

16.1

UNIT 16 Past experiences

Past time dominoes

Level

Elementary

Time

35–40 minutes

Aim

To practise using words and prepositions in past time expressions

Materials

One set of dominoes, cut up, for each group of three students

Key vocabulary

in + months
in January, in February, etc.
in + seasons
in spring, in summer, etc.
on + days
on Sunday, on Wednesday, on 6 January, on my birthday, on Christmas Day, on New Year's Day, etc.
at + times of day
at midday, at midnight, at 7 o'clock, etc.
for + periods of time
for a week, for a long time, for six months, for ten years, etc.
last + days, weeks, months, years
last night, last weekend, last year
periods of time + ago
six months ago, ten years ago, etc.
yesterday, last night, last weekend, last month, last year

Warm-up

- 1 Draw seven columns on the board. Label the columns: *in, on, at, for, last, ago* and put a dash (–) to represent ‘no word’ in the last column.
- 2 Ask the students to form a queue in front of the board. Choose a word from the Key vocabulary, e.g. *February*, and write it in the correct column, i.e. the *in* column. Now give the first student a pen. Say another word from the Key vocabulary, e.g. *Christmas Day*, and ask the student to write it in the correct column.
- 3 Check each answer with the class. Continue in this way until each student has had a go. If students prefer to stay in their seats, let them tell you which column to write the words in.

Main activity

- 1 Draw a few four-sided dominoes from the sheet on the board. Ask students how they can be fitted together to form the right connections.
- 2 Divide the students into groups of three. Give each group a set of dominoes. Tell each person to take five dominoes and to place the rest face down in a pile.
- 3 Playing the game:
 - Student A starts by placing one domino on the table.
 - Student B places a domino beside the first one so that the two adjoining words make a time expression. The group should decide if it is correct or not.
 - Student C places a third domino beside the second one. The line can go in any direction but each domino must be placed next to the last one put down. So for example, Student C’s domino may not be placed next to Student A’s domino.
 - If a student cannot place a domino, they take one from the pile and wait until it is their turn again.
 - The winner is the first person to put down all their dominoes.

Variation

Divide students into pairs and give each pair a set of dominoes. Together students try to create a line in which all the dominoes are used. The first pair to complete a correctly connected line wins.

Follow-up

In their groups or as a whole class, students make up their own sentences about the past, using the time expressions from the game. They get one point for each correct sentence.

Homework

- A Ask students to write six sentences about themselves, using the past time expressions they have practised.
- B Ask students to prepare six questions with some past time expressions to use to interview a classmate or another person, e.g. *What did you do last weekend? When did you last go on holiday?* This kind of interview can also be done on email.

Acknowledgement

We have adapted the idea of four-sided dominoes from *Pronunciation Games* by Mark Hancock (Cambridge University Press 1995).

Past time dominoes 16.1

at

autumn

for

20 March

at

January

a long time

month

for

Sunday

in

midnight

at

Friday

in

year

February

six months

12.30

on

afternoon

Saturday

ago

18 May

ago

8 o'clock

for

night

on

New Year's Day

ten years

summer

at

morning

last

two hours

on

9 August

a week

7 o'clock

winter

yesterday

on

April

yesterday

three years

Wednesday

2 December

in

5 October

last

my birthday

at

evening

on

two weeks

no

June

at

spring

no

two minutes

last

6.45

for

weekend

December

9.30

for

Christmas Day

Thursday

November

midday

September

ago

half an hour

in

Monday

last

week

16.2

UNIT 16 Past experiences

Phrasal verbs auction

Level

Intermediate

Time

40–45 minutes

Aim

To focus students’ attention on the meaning and use of some common phrasal verbs

Materials

For Warm-up, one set of Phrasal verb cards, cut up, for each pair of students
One set of Sentences for auction for each pair of students

Key vocabulary

break down
break up
bring up
cut down on
cut off
cut out
find out
give up
let down
put across
put down
put through
run out of
take after
take on
take up
tell off

Warm-up

- 1 Elicit some phrasal verbs that students are already familiar with by miming or paraphrasing, e.g. *put your coat on, turn the light off, the plane took off at 10.30.*
- 2 Divide students into pairs. Give each pair a set of Phrasal verb cards. Tell them to spread them out on the table and find the matching pairs, i.e. sentence and correct particle(s).
- 3 When everyone has finished, check that they have the correct pairs and ask students to explain the meaning of each phrasal verb. Then collect in the cards before starting the Main activity.

Main activity

- 1 Explain what happens at an auction and introduce some of the associated vocabulary, e.g. *auctioneer, hammer, to bid for something, going, going, gone!, sold!.*
- 2 Tell the students they have €5000, or the equivalent in their currency, to spend at the auction. The lowest acceptable bid is €200. Their aim is to buy as many correct sentences as possible.
- 3 First ask pairs to decide on their maximum bid for each sentence, and write it in the first column. Resist giving any clues about whether sentences are correct or not.
- 4 To begin the auction read out the sentences one at a time and ask for bids. Sell each sentence to the highest bidders and tell them to write down in the second column of the auction sheet how much they paid.
- 5 When all the sentences have been auctioned, go through the list and tell students whether each sentence was correct or not. Try not to elicit the correct sentences until the Follow-up.
- 6 The winners are the students who have bought the most correct sentences.

Answers

The incorrect sentences are – 3 (*broke down*), 4 (*took me on*), 8 (*let me down*), 9 (*give up*), 11 (*put me through to*).

Variation

Ask a student to take on the role of auctioneer.

Follow-up

Ask students to change each incorrect sentence into a correct sentence. Check suggested corrections with the whole class.

Homework

- A Look up each of the phrasal verbs from the activity in a monolingual English dictionary and note down more examples of their use.
- B Write questions for a class survey in the following lesson, using phrasal verbs from the activity, e.g. *Where were you brought up? What would you most like to cut down on?*

Acknowledgement

As far as we know, the idea of auctioning language items was first suggested in *Grammar Games* by Mario Rinvolucrí (Cambridge University Press 1984).