



Narrative Tenses:

Complete Narratives: All Four Tenses Combined

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

- It ___ heavily. The roads were slippery and traffic had come to a standstill.
a) was raining
b) rained
c) had rained
d) had been raining
- When she ___ the room, everyone stopped talking and stared at her.
a) was entering
b) entered
c) had entered
d) had been entering
- He was exhausted. He ___ all night to finish the report.
a) worked
b) was working
c) had been working
d) had worked
- The detective realized that the suspect ___ the country the day before.
a) left
b) was leaving
c) has left
d) had left
- While we ___ dinner, someone knocked on the door.
a) were having
b) had
c) had been having
d) have had
- She ___ him before at a conference, so she recognized him immediately.
a) met
b) had met
c) was meeting
d) had been meeting
- The streets were quiet. Everyone ___ inside because of the storm.
a) stayed
b) had stayed
c) was staying
d) had been staying
- By the time the fire brigade arrived, the building ___ for an hour.
a) burned
b) was burning
c) has been burning
d) had been burning
- I ___ my keys everywhere, but I couldn't find them.
a) searched
b) was searching
c) had searched
d) had been searching
- The children were covered in mud. They ___ outside all afternoon.
a) played
b) had been playing
c) were playing
d) had played
- When the power ___ out, we were in the middle of watching a movie.
a) was going
b) had gone
c) went
d) had been going

12. She couldn't join us because she ____ to another party already.
a) agreed
b) was agreeing
c) has agreed
d) had agreed
13. The old man ____ on a bench in the park when a pigeon landed on his shoulder.
a) was sitting
b) sat
c) had sat
d) had been sitting
14. He apologized because he ____ to call her the night before.
a) forgot
b) had forgotten
c) was forgetting
d) had been forgetting
15. Just as I ____ asleep, I heard a loud crash outside.
a) fell
b) had fallen
c) was falling
d) had been falling
16. They ____ for the concert for months before it was suddenly canceled.
a) prepared
b) were preparing
c) have been preparing
d) had been preparing
17. The moment the music ____, everyone rushed to the dance floor.
a) started
b) was starting
c) had started
d) had been starting
18. I knew something was wrong because she ____ all day.
a) didn't answer
b) hadn't been answering
c) wasn't answering
d) hadn't answered
19. While the teacher ____ the lesson, a student suddenly fainted.
a) explained
b) had explained
c) was explaining
d) had been explaining
20. By 10 PM, she ____ three chapters and was ready to stop.
a) wrote
b) was writing
c) has written
d) had written



Answers

1. a) was raining
2. b) entered
3. c) had been working
4. d) had left
5. a) were having
6. b) had met
7. c) was staying
8. d) had been burning
9. a) searched
10. b) had been playing
11. c) went
12. d) had agreed
13. a) was sitting
14. b) had forgotten
15. c) was falling
16. d) had been preparing
17. a) started
18. b) hadn't been answering
19. c) was explaining
20. d) had written



Explanations

1. “was raining” (a)

Past Continuous describes the ongoing weather that formed the background of the scene.

2. “entered” (b)

Past Simple for the main action that triggered the reaction.

3. “had been working” (c)

Past Perfect Continuous emphasizes the duration of work that caused exhaustion.

4. “had left” (d)

Past Perfect shows the leaving happened before the realization.

5. “were having” (a)

'While' + Past Continuous for the background activity when the knock occurred.

6. “had met” (b)

Past Perfect explains the earlier meeting that enabled recognition.

7. “was staying” (c)

Past Continuous describes the ongoing situation that explained the quiet streets.

8. “had been burning” (d)

'For an hour' emphasizes the duration before arrival, requiring Past Perfect Continuous.

9. “searched” (a)

Past Simple for the completed main action in the narrative.

10. “had been playing” (b)

Past Perfect Continuous explains the prolonged activity that caused the muddy clothes.

11. “went” (c)

Past Simple for the sudden interrupting event.

12. “had agreed” (d)

Past Perfect shows the agreement was made before the invitation.

13. “was sitting” (a)

Past Continuous describes the ongoing background action when the sudden event (the pigeon landing) occurred.

14. “had forgotten” (b)

Past Perfect for the earlier action that caused the need to apologize.

15. “was falling” (c)

'Just as' + Past Continuous shows the action was in progress when interrupted.

16. “had been preparing” (d)

'For months before' requires Past Perfect Continuous to emphasize duration.

17. “started” (a)

'The moment' + Past Simple indicates the exact trigger point.

18. “hadn't been answering” (b)

Negative Past Perfect Continuous emphasizes the worrying duration of no response.

19. “was explaining” (c)

'While' + Past Continuous for the background activity when the event occurred.

20. “had written” (d)

Past Perfect for the completed achievement by a past time.