UNIT 15

Verb Tenses and Voice

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All verbs have four **principal parts**: a base form, a present participle, a simple past form, and a past participle. All the verb tenses are formed from these principal parts.

### Principal Parts of Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE FORM</th>
<th>PRESENT PARTICIPLE</th>
<th>PAST FORM</th>
<th>PAST PARTICIPLE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nail</td>
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<tr>
<td>carry</td>
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<tr>
<td>ring</td>
<td>ringing</td>
<td>rang</td>
<td>rung</td>
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<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>being</td>
<td>was, were</td>
<td>been</td>
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<tr>
<td>sit</td>
<td>sitting</td>
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</table>

The base form (except the base form of *be*) and the past form can be used by themselves as main verbs. To function as the simple predicate in a sentence, the present participle and the past participle must always be used with one or more auxiliary verbs.

Lions roar. [base or present form]
Lions roared. [past form]
Lions are roaring. [present participle with the auxiliary verb *are*]
Lions have roared. [past participle with the auxiliary verb *have*]

### Exercise 1 Using Principal Parts of Verbs

Write the correct form of the principal part of the verb indicated in parentheses.

1. They ____ for an auto dealership. (base form of *work*)
2. They are ___ up sales of minivans and jeeps. (present participle of *ring*)
3. Last month, he ____ ten people into buying minivans. (past form of *talk*)
4. She is ____ harder than any other salesperson. (present participle of *work*)
5. They have both ____ a bonus and an award. (past participle of *receive*)
6. They are _____ to other salespeople at the award dinner. (present participle of *talk*)
7. They have often _____ techniques with their colleagues. (past participle of *discuss*)
8. Now they _____ a wider audience. (base form of *need*)
9. Their supervisor ____ very proud when they were selected. (past form of *be*)
10. He was actually _____ around in his office. (present participle of *dance*)
### Regular and Irregular Verbs

- **A regular verb** forms its past and past participle by adding *-ed* to the base form.

#### Regular Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE FORM</th>
<th>PAST FORM</th>
<th>PAST PARTICIPLE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>roar</td>
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<td>talked</td>
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<tr>
<td>learn</td>
<td>learned</td>
<td>learned</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Some regular verbs undergo spelling changes when a suffix beginning with a vowel is added.

- ruffle + *-ed* = ruffled
- spy + *-ed* = spied
- flop + *-ed* = flopped
- argue + *-ed* = argued
- tie + *-ed* = tied
- refer + *-ed* = referred

- **An irregular verb** forms its past and past participle in some way other than by adding *-ed* to the base form.

#### Irregular Verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE FORM</th>
<th>PAST FORM</th>
<th>PAST PARTICIPLE</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>be</td>
<td>was, were</td>
<td>been</td>
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<tr>
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</tbody>
</table>

*For more detailed instruction on *lay* versus *lie* and *raise* versus *rise*, see Unit 19.

*For more detailed instruction on *sit* versus *set*, see Unit 19.
Exercise 2  Writing Principal Parts of Verbs

Copy and complete the chart. Make sure that you have spelled each form correctly.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BASE FORM</th>
<th>PAST FORM</th>
<th>PAST PARTICIPLE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. start</td>
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<td>2. think</td>
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<td>3. climb</td>
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<td>4. stop</td>
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<td>5. hit</td>
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<td>6. occur</td>
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<td>7. grow</td>
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<td>8. skip</td>
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<td>9. fly</td>
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<td>10. deter</td>
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<td>15. swim</td>
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<td>19. wear</td>
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<td>20. submit</td>
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<td>21. write</td>
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<tr>
<td>22. run</td>
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<tr>
<td>23. deny</td>
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<tr>
<td>24. lend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>25. know</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Exercise 3  Using Principal Parts of Irregular Verbs

Write the correct form of the principal part of the verb indicated in parentheses.

1. I ____ breakfast for my family every Sunday. (base form of make)
2. Last Sunday I ____ late. (past form of rise)
3. I was still ____ in bed when a wonderful aroma hit me. (present participle of lie)
4. I almost ____ out of bed with excitement. (past form of fall)
5. My brother had ____ to give me a present. (past participle of choose)
6. I ____ out of bed and sprinted down the stairs. (past form of spring)
7. His choice couldn't have ____ a better one. (past participle of be)
8. How could he have ____ what I really wanted? (past participle of know)
9. I sat and ____ my teeth into my favorite breakfast. (past form of sink)
10. I have never ____ better pancakes. (past participle of eat)
Exercise 4 Using Principal Parts of Verbs

Write the principal part of the verb indicated in parentheses.

Arthur Ashe, a Tennis Pioneer

1. The name Arthur Ashe has ___ to symbolize athletic brilliance and outstanding achievement. (past participle of come)
2. Over the past two decades, the name has also ___ personal integrity and grace. (past participle of signify)
3. Ashe ___ playing tennis in elementary school. (past form of begin)
4. His athletic talent ___ the attention of a local physician, Dr. Robert “Whirlwind” Johnson. (past form of catch)
5. Dr. Johnson ___ talented African American youngsters to play for the U.S. Tennis Association. (past form of teach)
6. Dr. Johnson had ___ tennis lessons to Althea Gibson. (past participle of give)
7. Althea Gibson ___ the first African American to win a championship at Wimbledon, a famous tennis tournament in England. (past form of be)
8. By the age of 18, Arthur Ashe had ___ to national prominence. (past participle of rise)
10. While he ___ at the University of California in Los Angeles, Ashe was coached by Pancho Gonzales, a tennis champion. (past form of study)
11. In 1963 Ashe was ___ for the Davis Cup team. (past participle of choose)
12. In 1966 he ___ himself the winner of both the singles and doubles titles in the National Collegiate Athletic Association Championship. (past form of find)
13. In 1968 Ashe’s dream of winning at the highest levels of American tennis finally ___ true. (past form of come)
14. He ___ first place at the U.S. National Men’s Singles Championship. (past form of take)
15. By the end of 1968, Ashe had ___ all opponents in the men’s singles competition of the first U.S. Open tournament. (past participle of beat)
16. Unfortunately, his tournament career ended when he ___ heart surgery. (past form of undergo)
17. As a result of a blood transfusion, Ashe ___ HIV. (past form of contract)
18. Years later, he ___ a news conference and discussed his illness publicly for the first time. (past form of hold)
19. Arthur Ashe ___ in 1993, five months before his fiftieth birthday. (past form of die)
20. Friends who ___ at his memorial service praised Ashe for his professional and humanitarian achievements. (past form of speak)
15.3 Tenses of Verbs

- **Tense** is the time of the action expressed by a verb.
- There are six tenses in English: *present, past, future, present perfect, past perfect,* and *future perfect.*

### Present Tense

The present-tense form of a verb (excluding the third-person singular, which adds an -s or -es) is the same as the verb's base form. The one exception is the verb *be.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE VERB STAY</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIRST PERSON</td>
<td>I stay.</td>
<td>We stay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>You stay.</td>
<td>You stay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECOND PERSON</td>
<td>She, he, or it stays.</td>
<td>They stay.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THIRD PERSON</td>
<td>Jesse stays.</td>
<td>The children stay.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>THE VERB BE</th>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIRST PERSON</td>
<td>I am sad.</td>
<td>We are sad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SECOND PERSON</td>
<td>You are sad.</td>
<td>You are sad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THIRD PERSON</td>
<td>She, he, or it is sad.</td>
<td>They are sad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sheila is sad.</td>
<td>The players are sad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- The **present tense** expresses a constant, repeated, or habitual action or condition. It can also express a general truth.

  My garden grows well in the summer. [not just this summer but every summer: a repeated action]
  Helena bakes bread well. [always: a habitual action]
  Gold is valuable. [a condition that is generally true]

- The **present tense** can also express an action or condition that exists only now.

  Jenny feels happy. [not always but just now]
  I see a fly on the ceiling. [at this very moment]

- The **present tense** is sometimes used in historical writing to express past events and, more often, in poetry, fiction, and reporting (especially in sports) to convey to the reader a sense of “being there.”

  Washington and his troops spend the winter at Valley Forge.
  The exhausted runner seems to stumble, but in a final spurt he rushes over the finish line and wins.
Past Tense

- Use the **past tense** to express an action or condition that began and ended in the past.

  The orchestra **performed** well.
  The musicians **seemed** pleased.
  The soloist **sang** beautifully.
  The conductor **praised** the musicians.

Nearly all regular and irregular verbs—except *be*—have just one past-tense form, such as *soared* or *began*. The word *be* has two past-tense forms: *was* and *were*.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>PLURAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FIRST PERSON</strong></td>
<td><strong>SECOND PERSON</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I <strong>was</strong> sad.</td>
<td>You <strong>were</strong> sad.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>We <strong>were</strong> sad.</td>
<td>You <strong>were</strong> sad.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise 5** Using the Present Tense

Write a sentence using each of the following present-tense verbs. The content of your sentence should express the kind of present time indicated in parentheses.

- **SAMPLE** does (a repeated action)
  - **ANSWER** He does his housecleaning on Saturday.

1. sleeps (a habitual action)
2. feel (just now)
3. is (generally true)
4. hopes (at this moment)
5. takes (constant action)
6. opens (at this moment)
7. am (not always, but just now)
8. practices (a repeated action)
9. need (a condition that is generally true)
10. signs (an event in history)

**Exercise 6** Using the Past Tense

Write two paragraphs, one using the past tense of verbs 1 through 5 and one using the past tense of verbs 6 through 10.

1. feel
2. catch
3. freeze
4. eat
5. write
6. be
7. give
8. take
9. wear
10. drink
Future Tense

- Use the future tense to express an action or condition that will occur in the future.

You form the future tense of any verb by using shall or will with the base form: I shall study; you will go.

Roberta will send the telegram.
I shall practice the piano tonight.

The following are other ways to express future time besides using shall or will:
1. Use the present tense of be with going to and the base form of a verb.
   Roberta is going to send the telegram.
2. Use the present tense of be with about to and the base form of the verb.
   Roberta is about to send the telegram.
3. Use the present tense of a verb with an adverb or an adverb phrase that shows future time.
   Roberta leaves tomorrow.
   Roberta arrives in the middle of next week.

Exercise 7 Using Expressions of Future Time

Rewrite each of the following sentences so that the verb is in the future tense. Try to use at least two other ways of expressing future time in addition to shall and will.

Japan’s Classical Theater

1. Two classmates and I presented a cooperative report on the history of Japanese theater for our literature class. 2. There were three parts to the presentation. 3. First, Kate spoke about the form of medieval theater called No. 4. She described the formality and beauty of No plays. 5. Then Miguel covered the history of Japan’s Joruri puppet theater. 6. He focused on the extraordinary realism of the colorful and expressive Joruri puppets. 7. I was responsible for information on Kabuki theater. 8. I began with a description of the typical Kabuki stage with its trapdoors and revolving platforms. 9. I explained the stylized and exaggerated movements of Kabuki actors. 10. The report concluded with a demonstration of Kabuki dance.

Exercise 8 Expressing Future Time in Sentences

Write five statements or predictions about the future. Your sentences may be as realistic or as unrealistic as you wish. Remember to vary the ways in which you express future time.

SAMPLE ANSWER Household robots are going to become a reality.
Perfect Tenses

15.4 Present Perfect Tense

Use the **present perfect tense** to express an action that took place or a condition that existed at some *indefinite time* in the past.

Form the present perfect tense by using *has* or *have* with the past participle of a verb: *has stopped, have waited.*

She **has caught** the flu.

They **have brought** a present for us.

The present perfect can refer to completed action in past time only in an indefinite way. Adverbs such as *yesterday* cannot be added to make the time more specific.

Sophia **has completed** her project.

Jack **has wanted** to visit Mexico.

To be specific about completed past time, you would normally use the simple past tense.

Sophia **completed** her project yesterday.

Jack **wanted** to visit Mexico last summer.

The present perfect can also be used to communicate the idea that an action or a condition **began** in the past and **continues** into the present. This use is normally accompanied by an adverb of time or an adverb phrase beginning with *for* or *since*.

The museum **has displayed** the exhibit for months.

We **have kept** the dogs indoors since Sunday.

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**Exercise 9 Using the Present Perfect Tense**

(a) Rewrite each of the following sentences, changing the tense of the verb from past to present perfect. (b) Add adverbs or adverb phrases to each new sentence to communicate the idea that an action or condition began in the past and continues into the present.

**SAMPLE**

We wanted to go to Paris.

**ANSWER**

a. We have wanted to go to Paris.

b. We have wanted to go to Paris for two years.

1. Lila gave piano lessons.
2. My parents owned two dogs.
3. The trees were in bloom.
4. My friend wrote poetry.
5. The team played with determination.

* Do not be confused by the term *present perfect*; this tense expresses past time. **Present** refers to the tense of the auxiliary verb *has* or *have.*
Past Perfect Tense

- Use the **past perfect tense** to indicate that one past action or condition began *and* ended before another past action or condition started.

You form the past perfect tense by using *had* with the past participle of a verb: *had loved, had written.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAST PERFECT</th>
<th>PAST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>She <strong>had been</strong> the captain of the team before I <strong>became</strong> captain. [She was captain; she stopped being captain; I became captain.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAST</th>
<th>PAST PERFECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Before I <strong>slipped</strong>, many other pedestrians <strong>had slipped</strong> in the same place. [They slipped; they finished slipping; I slipped.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAST PERFECT</th>
<th>PAST</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>He <strong>had already dried</strong> the dishes by the time I <strong>arrived</strong>. [He dried the dishes; he finished drying the dishes; I arrived.]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Future Perfect Tense

- Use the **future perfect tense** to express one future action or condition that will begin *and* end before another future event starts.

You form the future perfect tense by using *shall have* or *will have* with the past participle of a verb: *shall have walked, will have walked.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAST</th>
<th>PAST PERFECT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By summertime I <strong>will have lived</strong> here four months. [The four months will be over by the time another future event, the coming of summertime, occurs.]</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<tr>
<th>PAST</th>
<th>PAST PERFECT</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>By the time the astronauts reach the moon, they <strong>will have practiced</strong> the maneuver many times.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise 10**  **Writing the Past Perfect and Future Perfect Tenses**

Write the verb in parentheses in the tense indicated in brackets.

1. When the president resigned, he (**hold**) office for three years. [past perfect]
2. My father projects that forty years from now the majority of people (**become**) comfortable with voting by computer. [future perfect]
3. Before she realized it, Janice (**throw**) away the newspaper with the candidates’ statements. [past perfect]
4. Peter learned that he (**drive**) to the wrong polling place. [past perfect]
5. By the time the candidate makes a speech, she (**rehearse**) it for weeks. [future perfect]
Exercise 11  Review: Identifying the Verb Tenses

On your paper, write the tense of each italicized verb. Identify the tense as *present*, *past*, *future*, *present perfect*, *past perfect*, or *future perfect*.

**Reggae Music**

1. Perhaps you *listen* to a style of music known as reggae.
2. This intensely rhythmic music *has been* popular in Jamaica for some time.
3. Jamaican and African folk music and American rhythm and blues *had influenced* the reggae star Bob Marley before he *began* to play music himself.
4. Bands *had performed* reggae in Jamaica for twenty years before it was heard in either the United States or Europe.
5. It *has been* popular in the United States since the 1970s.
6. Before the musical style *took* the name reggae, fans *had called* it by various names—including rudie blues, ska, blue beat, and rock steady.
7. Reggae music *gained* international fame as a result of two groups, Bob Marley and the Wailers and Toots and the Maytals.
8. By the time it *became* popular outside Jamaica, reggae *had influenced* such rock musicians as Eric Clapton, John Lennon, and the Police.
9. Reggae *will remain* popular because reggae musicians *tour* frequently.
10. By the time he *completes* his latest tour, Bob Marley’s son Ziggy, for example, *will have performed* in dozens of American cities.

Exercise 12  Review: Using Verb Tenses

For each sentence, write the tense of the verb indicated in parentheses.

**A Legendary Concert**

1. The Woodstock Music and Art Fair ____ to symbolize the hippie culture of the 1960s. (present perfect tense of *come*)
2. By the time Jimi Hendrix played the “Star Spangled Banner,” an estimated 500,000 young people ____ in Saugerties, New York, for a weekend of rock and roll. (past perfect tense of *arrive*)
3. At the event, Richie Havens ____ for over two hours. (past tense of *sing*)
4. For years a rumor ____ that Joni Mitchell, known for her rendition of the song “Woodstock,” was never at Woodstock. (present perfect tense of *persist*)
5. In August 1994, what some had called the “Reunion at Yasgur’s Farm” ____ place on the actual site of Woodstock ’69. (past tense of *take*)
6. Rock elders such as Joe Cocker and Bob Dylan, who ____ favor with young audiences, performed at the anniversary concert. (past perfect tense of *gain*)
7. I ____ happy that I had the opportunity to attend. (present tense of *be*)
8. By the fortieth anniversary of Woodstock, many of the “flower children” of the 1960s ____ their sixties. (future perfect tense of *reach*)
9. Do you think they ____ Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, and the other legendary musicians who performed at Woodstock? (future perfect tense of *forget*)
10. I think they ____ still ____ (future tense of *remember*)
Progressive and Emphatic Forms

Each of the six tenses has a **progressive** form that expresses a continuing action.

Make the progressive forms by using the appropriate tense of the verb *be* with the present participle of the main verb:

**PRESENT PROGRESSIVE**

They *are* reading.

**PAST PROGRESSIVE**

They *were* reading.

**FUTURE PROGRESSIVE**

They *will be* reading.

**PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE**

They *have been* reading.

**PAST PERFECT PROGRESSIVE**

They *had been* reading.

**FUTURE PERFECT PROGRESSIVE**

They *will have been* reading.

The present and past tenses have **emphatic forms**, which add special force, or emphasis, to the verb.

Make the emphatic forms by using *do, does,* or *did* with the base form of the verb.

**PRESENT EMPHATIC**

*I do* read the newspaper every day.

Tony *does* read it occasionally.

**PAST EMPHATIC**

Inez *did* read the newspaper yesterday.

---

**Exercise 13** Using the Progressive and Emphatic Forms

For each of the following sentences, write the progressive or the emphatic form of the verb in parentheses that makes sense in the sentence.

*The Modern Bicycle*

1. Today more than seventy-five million Americans *(ride)* bicycles.
2. Over the years, bicycling *(gain)* popularity as a form of both exercise and recreation.
3. Even before bicycles began to be widely used for transportation and exercise, numerous organizations already *(work)* to promote long-distance trips for experienced riders.
4. Today the bicycle *(provide)* efficient transportation to and from work for many people.
5. Despite the dangers, many people *(ride)* bicycles in metropolitan areas.
6. Because of accidents involving bicyclists, safety rules *(grow)* increasingly important.
7. There is no doubt that bicyclists *(find)* it difficult to ride on busy streets.
8. We can predict that if environmental conditions don’t improve, legislators *(try)* to pass laws to protect bicyclists.
9. Before the recession, many cities *(plan)* to create bikeways, special lanes for bicyclists.
10. To ensure safety for all, new traffic laws *(require)* bicyclists to ride more carefully.
Exercise 14  Identifying Verb Tenses and Their Uses

Explain the difference in meaning between the sentences in each of the pairs below. Name the tenses and forms used in each sentence.

**SAMPLE**  
**a.** Why was Gloria so secretive?  
**b.** Why has Gloria been so secretive?

**ANSWER**  
In sentence *a*, the action occurred and ended (past). In sentence *b*, the action occurred in the past and is still continuing (present perfect).

1. **a.** Do you think Anna is writing a birthday poem for the twins’ twenty-first birthday?  
   **b.** Do you think Anna has been writing a birthday poem for the twins’ twenty-first birthday?

2. **a.** Anna had finished the poem by the twins’ birthday.  
   **b.** Anna did finish the poem by the twins’ birthday.

3. **a.** Michael had been painting a picture for the twins before he left town on a business trip to Salt Lake City.  
   **b.** Michael had painted a picture for the twins before he left town on a business trip to Salt Lake City.

4. **a.** The twins had been telling everyone not to make a fuss.  
   **b.** The twins told everyone not to make a fuss.

5. **a.** Nonetheless, the twins’ friends planned a surprise party.  
   **b.** Nonetheless, the twins’ friends were planning a surprise party.

6. **a.** Last year, they forgot to celebrate the twins’ birthday.  
   **b.** Last year, they did forget to celebrate the twins’ birthday.

7. **a.** I have been shopping for the perfect gift for weeks.  
   **b.** I had been shopping for the perfect gift for weeks.

8. **a.** Marc and Lydia had been arguing before the twins arrived.  
   **b.** Marc and Lydia were arguing when the twins arrived.

9. **a.** The twins looked happy.  
   **b.** The twins were looking happy.

10. **a.** By this time next week, the twins will have begun their thank-you notes.  
       **b.** By this time next week, the twins will begin their thank-you notes.

Exercise 15  Expressing Past Time in a Paragraph

Write a paragraph of at least eight sentences about an important event in your past. Underline five verbs or verb phrases that you have used. Use some progressive and emphatic forms if possible. (Remember that the perfect tenses, as well as the past tense, can be used to express past action.)
Compatibility of Tenses

- Do not shift, or change, tenses when two or more events occur at the same time.

**INCORRECT**
During the concert the pianist forgot the notes, and she stops in the middle of the piece. [The tense needlessly shifts from the past to the present.]

**CORRECT**
During the concert the pianist forgot the notes, and she stopped in the middle of the piece. [Now it is clear that both events happened at nearly the same time in the past.]

**INCORRECT**
The maestro leaves the podium. The audience gave him a standing ovation. [The tense needlessly shifts from the present to the past.]

**CORRECT**
The maestro leaves the podium. The audience gives him a standing ovation. [It is clear that both events are happening at about the same time.]

- Shift tenses to show that one event precedes or follows another.

**INCORRECT**
By the time we arrived, they ate dinner. [The two past-tense verbs give the mistaken impression that both events happened at the same time.]

**CORRECT**
By the time we arrived, they had eaten dinner. [The shift from the past tense (arrived) to the past perfect tense (had eaten) clearly indicates that they ate the dinner before we arrived.]

- Keep a statement of universal truth in the present tense even if the main verb is in the past tense.

Columbus proved that the earth is round.

**Exercise 16 Choosing Compatible Tenses**

Determine which action or condition preceded the other one. Then write the compatible tense of the verb in parentheses.

1. Kim Mason was saving her earnings to buy a CD player she (saw, had seen) in the window of Music World.
2. It had been almost a year since she (opens, opened) her savings account.
3. By the time she saved enough money to buy the CD player, it (had gone, went) on sale.
4. She purchased the CD player and also (buys, bought) some CDs.
5. Kim learned that saving (is, was) a good way to get what you want.
Exercise 17  Making Tenses Compatible

First find the two verbs that appear in each of the following sentences. Then rewrite each sentence, making the second verb compatible with the first verb.

**Maxine Hong Kingston: A Writer’s Heritage**

1. Maxine Hong Kingston was born in Stockton, California, in 1940 and was speaking Cantonese as a child.
2. After she had received several scholarships, she attends college at the University of California at Berkeley.
3. Before she switched to English, Kingston studies engineering.
4. Kingston found out in college that she is not a reporter.
5. While she wrote her first book, Kingston supports herself with a full-time job.
6. When *The Woman Warrior: Memoirs of a Girlhood Among Ghosts* was published in 1976, reviewers praise its combination of autobiography, fiction, and history.
7. By the time I finished *The Woman Warrior*, I learned a great deal about Kingston's childhood.
8. Kingston published *China Men* four years after she was writing *The Woman Warrior*.
9. In *China Men*, Kingston described her grandfather, who works on the transcontinental railroad in the early 1900s.
10. After I had completed *The Woman Warrior*, I had decided to read *China Men* as well.
11. *The Woman Warrior* won the National Book Critics Circle Award for nonfiction in 1976; and four years later, *China Men* had received the National Book Award.
12. Kingston made her debut as a novelist when she has written *Tripmaster Monkey: His Fake Book*.
13. This novel tells the story of Wittman Ah Sing, who had been a graduate of Berkeley and a Chinese American hippie.
14. Kingston sets the story in San Francisco in the 1960s and has made Sing a kind of rebel with a cause.
15. The story follows Sing as he will pursue his dream of writing and staging a huge Chinese saga.
16. The novel has been described as surreal and will have been called a bitter and funny tale.
17. In the course of the story, Sing falls in love and also searched for his grandmother in Reno, Nevada.
18. Maxine Hong Kingston is married to Earll Kingston, the actor, and they had had a son, Joseph.
19. Unlike his mother, Joseph Kingston is not a writer; instead, he had been a musician.
20. Maxine Hong Kingston makes her home in Oakland, California, where she continued to write.
15.7 Voice of Verbs

- An action verb is in the **active voice** when the subject of the sentence performs the action.
  
The student **submitted** her report.

- An action verb is in the **passive voice** when the action is performed on the subject.
  
The report **was submitted** by the student.

Generally, the active voice is stronger, but at times the passive voice is preferred or, in fact, necessary. If you do not want to call attention to the performer or do not know who the performer is, use the passive voice.

- The dinner **was ruined**. [You may not want to identify the culprit.]
- The manuscript **was stolen**. [You may not know who the culprit is.]

Form the passive voice by using a form of the auxiliary verb *be* with the past participle of the verb. The tense of a passive verb is determined by the tense of the auxiliary verb.

- The child is **pleased** with the dog. [present tense, passive voice]
- The child **was pleased** with the dog. [past tense, passive voice]
- The child **will be pleased** with the dog. [future tense, passive voice]

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**Exercise 18** Identifying Active and Passive Voice

Write the verb in each sentence, and tell whether it is **active** or **passive**.

**Denver International Airport**

1. In 1995 the largest airport in North America opened for business.
2. Denver International Airport has been labeled by its supporters as the airport for the twenty-first century.
3. The airport was built on fifty-three square miles of prairie land northeast of the city.
4. Mismanagement and technological mishaps pushed the final cost to almost $5 billion, $3 billion over budget.
5. Three parallel runways are designed to handle ninety-nine aircraft every hour.
6. The control tower, 327 feet tall, will operate even in severe weather.
7. An automated underground transit system and a superhighway of moving sidewalks transport passengers to their gates.
8. Some of the glitches in the $232-million automated baggage system have been corrected.
9. Baggage is no longer shredded by the state-of-the-art system.
10. The baggage system winds for twenty miles beneath the terminal.
Exercise 19  Changing the Voice of Verbs

Rewrite the following sentences, changing active verbs to passive and passive verbs to active. When using passive verbs, drop the performers of the action if they do not need to be identified. Make other wording changes as needed.

**SAMPLE**  Long-distance health care was made possible by new technology.
**ANSWER**  New technology has made long-distance health care possible.

**Explorer Robots**

1. The explorer robot has been brought to us by new technology.
2. Human beings operate some of these robots.
3. Areas dangerous to people have been explored by these robots.
4. NASA has tested some explorer robots.
5. Marine biologists expect explorer robots to do underwater research.
6. Endurance superior to that of humans is offered by these robots.
7. Therefore, explorer robots can maintain underwater equipment.
8. Pictures of Mars were relayed to Earth by planetary explorer robots.
9. Engineers have designed some explorer robots to help the physically challenged.
10. Scientists predict a great future for explorer robots.
11. A robotic arm has been constructed by engineers at NASA’s Jet Propulsion Laboratory.
12. The device can imitate any action of a surgeon’s electronic pointer.
13. The arm provides surgeons access to remote regions of the spine and brain.
14. The robotic arm will be tested on humans by medical researchers.
15. Engineers at MIT are developing a surgical robot for fulfilling a surgeon’s commands.
16. Two small cameras have been placed inside the robot’s head by engineers.
17. The cameras can continually transmit magnified images back to a video console.
18. A surgeon can direct the robot’s movements by manipulating surgical tools mounted on the console.
19. For the next century, long-distance operating rooms with fiber-optic cable connectors are envisioned by researchers.
20. However, many obstacles must first be overcome by medical researchers and electronic engineers.

Exercise 20  Writing Sentences with Active and Passive Voice

Write a paragraph of ten sentences describing a process with which you are familiar. Use a combination of active and passive verbs in your paragraph.
UNIT 15
Grammar Review

V E R B  T E N S E S  A N D  V O I C E

The following literary passage is taken from *Black Boy*, Richard Wright’s autobiography. Born in Natchez, Mississippi, in 1908, Wright grew up poor, neglected, and hungry. In this passage, he describes a happy memory: the abundant meals that his Aunt Maggie served at her home in Arkansas. The passage has been annotated to show some of the kinds of verbs covered in this unit.

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**Literature Model**

*from Black Boy: A Record of Childhood and Youth*  
_by Richard Wright_

- ... At mealtime Aunt Maggie’s table was so loaded with food that I could scarcely believe it was real. It took me some time to get used to the idea of there being enough to eat; I felt that if I ate enough there would not be anything left for another time. When I first sat down at Aunt Maggie’s table, I could not eat until I had asked:
  - “Can I eat all I want?”
  - “Eat as much as you like,” Uncle Hoskins said. I did not believe him. I ate until my stomach hurt, but even then I did not want to get up from the table.
  - “Your eyes are bigger than your stomach,” my mother said.
  - “Let him eat all he wants to and get used to food,” Uncle Hoskins said.

  When supper was over I saw that there were many biscuits piled high upon the bread platter, an astonishing and unbelievable sight to me. Though the biscuits were right before my eyes, and though there was more flour in the kitchen, I was apprehensive lest there be no bread for breakfast in the morning. I was afraid that somehow the biscuits might disappear during the night, while I was sleeping. I did not want to wake up in the morning, as I had so often in the past, feeling hun-
gry and knowing that there was no food in the house. So, surreptitiously, I took some of the biscuits from the platter and slipped them into my pocket, not to eat, but to keep as a bulwark against any possible attack of hunger. Even after I had got used to seeing the table loaded with food at each meal, I still stole bread and put it into my pockets. In washing my clothes my mother found the gummy wads and scolded me to break me of the habit; I stopped hiding the bread in my pockets and hid it about the house, in corners, behind dressers. I did not break the habit of stealing and hoarding bread until my faith that food would be forthcoming at each meal had been somewhat established.

Review: Exercise 1 Identifying Principal Parts of Verbs

The following sentences elaborate on ideas suggested by the passage from Black Boy. Each sentence contains an italicized verb in one of four forms: (a) the base form, (b) the past form, (c) the present participle, or (d) the past participle. At the end of the sentence is a second verb in parentheses. First, identify the form of the verb in italics. Then write the verb in parentheses in the same form as the original verb.

**SAMPLE**  The family dined at Aunt Maggie’s. (eat)

**ANSWER**  past form; ate

1. At home in Mississippi, food had often seemed scarce. (be)
2. Young Wright had the acute, daily ache of hunger. (feel)
3. His stomach frequently was churning with discomfort. (growl)
4. Then Wright and his mother traveled to his aunt’s home in Arkansas. (come)
5. They are visiting Wright’s Aunt Maggie and Uncle Hoskins today. (see)
6. The kindly pair welcome them into their home. (take)
7. Wright wondered at the amount of food in the kitchen. (marvel)
8. Later, Wright was devouring an abundant dinner. (eat)
9. He had consumed the food until his stomach ached. (eat)
10. Aunt Maggie carried a lavish platter of hot biscuits to the table. (bring)
11. Wright had grown fearful that the biscuits would disappear before breakfast. (become)
12. He was even concealing extra food in his pocket. (hide)
13. His mother had found gummy wads of bread in his pocket. (discover)
14. For many days, he feared that every full meal might be his last. (think)
15. This fear of hunger remained with him for months. (stay)
Review: Exercise 2  Using the Present, Past, and Future Tenses

The following sentences are based on passages from *Black Boy* that are not reprinted in this textbook. On your paper, write each italicized verb so that it matches the tense in parentheses. Use only the present, past, and future tenses; with the exception of *will* to express the future tense, do not use any helping verbs.

**SAMPLE**  Wright’s mother *will bring* her son to Arkansas. (present tense)
**ANSWER**  brings

1. On the train to Elaine, Arkansas, Wright *will become* aware of racism and segregation. (present tense)
2. In those days, African Americans and whites *ride* in separate sections of the train. (past tense)
3. The naive youngsters *wanted* a peek at the whites’ part of the train. (present tense)
4. His mother *says*, “Quit talking foolishness!” (past tense)
5. The travelers *went* to Aunt Maggie and Uncle Hoskins’s home to live. (future tense)
6. Uncle Hoskins *owned* a prosperous business in town. (present tense)
7. Aunt Maggie *will have* plenty of food on the dinner table. (past tense)
8. Soon a major calamity *will break* Wright’s mood of contentment. (present tense)
9. Some white people in town, envious of Uncle Hoskins’s success, *murder* him one night. (past tense)
10. Aunt Maggie, Wright, and Wright’s mother *flee* to safety in another town. (future tense)
11. Wright’s four years at Jim Hill Public School *were* his only opportunity for formal study. (present tense)
12. At first the principal *puts* him in the fifth grade. (past tense)
13. After studying day and night, Wright *passes* to the sixth grade. (future tense)
14. Flushed with success, Wright *thinks* about studying medicine. (past tense)
15. In school he *will try* to deter questions about his home and his life. (present tense)
16. At noon he *went* to the sandwich shop with some of his classmates. (present tense)
17. One of the boys *sensed* Wright’s dilemma. (future tense)
18. Later, he *suggests* that Wright earn some money by selling newspapers published in Chicago. (future tense)
19. Slowly, Wright *collects* customers in the African American neighborhoods. (past tense)
20. Later, he *found* out that the newspapers preach the Ku Klux Klan doctrine. (present tense)
Review: Exercise 3 Using the Perfect Tenses

Each of the following sentences is based on events in Richard Wright’s Black Boy. On your paper, write the form of the italicized verb that belongs in the place indicated by the caret. Follow the directions in parentheses, using the past participle of the main verb and the appropriate form of the helping verb have.

1. By the time he became a teenager, Wright ^ in several southern states. (past perfect tense of live)
2. Wright ^ the age of four before he moved from his grandparents’ home near Natchez, Mississippi. (past perfect tense of reach)
3. When Richard’s grandmother ^ ill for some time, a fire nearly destroyed the Wright home. (past perfect tense of be)
4. The fire ^ through several rooms by the time Wright could flee to safety. (past perfect tense of tear)
5. When the adults at last put out the blaze, nearly half the house ^ down. (past perfect tense of burn)
6. Wright ^ to Arkansas to live with his aunt and uncle. (present perfect tense of come)
7. Wright ^ in Memphis, Tennessee, but he had never lived in Arkansas before. (past perfect form of live)
8. For most of her life before she decided to leave Memphis, his mother ^ against exhaustion and despair. (past perfect tense of struggle)
9. Her meager wages ^ her almost no money for food. (present perfect tense of leave)
10. Now that his mother ^ Wright to his aunt’s home, he is finally getting enough to eat. (present perfect tense of bring)
11. Because he ^ constant hunger, at first he eats until his stomach hurts. (present perfect tense of know)
12. After he ^ a meal, he hides bread in his pockets. (present perfect tense of finish)
13. His mother often finds gummy wads of bread in the clothes that she ^ . (present perfect tense of wash)
14. She realizes what he ^ and scolds him. (present perfect tense of do)
15. In spite of her criticism, she understands why he ^ the bread. (present perfect tense of steal)
16. During his short life, he already ^ great hardship. (present perfect tense of endure)
17. In a month or so, Wright ^ the habit. (future perfect tense of break)
18. By then he ^ more confident that food will always be available. (future perfect tense of become)
19. Violence tears the family apart when they learn that envious whites ^ Uncle Hoskins. (present perfect tense of murder)
20. By the following morning, mother and son ^ safety in a nearby town. (future perfect tense of reach)
Review: Exercise 4  Using the Progressive and Emphatic Forms

Each of the following sentences is based on events in Richard Wright’s *Black Boy*. On your paper, write the form of the italicized verb that belongs in the place indicated by the caret. Follow the directions in parentheses, using the present participle of the main verb and the appropriate tense of *be*, or the base form of the main verb and the appropriate form of *do*.

**SAMPLE**  The writer ^ about the meaning of his life. (present progressive form of *think*)

**ANSWER**  is thinking

1. A train trip to Arkansas in 1917 ^ Wright about the realities of the Jim Crow laws that limited the rights of African Americans. (past emphatic form of *teach*)
2. He wonders why whites and African Americans ^ in separate sections of the train. (present progressive form of *sit*)
3. During the train ride to Arkansas, Wright ^ about his grandmother’s life as a slave before the Civil War. (present progressive form of *ask*)
4. Tonight young Wright ^ in the home of his Uncle Hoskins. (future progressive form of *sleep*)
5. Although startled at first by all the food served by his aunt, eventually Wright ^ to Hoskins’s home. (past emphatic form of *adjust*)
6. Envious men in town ^ Uncle Hoskins’s life. (past progressive form of *threaten*)
7. One night, Aunt Maggie ^ for Uncle Hoskins’s return when a tall boy knocked on the door. (past progressive form of *wait*)
8. The threat ^ a reality: Uncle Hoskins was murdered. (past emphatic form of *become*)
9. Weeks later, a regiment of African American soldiers ^ with rifles on their shoulders. (future progressive form of *parade*)
10. Soon these troops ^ in World War I. (future progressive form of *fight*)

Review: Exercise 5  Identifying and Using Voice of Verbs

The following sentences are about Richard Wright and *Black Boy*. First, identify each sentence as being in either the passive voice or the active voice. Then rewrite each sentence, changing the active voice to the passive or the passive voice to the active.

**SAMPLE**  *Black Boy* was written by Richard Wright.

**ANSWER**  passive voice; Richard Wright wrote *Black Boy*.

1. The events in *Black Boy* are recounted by the author with fury and eloquence.
2. The Civil War ended slavery in the United States.
3. Little was done by society about the plight of African Americans.
4. *Black Boy* was written by Richard Wright as a story of protest.
5. Wright’s forceful voice has inspired generations of Americans.
Review: Exercise 6  Making Tenses Compatible

The following sentences elaborate on events in the passage from *Black Boy*. On your paper, correct the tense of the italicized verb so that the tenses are compatible.

**SAMPLE**  Before Wright came to his aunt’s home in Arkansas, he *lived* in Memphis, Tennessee.

**ANSWER**  had lived

1. Aunt Maggie was married to Uncle Hoskins, who *runs* a thriving business near their home in Arkansas.
2. In Memphis Wright *is eating* poorly, but at Aunt Maggie’s he ate well.
3. He *sits* shyly at the table when Aunt Maggie brought out the first meal.
4. Aunt Maggie was a fine cook, and she *sets* a variety of savory foods on the table.
5. As Wright *bites* into a biscuit, he recalled his many hungry times.
6. The others had not yet finished their first portion when Wright *takes* a second helping of the food.
7. After his meals, Wright *puts* some extra food into a pocket or hid it in the house.
8. Wright’s mother *finds* wads of bread when she washed his clothes.
9. Wright controlled his urge to hoard food only after he *becomes* certain of the source of his next meal.
10. In his years in Memphis, Wright *is failing* to gain weight, but in Arkansas, at Aunt Maggie’s table, he never went hungry.
11. Wright is hired by a white family who *will want* someone to milk cows, feed chickens, and serve meals.
12. The woman teaches him how to milk and *had shown* him how to gather eggs.
13. When he came into the house, Wright noticed that the dining table *will have been set* for five people.
14. He was appalled that the family habitually *had cursed* each other.
15. When the time came for him to return to school, he *will be* physically tired and emotionally spent.
16. He *clings* to the job, however, because the family never measured how much food he ate.
17. Back home, when he described his meals, his family *feels* envious.
18. In class Wright *will fall* behind with his academic work because he had drifted off to sleep so many times.
19. To keep himself awake and alert, he goes to the water fountain and *ran* cold water over his wrists.
20. Now that he is earning money, he *has bought* sandwiches for lunch.
Grammar Review

Review: Exercise 7 Using Verb Tenses in Writing

Choose a story you have read recently or seen at the movies or on television. Write ten sentences about the story and the characters. In each sentence, use at least two verbs that are compatible in tense. Write the verbs and label the tenses. Use all six verb tenses in your sentences: present, past, future, present perfect, past perfect, and future perfect.

SAMPLE ANSWER

I recently read a story that I had wanted to read for some time. read—past tense; had wanted—past perfect tense

Review: Exercise 8 Proofreading

The following passage describes the artist William H. Johnson, whose painting appears on the opposite page. Rewrite the passage, correcting the errors in spelling, grammar, and usage. Add any missing punctuation. There are twenty-five errors.

William H. Johnson

William H. Johnson (1901–1970), one of the most innovative artists of the Harlem Renaissance is born in Florence, South Carolina. One day, one of his elementary school teachers founded on Johnson’s desk a piece of paper with a remarkable likeness of herself. His teachers and his family, recognizing his talent encourage Johnson to develop his skill as a painter.

When he was seventeen, Johnson moved to Harlem a neighborhood in New York City. Three years later, he accepted into the prestigious National Academy of Design, where he won several awards. He gone to Paris in 1926. He was spending twelve years altogether in Europe, nine of them in Scandinavia. There he studied art and met the Danish woman who become his wife. His painting was influenced by the highly expressive works of Vincent van Gogh the famous Dutch Postimpressionist.

Johnson once describes himself as primitive and cultured at the same time. When he come back to the United States, he had refined his hybrid style. Using vivid colors and a deliberately primitive technique, he painted scenes of contemporary African American life. Poor farm workers city dwellers, soldiers, convicts, musicians, and preachers appear often in his work. The heightened colors and the strong emotional tone of his paintings shows the influence of the European school of painting known as Expressionism.
Soon after World War II ended, Johnson hospitalized for a nervous disorder. Tragically, his last years was spent in mental institutions. His works has continued to be exhibited and praised despite his career’s premature end. Jim, a relatively early portrait is painted in a style that Johnson later abandoned. The vivid colors and loose brush strokes is reminiscent of Expressionist techniques. It is not hard to imagine the young Richard Wright as the boy in Johnsons painting. The gaze in Jim’s eyes suggest an inner turmoil that seems akin to the physical and spiritual hunger that Wright feeled as a boy.
Mixed Review

The following sentences describe the life and literary achievements of the author Richard Wright. Rewrite each sentence, following the directions in parentheses.

SAMPLE  Richard Wright portrayed his childhood and also writes about urban life. (Change the second verb to make the tenses compatible.)

ANSWER  Richard Wright portrayed his childhood and also wrote about urban life.

Richard Wright

1. Richard Wright was born in a rural region of Mississippi, where his grandparents were enslaved before the Civil War. (Change the second verb to the past perfect tense.)
2. Wright lived in Memphis when his father abandoned the family to a life of poverty. (Change the first verb to the past progressive form.)
3. After he had spent time with relatives in Arkansas and Mississippi, Wright had returned to Memphis. (Change the second verb to the past tense.)
4. In Memphis Wright worked as a postal clerk when he decided to become a writer. (Change the first verb to the past progressive form.)
5. He reads several books that stimulated his interest in becoming a writer. (Change the first verb to make the tenses compatible.)
6. The American author H. L. Mencken wrote one of those books. (Rewrite the sentence in the passive voice.)
7. Financial aid was given to the budding author by the Federal Writers’ Project, a government assistance program. (Rewrite the sentence in the active voice.)
8. Before he moved to New York City in 1937, Wright lived for a time in Chicago. (Change the second verb to the past perfect tense.)
9. Wright first wins attention with *Uncle Tom’s Children*, a collection of short works of fiction that appeared in 1938. (Correct the error caused by the use of the present tense.)
10. Two years later he published his popular novel *Native Son*. (Rewrite the sentence in the passive voice.)
11. *Native Son* was adapted for the Broadway stage by the noted director Orson Welles. (Rewrite the sentence in the active voice.)
12. Eventually, Hollywood turned *Native Son* into a film drama. (Change the verb to the past emphatic form.)
13. When an Argentine film version of *Native Son* appeared in 1951, Wright himself plays the main character, Bigger Thomas. (Correct the error caused by the use of the present tense.)
14. An American studio recently released a film adaptation of *Native Son*. (Change the verb to the present perfect tense.)
15. In fact, the video store in my neighborhood stocks the 1986 version of *Native Son*. (Change the verb to the present emphatic form.)
Writing Application

Verbs in Writing

In this passage from her autobiography *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Maya Angelou describes the relationship between her grandmother and the aristocratic Mrs. Flowers. As you read, concentrate on Angelou’s use of verbs, especially the italicized ones.

Mrs. Flowers didn’t belong to our church, nor was she Momma’s familiar. Why on earth did she insist on calling her Sister Flowers? Shame made me want to hide my face. Mrs. Flowers deserved better than to be called Sister. Then, Momma left out the verb. Why not ask “How are you, Mrs. Flowers?” With the unbalanced passion of the young, I hated her for showing her ignorance to Mrs. Flowers. It didn’t occur to me for many years that they were as alike as sisters, separated only by formal education.

Techniques with Verbs

When you write and revise your own work, try to use verbs as Angelou does.

1. Do not shift tenses when referring to events in the same time frame.

   **INCORRECT VERSION** Mrs. Flowers doesn’t belong to our church, nor was she Momma’s familiar.

   **ANGELOU’S CORRECT VERSION** Mrs. Flowers didn’t belong to our church, nor was she Momma’s familiar.

2. Use the emphatic form and the active voice to make a point.

   **UNEMPHATIC PASSIVE VERSION** Why was Mrs. Flowers called Sister Flowers by her?

   **ANGELOU’S VERSION** Why on earth did she insist on calling her Sister Flowers?

Revise the following passage on a separate sheet of paper. Keep verb tenses consistent and use active voice as much as possible.

Maya Angelou has enriched American culture with the many books and poems she had written. Perhaps best known for her multivolume autobiography, she also will have been remembered for the poem she wrote to commemorate the inauguration of President William Jefferson Clinton. She completed the poem several days before Clinton was inaugurated.

Interestingly, an experience was shared by President Clinton and this gifted African American writer: They both spent their childhood in Arkansas and were cared for by grandmothers whom they will remember with great affection.