

B6. Fishing in the rain

past continuous



It was a cold dark evening in February in the city. It **was raining** heavily and the roads were covered in water. George **was leaving** his office after work when he noticed a poor old man. The man **was standing** next to a puddle in the road. He **was wearing** long rubber fishing boots and he **was holding** a stick with a piece of string. The string **was hanging** in the puddle. George asked the old man what he **was doing** and the man replied that he **was fishing**. 'Poor guy!', George thought. The old man **was obviously going** crazy. George felt sorry for the old man, and he **was getting** very wet, standing outside in the rain, so he decided to invite the old man to have a drink with him in a nearby bar.

George ordered a drink for himself and bought one for the old man. The old man **was smiling** happily as he was drinking. While they **were finishing** their drinks, George tried to start a conversation. He turned to the old man and asked,

'So is the fishing good today?'

'Not bad today, thanks.' replied the old man.

'And how many have you caught?'

'You're the eighth,' the old man answered.

Grammar: past continuous

We use the **past continuous** form to describe the background events in a story. It is often used to talk about the weather, to describe what people were wearing and to talk about actions which were in progress at the beginning of the story.

*We **were wearing** very smart clothes because we **were going** to a wedding.*

*The sun **was shining** and Helen **was feeling** very happy.*

We often use the time expressions **as** and **while** with the past continuous form to show that the two things were happening at the same time.

*I **was cleaning** the apartment while you **were drinking** in the bar.*

*It **was raining** heavily as I **was walking** home.*

Match the questions with the answers.

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|---|-----------------------------|
| 1. How did you break your leg? | A. Having lunch. |
| 2. What was the weather like while you were there? | B. Quite nervous. |
| 3. What was he wearing when you last saw him? | C. I was skiing. |
| 4. What were they doing when you phoned? | D. Something warm and dark. |
| 5. How were you feeling while you were taking the exam? | E. It was freezing. |

Choose a verb to complete these sentences. Put the verb into the past continuous form.

hold leave rain wear begin

- We didn't go out in the afternoon because it _____.
- We _____ the office when we saw the note on the desk.
- We arrived at the cinema just as the film _____.
- When I first met her she _____ a red dress and black boots.
- Mike _____ a tray of drinks when the dog ran out in front of him.

Vocabulary exercises

Choose the correct word to complete these sentences.

- It was getting cold and dark and the two people were _____ lost.
A. happily B. obviously C. heavily D. closely
- I wasn't wearing boots and I stepped into a very deep _____, so my feet got wet.
A. water B. rain C. puddle D. wet
- I bought some _____ to tie the flowers to the sticks.
A. string B. stick C. boots D. rubber
- It started to rain so we went into a _____ bar.

A. nearly B. closely C. nearby D. near

5. I _____ the girl what she was doing.

A. replied B. answered C. said D. asked

Choose the correct verb to complete these sentences.

catch feel order go invite

6. I'd like to _____ Mark and Sarah to the party but I don't know their phone numbers.

7. I walked up to the bar to _____ a drink.

8. I _____ sorry for Karl because he lost his job last week

9. I'm going fishing next weekend. I hope I _____ lots of fish.

10. My computer crashed again! I think I'm going to _____ crazy!

ANSWERS