



# Learn English Through Stories

T Series

Upper - Intermediate

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## **Banta Learning Past Tenses 2 by K S Sandhu**

### **The Sky Fell on Karlsvile**

Yesterday afternoon, at exactly 3.30 p.m., the peaceful town of Karlsvile, Texas, experienced something unforgettable. A large meteorite crashed to Earth just outside the town. At that moment, many local people were doing ordinary things outdoors, and they all witnessed the bright streak across the sky.

Mr. Thompson was washing his old blue car in the driveway when he noticed a vivid light high above. He stopped immediately, soap dripping from his hands, because he didn't know what it was. Meanwhile, the Garcia family were driving home from the shopping mall, singing along to the radio. Suddenly, they heard a loud bang that shook the windows. When they looked up, they could see thick smoke rising from the middle of a nearby field.

It seems that whatever people were doing at the time, they stopped everything and rushed to the crash site. Mrs. Lopez was hanging laundry on the line, Mr. Patel was mowing his lawn, and teenagers were playing basketball in the park. All of them dropped what they were holding and ran towards the smoke. The streets filled with people in a state of chaos, shouting and pointing.

Local police arrived quickly and tried to control the crowd. Officer Ramirez later said that this was foolish because pieces of hot debris were still falling, but fortunately nobody was hurt. "Everyone was panicking and running without thinking," she explained. "We were warning them to stay back, but they were too excited to listen."

In the middle of all this excitement, young Anna was intending to meet her friends at the café. She was walking down Main Street when the sky lit up. She hesitated for a second, then joined the rush like everyone else. Later, she told her mother, "I wasn't feeling scared at first — it was like a movie. But when I got closer and saw the huge crater, I realized how cataclysmic it could have been."

Nearby, in a quiet house, Jana was recovering from a broken wrist she got months earlier while playing netball. She was sitting by the window, watching TV, when the bang made her jump. "I was always complaining about my wrist," she laughed afterwards, "but that noise made me forget the pain for a minute!"

As the sun set, the crowd slowly returned home. The field was smoking, and scientists were already arriving to study the meteorite. Karlsvile would never forget that afternoon — when the sky fell, ordinary life stopped, and the whole town came together in wonder.

### **Questions:**

Question 1: What were most people in Karlsvile doing when the meteorite crashed at 3.30 p.m. yesterday?

Question 2: Why did the Garcia family look up while they were driving home?

Question 3: What does Officer Ramirez say about the people who rushed to the crash site?

Question 4: What was Jana doing when she heard the loud bang from the meteorite?

Question 5: According to the story, why did Anna hesitate for a second before joining the rush?

### **Answers**

Answer 1: Most people were doing ordinary things outdoors (e.g. washing a car, driving, hanging laundry, mowing the lawn, playing basketball).

Answer 2: They heard a loud bang that shook the windows (and then they looked up and saw smoke).

Answer 3: She said it was foolish because pieces of hot debris were still falling, but fortunately nobody was hurt.

Answer 4: She was sitting by the window recovering from a broken wrist and watching TV.

Answer 5: She hesitated for a second because the sky lit up suddenly (then she joined the rush like everyone else).

# 31 Past continuous

## 1 Form

<b>POSITIVE</b>	<i>I was waiting for you. She was travelling in the Middle East. They were living at home.</i>
<b>NEGATIVE</b>	<i>I was not (wasn't) waiting long. He was not (wasn't) travelling then. We were not (weren't) living there.</i>
<b>QUESTIONS</b>	<i>Were you waiting long? (No, I wasn't.) Were they living at home? (Yes, they were.) Where was she travelling?</i>



Freya Stark was a travel writer who spent much of her life travelling in the Middle East. While she **was travelling**, she **was** constantly **taking** notes and **photographing** places and people, so her travel books are very personal.

Spelling rules for *-ing* forms ➤ page 350

## Pronunciation ➤ 1.12

## 2 Past actions and situations

We use the past continuous

- to describe an action or situation happening at or around a time in the past:  
*I **wasn't** feeling well that day, so I didn't go out with the others.*
- for temporary past situations:  
*We **were living** in Beijing at the time of the 2008 Olympics. (We don't live there now.)*
- for two actions/situations happening at the same time:  
*While Rob **was playing** his match, I **was waiting** in the car outside.*

As with the present continuous (➤ Unit 28.2), we can use the past continuous to criticise another person's actions, often with *always*:

*Karla **was always complaining** about something or other.*

## 3 Interrupted actions

We use the past continuous and the past simple together to show that one action (past simple) interrupts another action (past continuous):



## 4 Plans that did not happen

The past continuous of verbs like *plan*, *hope*, *intend* shows that the action did not happen:

*We **were planning** to come to your party, but Mike was ill so we couldn't make it.*

*I **was hoping** to study medicine, but my grades weren't high enough so I couldn't.*


*was going to* ➤ Unit 45.1

## 5 Background situations

We often use the past continuous to describe a 'background' situation in the past:

*When we arrived at the beach, **the sun wasn't shining**.*

We also use the past continuous to 'set the scene' for a story or account of something that happened; the actions that follow are in the past simple: *Dana **was living** in Istanbul that summer. Isik **was working** at the same school as her. As soon as they **met**, they immediately **got on** with each other ...*

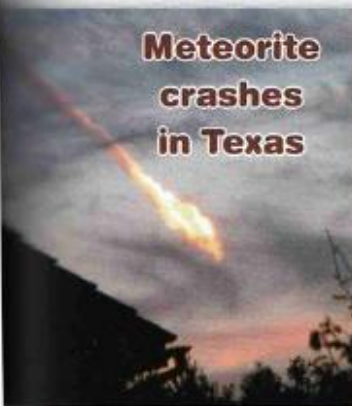
 We don't usually use continuous forms of state verbs (e.g. *like*, *see*, *hear*, *think*, *agree*). (➤ Unit 29.3)

## Practice

- 1 Write the words in the correct order to make sentences. Put the verbs in the past continuous.

- 0 at that man you why stare ? *Why were you staring at that man?*  
 1 not work during the strike there they .....  
 2 where you at the start of the year live ? .....  
 3 not feel yesterday evening I very well .....  
 4 heavily it rain and the rivers rise .....  
 5 she talk always while I watch TV .....

- 2 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Read the article and choose the correct words in *italics*.  
 2.61 Listen and check.



### Meteorite crashes in Texas

At 3.30 p.m. yesterday a large meteorite (0) *crashed* / *was crashing* to Earth near the small town of Karlsville, Texas. Many local people (1) *was* / *were* doing things outside and (2) *were seeing* / *saw* it happen. Here are a couple of their reports:

"I (3) *washed* / *was washing* my car when I (4) *noticed* / *was noticing* a bright light in the sky. I (5) *didn't know* / *wasn't knowing* what it was."

"We (6) *were* / *did* driving home from the shopping mall when we (7) *heard* / *were hearing* a loud bang. When we looked up we could see smoke coming from the middle of a nearby field."

It seems that whatever people (8) *did* / *were doing*, they (9) *stopped* / *were stopping* and (10) *rushed* / *were rushing* to the site of the crash. Local police said that this was foolish but that nobody was hurt.

- 3 **GRAMMAR IN USE** Complete the conversation with words and phrases from the box. There are four extra words or phrases. 2.62 Listen and check.

always asked became didn't know fell played was always asking was becoming  
 was hoping ~~was intending~~ was planning was playing wasn't knowing  
 weren't planning

ALLA When's your trip to Namibia? Isn't it soon?

SUE Well, I (0) *was intending* ..... to go in April, but everything's changed. You see, I  
 (1) ..... to go with Jana, from work, but she broke her wrist a while ago.

ALLA I (2) ..... that.

SUE Yes, she (3) ..... netball with some people from work in November when  
 she (4) ..... over. She landed on her wrist, and it was quite a bad break.

ALLA Mmm, but surely she's had enough time to recover?

SUE Yes, well, that wasn't the only problem. She was really starting to get on my nerves.

ALLA Oh, why?

SUE She (5) ..... stupid questions, things like: 'Should I take my hairdryer?'

We (6) ..... to go to Ibiza, after all!

ALLA Oh dear ...

SUE So ... the broken wrist (7) ..... a good excuse! Are you going away  
 this year?

ALLA Oh, well, I (8) ..... to visit my friend in Crete for a couple of weeks,  
 but we hadn't discussed it and she's just told me that she's coming back soon ...

## Answers

### UNIT 31

- 1** 1 They weren't working there during the strike.  
2 Where were you living at the start of the year?  
3 I wasn't feeling very well yesterday evening.  
4 It was raining heavily and the rivers were rising.  
5 She was always talking while I was watching TV.
- 2** 1 were 2 saw 3 was washing 4 noticed  
5 didn't know 6 were 7 heard 8 were doing  
9 stopped 10 rushed
- 3** 1 was planning 2 didn't know 3 was playing  
4 fell 5 was always asking 6 weren't planning  
7 became 8 was hoping





## Answers

### UNIT 30

- 1** 1 became 2 gave 3 went 4 heard 5 met  
6 sold 7 took 8 travelled
- 2** 1 became 2 sold 3 heard 4 joined 5 did  
not/didn't go 6 went 7 explored 8 traded  
9 travelled 10 gave 11 didn't enjoy 12 died
- 3** 1 The slave trade stopped over 200 years ago.  
2 Who did you like most at your last school?  
3 We didn't understand the lecture last week.  
4 When did you take your last exam?  
5 When Jack arrived, he told us the news.  
6 Why did you start learning English?
- 4 Model answers**
  - 1 *The last major festival in my country was last summer.*
  - 2 *I liked the history teacher most at my last school.*
  - 3 *I took my last exam just over a year ago.*
  - 4 *I started learning English because I had to study it at school.*