



Learn English Through Stories

T Series

Upper - Intermediate

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Banta Learning Present Tenses 3 by K S Sandhu

Banta's Busy Day with Pets

Banta is a university student. Right now, he is studying animal behaviour in his final year. He is sitting at his desk in the small apartment, surrounded by books and notes. Outside, it is raining heavily, so he is not going out today. Instead, he is reading about why more pet owners are taking their dogs and cats to the vet with behaviour problems these days.

These problems are becoming more pervasive. Many pets are showing signs of aggression, anxiety, separation-related distress, or destructive chewing. Experts say these issues often come from fear, lack of stimulation, or even hidden medical problems. Owners are noticing that their pets are barking more, are hiding under furniture, or are scratching doors when left alone. Vets are recommending early help to stop small problems from getting worse.

Banta is planning to become an animal behaviour consultant after he graduates. He is thinking about the future job market. More people are treating their pets like family members, and they are spending money on preventive care and emotional health. This trend is growing fast because of better awareness and new technology like AI collars that detect stress or unusual behaviour. Banta is hoping this means good job opportunities. He is dreaming of helping dogs that are suffering from separation-related distress or cats that are acting aggressively because of boredom.

At the moment, Banta is doing an online course about socialization. He is watching videos of puppies learning to meet new people and other animals. He is taking notes carefully because he knows that good early socialization can prevent many problems later. His phone is buzzing – it's a message from his tutor: "Are you coming to the webinar about pet longevity this evening?" Banta smiles and replies, "Yes, I'm looking forward to it!"

Meanwhile, across the city, a woman is calling her vet. Her dog is whining constantly and is refusing to eat when she leaves for work. The vet is advising her to book a session with a behaviour specialist. "Don't wait," the vet says. "These issues are getting more common, but they are treatable with patience and the right plan."

Banta is feeling excited about his future. He is not just studying theory – he is applying for volunteer work at a local animal shelter where he is helping with basic training sessions. Every day, he is learning something new, and he is believing that understanding animal behaviour can make life better for pets and their owners.

As the rain is stopping outside, Banta is closing his laptop. Tomorrow he is visiting the shelter again. For now, though, he is enjoying a quiet moment with a cup of tea, thinking about all the pets he wants to help one day.

Questions:

Questions 1: What is Banta doing right now at the beginning of the story, and why isn't he going outside?

Questions 2: What behaviour problems are becoming more pervasive in pets these days, according to the story?

Questions 3: What is Banta planning to do after he graduates, and why does he think there will be good job opportunities?

Questions 4: What is Banta watching in his online course at the moment, and why is he taking notes carefully?

Questions 5: What is happening with the weather outside, and what is Banta planning to do tomorrow?

Answers:

Answer 1: Banta is sitting at his desk in his small apartment, surrounded by books and notes. He isn't going outside because it is raining heavily.

Answer 2: Behaviour problems such as aggression, anxiety, separation-related distress, and destructive chewing are becoming more pervasive in pets these days.

Answer 3: Banta is planning to become an animal behaviour consultant after he graduates. He thinks there will be good job opportunities because more people are treating their pets like family members, spending money on preventive care and emotional health, and the trend is growing fast due to better awareness and new technology.

Answer 4: Banta is watching videos of puppies learning to meet new people and other animals. He is taking notes carefully because he knows that good early socialization can prevent many problems later.

Answer 5: It is raining heavily outside at the moment, but the rain is stopping. Tomorrow Banta is visiting the animal shelter again.

28 Present continuous

Trudi's a student. She's **studying** animal behaviour. More people **are taking** their pets to the vet with behaviour problems these days, so Trudi should find a job when she graduates.



1 Form

POSITIVE	<i>I'm having lunch. He's watching TV. They're running away.</i>
NEGATIVE	<i>I'm not watching TV. She isn't having lunch. We aren't staying there.</i>
QUESTIONS	<i>Are you watching TV? (No, I'm not.) Is she running away? (Yes, she is.) What are they having for lunch?</i>

Some verbs change their spelling in the *-ing* form, e.g. *run* → *running*.

Spelling rules for *-ing* forms ➤ page 350

2 Actions happening now or around now

We use the present continuous for

- actions happening while we are speaking: *Hurry up. The taxi's waiting.*
'Are you watching TV?' 'No. I'm doing my homework.'
- actions happening around the time of speaking: *Trudi's studying animal behaviour.*
- temporary situations:

We're staying at my mother's while the builders are repairing the roof of our house.

With these uses of the present continuous, we often use time expressions like *now*, *at the moment*, *today*, *this week*, etc: *I can't talk for long because I'm cooking at the moment.*
Joe isn't working at home this week – he's at a conference in Germany.

We sometimes use the present continuous with *always* to criticise another person's actions.

In speech we stress *always* strongly in this type of sentence:

Yolanda's always calling me late at night. I'm getting really fed up with it.

'I've lost my keys. Can you come home and let me in?' 'You're always losing your keys!'

3 Changes and trends

We use the present continuous to talk about things that are changing as we speak:

Harry's been really ill but he's getting better now. Prices are going up again.

More people are taking their pets to the vet with behaviour problems these days.

4 Describing pictures

We use the present continuous to describe what is happening in pictures and photos:

In the photo on page 81, the scientists are tasting food. The woman in the middle is holding a cup...

Present continuous to talk about the future ➤ Unit 41.2

Practice

- 1 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Complete the phone conversation with present continuous forms of the verbs in brackets.
 2.55 Listen and check.

WILL Hi, Amy. It's Will. Are you busy?
 AMY Will, hi. No, (0) *I'm watching* (I / watch) TV – nothing important. It's good to hear from you.
 What (1) (you / do) these days?
 WILL That's why (2) (I / phone).
 I've just changed my job – I'm now a 'recipe tester'.
 AMY What fun! (3) (you / cook) all the time?
 WILL No, I've only just started, so (4) (I / work) with another tester.
 (5) (I / not / cook) the food yet!
 AMY It'll be really interesting, though. (6) (I / find) work really boring now.
 WILL Amy, (7) (you / always / complain) about your job, but it's really great!
 AMY Oh, yeah, standing in the street in the cold and wet, trying to persuade people to talk to me. Actually, (8) (I / not / spend) much time outside at the moment as (9) (I / plan) a new project. But I really want to get into acting.
 WILL Yes, (10) (you / always / say) that, but you never do anything about it ...



- 2 Look at the table of changes in household spending in the UK. Use the words below + *because* to write sentences. 2.56 Listen and check.

CHANGES IN HOUSEHOLD SPENDING	% CHANGE
Food and drink	+ 9.2 ↑
Clothes	- 6.6 ↓
Domestic fuel (electricity, gas, etc.)	+ 65.0 ↑
Transport	+ 9.4 ↑
Communication (equipment, phones, etc.)	- 28.5 ↓
Eating out	+ 13.5 ↑

- 0 domestic fuel / increase / most / oil prices / go up
Domestic fuel is increasing the most because oil prices are going up.
 1 communication / decrease / most / equipment / get cheaper

 2 the cost of clothes / decrease / the UK / buy / clothes from China

 3 transport costs / go up / fuel prices / get higher

 4 food and drink / go up / cost of transporting them / increase

- 3 Look at the photo on page 80 and describe what is happening.

In the photo, the vet is holding a kitten. He's ...

Answers

UNIT 28

- 1** 1 are you doing 2 I'm phoning 3 Are you cooking 4 I'm working 5 I'm not cooking
6 I'm finding 7 you're always complaining
8 I'm not spending 9 I'm planning
10 you're always saying
- 2** 1 Communication is decreasing the most because equipment is getting cheaper.
2 The cost of clothes is decreasing because the UK is buying clothes from China.
3 Transport costs are going up because fuel prices are getting higher.
4 Food and drink are going up because the cost of transporting them is increasing.

3 Model answer

In the photo, the vet is holding a kitten. He's looking at another kitten and talking to a young girl. The young girl is stroking the kitten and listening to the vet. Trudi is watching and making notes.