



Narrative Tenses: Emphasizing Duration: Past Perfect Continuous

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

1. Her eyes were red because she ____ for hours.
a) had been crying
b) cried
c) was crying
d) had cried
2. They were exhausted. They ____ all day without a break.
a) worked
b) had been working
c) were working
d) had worked
3. The ground was wet because it ____ since morning.
a) rained
b) was raining
c) had been raining
d) has been raining
4. He finally found a job. He ____ for one for six months.
a) looked
b) was looking
c) has been looking
d) had been looking
5. I was tired because I ____ since 5 AM.
a) had been driving
b) drove
c) was driving
d) had driven
6. The children were dirty. They ____ in the mud all afternoon.
a) played
b) had been playing
c) were playing
d) had played
7. By the time she arrived, we ____ for over an hour.
a) waited
b) were waiting
c) had been waiting
d) have been waiting
8. His hands were covered in paint. He ____ the fence.
a) painted
b) was painting
c) has been painting
d) had been painting
9. She knew the city well because she ____ there for ten years.
a) had been living
b) lived
c) was living
d) has been living
10. The athletes were breathing heavily. They ____ for two hours.
a) trained
b) had been training
c) were training
d) had trained
11. When the boss arrived, the employees ____ about the new policy for over an hour.
a) discussed
b) were discussing
c) had been discussing
d) have been discussing

12. He lost his voice because he ____ all day.
a) shouted
b) was shouting
c) has been shouting
d) had been shouting
13. Before the accident, they ____ for five hours without stopping.
a) had been driving
b) drove
c) were driving
d) had driven
14. The writer finally finished the book. She ____ on it for three years.
a) worked
b) had been working
c) was working
d) has been working
15. His clothes were soaking wet. He ____ in the rain.
a) walked
b) was walking
c) had been walking
d) had walked
16. They were hungry because they ____ since breakfast.
a) didn't eat
b) weren't eating
c) haven't been eating
d) hadn't been eating
17. The students were well-prepared. They ____ for the exam for weeks.
a) had been studying
b) studied
c) were studying
d) have been studying
18. I could tell she ____ because her face was flushed.
a) ran
b) had been running
c) was running
d) has been running
19. By midnight, the neighbors ____ loud music for hours.
a) played
b) were playing
c) had been playing
d) have been playing
20. The detective solved the case. He ____ it for months.
a) investigated
b) was investigating
c) has been investigating
d) had been investigating



Answers

1. a) had been crying
2. b) had been working
3. c) had been raining
4. d) had been looking
5. a) had been driving
6. b) had been playing
7. c) had been waiting
8. d) had been painting
9. a) had been living
10. b) had been training
11. c) had been discussing
12. d) had been shouting
13. a) had been driving
14. b) had been working
15. c) had been walking
16. d) hadn't been eating
17. a) had been studying
18. b) had been running
19. c) had been playing
20. d) had been investigating



Explanations

1. “had been crying” (a)

Past Perfect Continuous emphasizes the duration of crying that caused the visible result.

2. “had been working” (b)

Past Perfect Continuous emphasizes the continuous duration of work that led to exhaustion.

3. “had been raining” (c)

'Since morning' emphasizes duration, requiring Past Perfect Continuous.

4. “had been looking” (d)

The duration of the job search before finding one requires Past Perfect Continuous.

5. “had been driving” (a)

'Since 5 AM' emphasizes duration, explaining why the speaker was tired.

6. “had been playing” (b)

Past Perfect Continuous explains the ongoing activity that caused the visible result.

7. “had been waiting” (c)

'For over an hour' emphasizes duration before her arrival.

8. “had been painting” (d)

Past Perfect Continuous explains the activity that caused the paint on his hands.

9. “had been living” (a)

'For ten years' emphasizes the duration of living that gave her knowledge.

10. “had been training” (b)

The duration of training explains why they were breathing heavily.

11. “had been discussing” (c)

'For over an hour' emphasizes the duration of the discussion before the boss arrived, requiring Past Perfect Continuous.

12. “had been shouting” (d)

The continuous shouting caused the visible result of losing his voice.

13. “had been driving” (a)

'For five hours' emphasizes the dangerous duration before the accident.

14. “had been working” (b)

'For three years' emphasizes the long duration of work before completion.

15. “had been walking” (c)

Past Perfect Continuous explains the activity that caused the wet clothes.

16. “hadn't been eating” (d)

Negative Past Perfect Continuous shows the lack of eating since breakfast.

17. “had been studying” (a)

'For weeks' emphasizes the duration of preparation before the exam.

18. “had been running” (b)

The flushed face is the visible result of the continuous running.

19. “had been playing” (c)

'For hours' before midnight emphasizes the annoying duration.

20. “had been investigating” (d)

'For months' emphasizes the duration of investigation before solving the case.