Name _____ Date _____

# Fixing tense mix-ups

Choose one tense and keep to it all the way through.

## 1 Learn



Good writers choose **one tense** and stick to it. If one verb jumps to a different time, that's a **mix-up**. Let's be detectives and find it!



**Mix-up:** Yesterday, we went to the zoo and we see a lion.

**Fixed:** Yesterday, we went to the zoo and we **saw** a lion.

**How to check a sentence, step by step**

1. **Find the time clue.** Yesterday means the past.
2. **Find every verb.** Here there are two: **went** and **see**.
3. **Check each one.** Went is past. See is present: change it to **saw**.

**Flip's tip:** read your writing out loud. If one verb sounds like it is in a different time, look at it again.

**Warm up:** draw a ring round the two verbs. Are they past or present?

Mia ran to the gate and waved. past / present

**Grown-ups:** a story can be in the past or the present tense; what matters is that it stays in the same one. Mix-ups are very common in children's writing, so reading aloud together is the best check.

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## 2 Try it together a child and a grown-up, about 10 minutes



### Story detectives

**You need:** a story book from home and a pencil.

1. Read a page of the book together. Find three verbs and write them below.
2. Is each verb past or present? Is the story told in the past or the present tense?
3. The grown-up tells that page again in their own words, but sneaks in one mix-up, like **"The bear walked into the woods and sees a bee."**
4. The child says **"Mix-up!"** and fixes it: **"saw a bee"**. Then swap.

| Verb we found | Past or present? |
|---|---|
| | |
| | |
| | |

Our book is told in the _____ tense.

**Grown-ups:** most picture books are in the past tense (said, went, looked), but some are in the present. Either is fine: the clue is that the author keeps to one.

## 3 Practise

**A.** One verb is in the wrong tense. Draw a ring round it, then write it the right way.

Last week, Sam baked a cake and eats it.

It should be: _____

Every day, Ava wakes up and brushed her teeth.

It should be: _____

Yesterday, we went to the beach and swim in the sea.

It should be: _____

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**B.** Leo's story is in the past tense, but it has **3 mix-ups**. Ring them, then write them the right way.

Yesterday, Leo and his dad go to the farm. They saw cows and pigs. Leo feeds the goats. Then they had a picnic and Dad drinks some lemonade. It was a great day!

1. _____ 2. _____ 3. _____

**C.** Write two sentences about what you did last weekend. Then ring your verbs. Are they all in the past?

**D.** Draw a line from each start to the ending in the **same tense**.

| | |
|---|---|
| Yesterday, Mia went to the shop ● | ● and gives it a drink. |
| Every day, Leo feeds the cat ● | ● and bought some bread. |

## Challenge

Mia says: **"Stories always have to be in the past tense."** Is she right? What do you think?

## I can… Tick when you can.

- [ ] find the time clue and the verbs in a sentence
- [ ] spot a verb in the wrong tense and fix it
- [ ] keep my own writing in one tense