Name _____ Date _____

Is, are, was, were

Helper words with -ing tell us what is going on, or was going on.

1 Learn



To say something is **going on**, we use a helper word and an **-ing** verb. The helper word shows if it is **now** or in the **past**.

NOW



The cat **is** sleeping.

PAST



The cat **was** sleeping.

Who?	Now	Past
one	**is**	**was**
more than one	**are**	**were**
I	**am**	**was**

Which helper? Right now, the dogs _____ running.

1. **One or more than one?** The dogs: more than one.
2. **Now or past?** "Right now" tells us it is now.
3. More than one, now: **are**. **The dogs are running.**

Flip's tip: people sometimes say **"we was"**, but in writing it is always **we were**. Say it like a little song: **we were, you were, they were!**

Warm up: draw a ring round the helper word that fits.

Mia **is** / **are** singing. The boys **is** / **are** jumping.

Grown-ups: you, we and they always go with **are** and **were**, even for one person ("you were"). Model "we were" in everyday talk; you don't need to correct every "we was" when your child speaks, but do in their writing.

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2 Try it together

a child and a grown-up, about 10 minutes



Freeze frame!

You need: a teddy or toy, a little space to move, and a pencil.

1. The grown-up acts something out, like brushing hair or stirring a pot. The child says what is going on: **"You are stirring."**
2. The grown-up stops still. The child says **"Freeze!"**, then says it in the past: **"You were stirring."**
3. Swap. The child acts and the grown-up says the sentences.
4. Make teddy do things too: **"Teddy is sitting." "Teddy was sitting."** Write some below.

What is going on? (now)	What was going on? (past)
You are stirring.	You were stirring.

Grown-ups: for teddy (one) the helpers are **is** and **was**; for "you" they are **are** and **were**. Point this out as you play.

3 Practise

A. It is happening **now**. Draw a ring round **is** or **are**.

The boys **is** / **are** playing.

Ava **is** / **are** reading.

The birds **is** / **are** singing.

Dad **is** / **are** cooking.

B. It happened in the **past**. Draw a ring round **was** or **were**.

We **was** / **were** swimming.

Sam **was** / **were** sleeping.

The ducks **was** / **were** quacking.

I **was** / **were** painting.

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C. Change each sentence into the **past**. Write it out.

The dog is barking. →

_____

We are walking to the park. →

_____

I am eating a pear. →

_____

D. Draw yourself doing something you like. Finish the sentence.

In my picture, I am

_____

_____

Now write it in the past: I was

_____

Challenge

Leo wrote: **"We was playing football."** Is that right? What should he write?

_____

_____

I can… Tick when you can.

- ☐ use is or are for something going on now
- ☐ use was or were for something going on in the past
- ☐ write "we were", not "we was"