

**LESSON 12**

**Topic: “Past Actions: Question Forms”**

**Objective:** Students will practice how to ask about interrupted actions in the past, through practicing some grammar exercises and by role-playing some situations, using the Simple Past vs Past Continuous Tenses.

## Warm-up: Chain Story: Sit around forming a circle. One of the students will start by saying one action that he/she was doing yesterday. The next student will repeat what the previous student said and then add another action that interrupted the previous action. The next student will say the last sentence his/her previous partner said and add another action. It has to be one action in Simple Past and one action in Past Continuous.

## “Past Continuous: Question Forms”

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Wh- word | was/were | subject | Verb-ing | complement | ? | Complete answers |
| What | were | you | doing | last night at 10 p.m. | ? | I was taking a shower in my house. |
| Where | was | he | staying | at | ? | I do not know where he was staying. |
| When | were | we | studying | English | ? | We were studying English last week at this hour. |
| Why | was | she | calling | you so late | ? | She was calling me so late because |
| How | were | they | behaving | that day | ? |  |
| Who | was | the woman | speaking | with | ? |  |
| What time | were | the guys | walking | outside your house | ? |  |

## Activity 1: In teams, choose one of the following situations and prepare it so that you and your team present it in class.

** 1. What Were You Doing When…?**

Often you can use Past Continuous tense to **talk about memories**, or for **looking back on what was happening at a specific time**. With this activity students ask each other questions that they may or may not remember the answer to. For example *What were you doing last Tuesday night at dinner time?* or*What were you doing when xx important thing happened?* You can explain that some historical events or other news events leave such an impression on us, we will always remember what we were doing at the time that thing happened. Sometimes our memories are very clear and sometimes they are not. You may want to provide prompts so the students get the idea and then have them generate their own questions. Some ideas for prompts are:

* + 9/11
  + The earthquake
  + Last Thursday at dinner time
  + Princess Diana died

**You can also make this into a *bluff game* by telling students who don’t remember to make something up**. For example, *I was doing laundry when my mom called* or *I was driving my car when I heard about 9/11*. Their partners can then guess whether the answer is true or not.

**2. Alibi**

This game is similar to the murder mystery *Clue*. You can set it up by **having the students create the crime they are going to investigate**. After that, students are divided into two groups--*suspects* and*detectives*. You want to have more suspects and just 2-4 detectives. The suspects each have to create a story of where they were and what they were doing at the time of the crime. They are then questioned by one of the detective students. The detectives must ask questions pertaining to Past Continuous by only asking questions about the time of the murder. For example they could ask questions like: *What were you discussing?* or *Where was the doctor eating?* If you want you could set up a jury as well and have the class vote as to who is guilty and why they don’t believe the alibi.

**3. Word Cards**

Have a stack of cards with random words prepared. Each student will choose two. In rounds have them create a sentence for their pair of words—one word for the past tense clause and one for the past continuous clause. For example, they draw the two words, *drive* and *monkey*. A possible sentence could be: *I was driving down the street when I saw a monkey in the road*. Or you can tell them to be more creative and allow some nonsense sentences. It does make it more challenging and fun if each of the words has to be used in a different clause. To make this activity even more involved you could have the students create sentences that somehow relate to the last person’s sentence to create a silly sort of story of things that were happening at a given time!

**Helped by:** http://busyteacher.org/10734-3-great-activities-past-continuous-tense.html