

Practice Test Topics 30, 32, 33 & 34: Tense, aspect, mood

ACTIVITY 1

Put the verbs in brackets in these passages into the appropriate form. In some cases you may need the help of an auxiliary modal verb. Be careful with the position of adverbs, and make sure you read the whole texts before attempting an answer.

A.

- "Do you know that Napoleon (get) married yesterday?"

- "Really? I (hope) it (be, not) to that awful girl Josephine. I (meet) her two months ago, and she (strike) me as the most arrogant woman I (ever, see)".

- "Well, I'm afraid she (become) Mrs Bonaparte! After all, he (know) her for a long time, and even though their temperaments (be) different, I (think) that they (be) reasonably happy. Anyway, it (be) a very splendid wedding, except that Napoleon (drop) the ring as he (put) it on Josephine's finger. They (go) to Elba for their honeymoon tomorrow morning; (you, be) there?"

- "No, but I (believe) it's very beautiful at this time of the year; anyway, it's time Napoleon (have) a holiday - he (work) too hard recently".

- "I agree with you. Why (he, want) to invade England next month in any case? If I (be) him, I (leave) the English to their fish and chips".

B.

I (feel) rather poorly lately, so this morning at nine I (go) to see my doctor. I (find) him alone in his waiting-room, where he (stand) surveying a pile of well-thumbed magazines. "All alone?" I (say). "What (you, do) with your patients? (you, cure) them all?" - "No", he (say). "The reason why people (not, crowd) into this room now is that on Wednesdays I (not, begin) my consultations here until half past ten. Such (be) my habit for the last twenty-five years" - "I'm so sorry. I (come) too early", I said, "I'll go away and come back later". - "Oh, no. I (prefer) early patients to late ones. In the course of my practice I (notice) that late-comers (be) usually not serious cases. Many people (come) to a doctor for sympathy, you (know). They are like a dog that once (come) here with a sore paw. I (bandage) it for him and while I (do) this he looked at me with great lonely eyes. He (come) back the next day and every day

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until his paw was well. I (find) out that his master was dead and a kindly old couple (look) after the dog. He (miss) his master and (want) special sympathy. So, although he was well, he (take) to coming to see me two or three times a week. He is old now but he (still, come)".

ACTIVITY 2

Explain the difference in meaning between the sentences in the following pairs. Justify it in grammatical terms.

- a) My son always plays football on Sundays.
My son is always playing football on Sundays.
- b) The unfortunate child drowned.
The unfortunate child was drowning.
- c) Who has been drinking my beer?
Who has drunk my beer?
- d) He's being very foolish.
He is very foolish.
- e) Jane wears glasses.
Why aren't you wearing your glasses, Jane?
- f) She was eating the baby's meal.
She ate the baby's meal.
- g) His brother has been blind all his life.
His brother was blind all his life.
- h) Now, where have I put my pen?
Now, where did I put my pen?

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- i) Wait till I have finished.
Wait till I finish.
- j) The little girl was jumping when the teacher entered the room.
The little girl jumped when the teacher entered the room.
- k) Have you seen *Titanic*?
Did you see *Titanic*?

ACTIVITY 3

Comment on the use of the subjunctive in the following sentences. Suggest a less formal alternative where possible.

1. We suggest that this applicant apply next year.
2. If I were feeling over-tired, I wouldn't go on.
3. I would much rather we stayed at home this evening.
4. Be that as it may, our expenditure is bound to increase.
5. It is highly desirable that every effort be made to reduce expenditure and that every member of the staff economize wherever possible.
6. The Committee recommends that the annual subscription be increased to three pounds.
7. Is it not time we set our own house in order?

ACTIVITY 4

Choose the best answers in this dialogue.

A: Why didn't you go to work yesterday?

B: I (needn't have gone / didn't need to go / mustn't go / couldn't have gone).

A: Actually I thought you always worked on Tuesday evenings?

B: I (might / must / would / used to) years ago, but not now, thank goodness. In fact at one time I (ought to / had to / must / was to) work two evenings a week.

A: That (can't have been / couldn't be / mustn't be / shouldn't have been) very pleasant.

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B: Oh it wasn't so bad. I had lots of friends there. We (might have / will have had / would have / would have had) lots of fun. Looking back, I find it odd that I (would enjoy / I would have enjoyed / I should have enjoyed / ought to have enjoyed) evening work so much.

A: But now, am I right?, you (may not / mustn't / needn't / used not to) work evenings.

B: That's right.

A: Of course. You did tell me. I (could remember / may have remembered / should have remembered / might remember).

ACTIVITY 5

Read the following text first to get a sense of what is said. Then fill in the banks with the appropriate modal verb.

Dr Faustus was sitting quietly in his study one winter evening when there was a knock at the door. '..... I come in?' said a soft, distinguished voice. Faustus looked up from his book and saw that the door was ajar: heleft it open when he came in. 'I made sure it was shut' he grumbled to himself. 'Oh, all right,' he said moodily, 'come in if you' 'Thank you, you're too kind,' said the voice. And a tall stranger, dressed in black, who have come straight out of a stage melodrama stepped into the room.

Faustus looked at him carefully and scarcely suppress a shiver when he saw the ice-cold light in the blue eyes which belied the smile on the lips of the stranger. 'Perhaps I tell you that I'm here on business,' he said. 'I hope we'll get it over quickly -I've go to another appointment in an hour.' 'Well,' replied Dr. Faustus calmly, 'I think we (not, probably) take as long as that. I've got an idea I know what you've come about.' 'Oh good,' replied the tall dark man, 'that makes things much easier. I (not) remind you, then, of the agreement we made some years ago.' 'No, you don't,' replied Faustus, 'but I as well tell you that I have no intention of keeping my part of the bargain. So you (not) come here at all tonight -your journey was quite unnecessary.'

As soon as the words were out of his mouth, Faustus knew he (not) uttered them. The room suddenly felt cold, very cold. ('What's happening?' thought Faustus in fright. 'The fire gone out, but I don't think it has.') At Faustus's words the stranger's eyes narrowed and his voice took on a hard edge: 'Really?' he said softly but menacingly. 'I'm afraid you be under some misapprehension: I have the agreement here, signed in your blood; so you see, there's no doubt about it -you get out of it.' And he stretched out a bony hand and took Faustus by the wrist. At the touch of the ice-cold flesh Faustus help crying out with fear. The stranger looked pained: you make such a noise? he

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said. 'It gets on my nerves so. No, please come along quietly, you?' 'Keep away from me! shouted Faustus hysterically; 'you take me yet' 'Oh,!?' said the stranger. 'No, it's not twelve o'clock yet.'

At that moment the church clock in the square outside began to chime. Faustus collapsed sobbing on the floor. 'I don't want to go! I don't want to go! he mumbled. 'You thought of that before you made the agreement' said the stranger calmly. And with a terrific pull he lifted Faustus off the floor. Faustus still struggled, but the stranger get him down the stairs into a big black coach, drawn by six black horses. Despite the cold, the horses were sweating: they come from somewhere warm -where it possibly be? And where was the stranger taking Faustus?

ACTIVITY 6

Translate the following sentences into English, with special attention to the verb forms.

1. ¿Has oído lo que le acabo de decir a tu hermana? Le vengo diciendo lo mismo desde hace una semana.
2. "Aún no ha venido la profesora", dijo el director.
3. Lleva lloviendo desde el lunes; espero que el fin de semana haga buen tiempo.
4. La camisa que compré la semana pasada ha encogido mucho.
5. Vivo aquí desde que mi madre murió hace 8 años.
6. He encontrado la bufanda que creía haber perdido.
7. Si tuviera dinero, me compraría una casa en el campo.
8. Cuando se jubile el mes que viene, llevará enseñando 50 años en esta escuela.

ANSWER KEY

ACTIVITY 1

Put the verbs in brackets in these passages into the appropriate form. In some cases you may need the help of an auxiliary modal verb. Be careful with the position of adverbs, and make sure you read the whole texts before attempting an answer.

A.

- "Do you know that Napoleon **GOT** (get) married yesterday?"

- "Really? I **HOPE** (hope) it **WASN'T/ISN'T/HASN'T BEEN** (be, not) to that awful girl Josephine. I **MET** (meet) her two months ago, and she **STRUCK** (strike) me as the most arrogant woman I **HAD EVER SEEN** (ever, see)".

- "Well, I'm afraid she **HAS BECOME** (become) Mrs Bonaparte! After all, he **HAS KNOWN** (know) her for a long time, and even though their temperaments **ARE/MAY BE** (be) different, I **THINK** (think) that they **WILL BE/COULD BE/CAN BE/MAY BE/MIGHT BE** (be) reasonably happy. Anyway, it **WAS** (be) a very splendid wedding, except that Napoleon **DROPPED** (drop) the ring as he **WAS PUTTING** (put) it on Josephine's finger. They **ARE GOING** (go) to Elba for their honeymoon tomorrow morning; **HAVE YOU BEEN** (you, be) there?"

- "No, but I **BELIEVE** (believe) it's very beautiful at this time of the year; anyway, **it's time** Napoleon **HAD** (have) a holiday - he **HAS BEEN WORKING** (work) too hard recently".

- "I agree with you. Why **DOES HE WANT/WOULD HE WANT** (he, want) to invade England next month in any case? If I **WERE/WAS**¹ (be) him, I **WOULD LEAVE** (leave) the English to their fish and chips".

B.

I **HAVE BEEN FEELING/HAD BEEN FEELING** (feel) rather poorly lately, so this morning at nine I **WENT** (go) to see my doctor. I **FOUND** (find) him alone in his waiting-room, where he **WAS STANDING** (stand) surveying a pile of well-thumbed magazines. "All alone?" I **SAID** (say). "What **DO YOU DO/HAVE YOU DONE/DID YOU DO** (you, do) with your patients? **DO YOU CURE/HAVE YOU CURED** (you, cure) them all?" - "No", he **SAID** (say). "The reason why people **DO NOT CROWD/ARE NOT CROWDING** (not, crowd) into this room now is that on Wednesdays I **DON'T BEGIN** (not, begin) my consultations here until half past ten. Such **HAS BEEN** (be) my habit for the last twenty-five years" - "I'm so sorry. I **HAVE COME** (come) too early", I said, "I'll go away and come back later". - "Oh, no. I **PREFER** (prefer) early patients to late ones. In the course of my practice I **HAVE NOTICED** (notice) that late-comers **ARE** (be) usually not serious cases. Many people **COME** (come) to a doctor for sympathy, you **KNOW** (know). They are like a dog that once **CAME** (come) here with a sore paw. I **BANDAGED** (bandage) it for him and while I **WAS DOING** (do) this he looked at me with great lonely eyes. He **CAME/WOULD COME** (come) back the next day and every day until his paw was well. I **FOUND** (find) out that his master was dead and a kindly old couple **LOOKED** (look) after the dog. He **MISSED** (miss) his master and **WANTED** (want) special sympathy. So, although he was well, he **TOOK** (take) to coming to see me two or three times a week. He is old now but he **STILL COMES** (still, come)".

Comentado [Office1]: Note the expression *it's (high) time*. It allows the following two structures:
It's (high) time we left (hypothetical past)
It's (high) time (for us) to leave

¹ *Were* is the "grammatically correct" option, but if we look at language descriptively, *was* is more commonly used.

ACTIVITY 2

Explain the difference in meaning between the sentences in the following pairs. Justify it in grammatical terms.

The answer key for this exercise provides you with the **key ideas** that **must** be included in your answer. However, if this type of question came up in the exam –highly unlikely–, your answers must be more carefully elaborated, and you should expound wherever possible. You might also want to use further examples to support your explanation.

- a) My son **always plays** football on Sundays.
My son **is always playing** football on Sundays.

Topic 32; section 3.1.2.

The propositional meaning is the same in both sentences. The only difference lies in the grammatical modification of aspect (progressive vs. non-progressive).

The use of the progressive in the second sentence means that the speaker is personally, emotionally involved. Depending on the context, the connotations attached to this personal involvement can be positive or negative.

The present simple in the first sentence presents it in a neutral form.

- b) The unfortunate child **drowned**.
The unfortunate child **was drowning**.

Topic 30; section 3.1.

In the first sentence the child unfortunately drowned, whereas in the second sentence all we know is that he was drowning at a certain point, but we don't know how the scene ended.

This is explained grammatically because of the aspectual difference between the simple (non-progressive) and continuous (progressive) forms. In the first sentence the action is seen as a whole, as a global event, which means that we know how it ended. In the second sentence, however, the action is seen in the middle of a process; we only focus on a specific point in its development. Therefore, we don't know how the scene eventually finished.

- c) Who **has been drinking** my beer?
Who **has drunk** my beer?

In the first sentence, there is some beer left, whereas there is none in the second sentence.

This is explained by the fact that with the present perfect simple (non-progressive), the speaker emphasises "achievement", whereas with the present perfect continuous (progressive) we emphasise "process" (action-in-the-middle-of-the-process; not finished).

- d) He's **being** very foolish.
He **is** very foolish.

Topic 30; section 3.1.

The fact that we are using a stative verb (*to be*) in the continuous form implies a change of the basic meaning of the verb. Whereas the sentence *he is very foolish* conveys a permanent state, converting *be* into a dynamic verb (*he's being very foolish*) means that it is only a temporary condition.

e) Jane wears glasses.

Why aren't you wearing your glasses, Jane?

Topic 30; section 3.1.

The first sentence means that she always wears glasses (habitual reference), whereas in the second one I'm referring to the moment 'now' (temporary reference).

This has been grammatically explained by suggesting that non-progressive forms (present simple in this case) express habitual activities, whereas progressive forms (present continuous in this case) express temporariness.

EXTRA:

It is true that the use of the simple or continuous forms favours these interpretations, but in a different context both forms can be used with the opposite references:

- *Why are you always wearing these glasses?* (habitual reference)
- *If you wear your glasses now, I won't go out with you* (temporary reference).

Therefore, we must ascertain that the semantic contrast 'habitual action' / 'temporary action' is not systematically expressed by the grammatical modification of aspect, although it is generally the case.

f) She was eating the baby's meal.

She ate the baby's meal.

Same as letters b) and c), explained by the grammatical modification of aspect: progressive and non-progressive forms.

Since the progressive form sees the action in the middle of its process, in the first sentence it is very likely that there is some food left. In the second sentence, however, she ate all of the baby's meal, since we are seeing the action in its entirety, as a global event.

g) His brother has been blind all his life.

His brother was blind all his life.

In the first sentence his brother is still alive, whereas in the second once he's deceased. This difference in meaning is explained grammatically attending to the modification of tense (remote vs. non-remote) and aspect (phased vs. non-phased).

In the first example, the present perfect is non-remote and phased. The grammatical modification of remoteness is helpful, but not determining, since non-remote does not always refer to 'present time'.

However, the grammatical modification of aspect (phased – non-phased) is indeed crucial. This means that the action has two points of reference: in this case, the past and the present. This means that the action started in the past, but still continues in the present. Therefore, he's still alive.

In the second sentence, the past simple is remote and non-phased. What matters is the fact that it does not have two points of reference. This means that the action is only related to the past, and it is finished now.

h) Now, where have I put my pen?

Now, where did I put my pen?

In this case the meaning of the two sentences is the same. On many occasions, the past simple and the present perfect can indeed report the same reality: *did you wash the dishes? Have you washed the dishes?* In any case, the use of the perfect form brings the action closer to the present moment ('Recent past time').

i) Wait till I have finished.

Wait till I finish.

Topic 34; section 3.6.

In both cases we have a subordinate temporal clause introduced by *till* and whose time reference is the future. The only difference between both is the grammatical modification of aspect (phased vs. non-phased).

Since the first sentence contains the perfect perfect simple, which is phased, there are two points of reference: one in the past, the other in the present. In this context, the speaker wants to specify that the action which will be finished in the future has already started at the time of speaking.

When the speaker is not interested in specifying that the action has already started, the present simple is used – non-phased; one point of reference (the present).

j) The little girl was jumping when the teacher entered the room.

The little girl jumped when the teacher entered the room.

3.1.1. Topic 33

Both sentences refer to the past time, but the use of the progressive modification with perfective verbs such as *jump* implies the idea of repetition. This way, the first sentence implies a repetitive action, whereas in the second sentence the little girl jumped once only.

k) Have you seen *Titanic*?

Did you see *Titanic*?

The difference in meaning between these two sentences lies in the difference between definite (*did you see*) and indefinite (*have you seen*) past time reference.

The present perfect locates the action at some unspecific time before the moment of speaking, but without pointing to any particular occasion. That is, it implies indefinite reference and can be understood with the idea of 'at any time'.

The past simple, however, locates the action at a specific point in the past. The question *did you see Titanic* would be set within a context which clarifies the occasion we are referring to.

ACTIVITY 3

Comment on the use of the subjunctive in the following sentences. Suggest a less formal alternative where possible.

1. We suggest that this applicant apply next year. MANDATIVE

We suggest that this applicant applied next year / We suggest this applicant should apply next year.

Comentado [Office2]: Remember that the term "perfective verbs" in this context is to be understood as "punctual verbs" (as opposed to "durative"). Please, check p. 2 in topic 31.

Comentado [Office3]: Remember that this *should* has nothing to do with advice. It's called "putative should", and it has a hypothetical meaning.

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2. If I were feeling over-tired, I wouldn't go on. HYPOTHETICAL
If I was feeling over-tired, I wouldn't go on.
3. I would much rather we stayed at home this evening. HYPOTHETICAL PAST
I would have preferred us to stay at home this evening.
4. Be that as it may, our expenditure is bound to increase. FORMULAIC
At any rate/all the same, our expenditure is bound to increase.
5. It is highly desirable that every effort be made to reduce expenditure and that every member of the staff economize wherever possible. MANDATIVE
It is highly desirable that every effort should be made/was made to reduce expenditure and for every member of the staff to economize wherever possible.
6. The Committee recommends that the annual subscription be increased to three pounds. MANDATIVE
*The Committee recommends the annual subscription to be increased to three pounds.
The Committee recommends increasing the annual subscription to three pounds.*
7. Is it not time we set our own house in order? HYPOTHETICAL PAST
Shouldn't we set our own house in order?

ACTIVITY 4

Choose the best answers in this dialogue.

A: Why didn't you go to work yesterday?

B: I (needn't have gone / **didn't need to go** / mustn't go / couldn't have gone).

A: Actually I thought you always worked on Tuesday evenings?

B: I (might / must / would² / **used to**) years ago, but not now, thank goodness. In fact at one time I (ought to / **had to** / must / was to) work two evenings a week.

A: That (**can't have been** / couldn't be / mustn't be / shouldn't have been) very pleasant.

B: Oh it wasn't so bad. I had lots of friends there. We (might have / will have had / **would have** / would have had) lots of fun. Looking back, I find it odd that I (would enjoy³ / I would have enjoyed / I **should have enjoyed** / ought to have enjoyed) evening work so much.

A: But now, am I right?, you (may not / mustn't / **needn't** / used not to) work evenings.

B: That's right.

A: Of course. You did tell me. I (could remember / may have remembered / **should have remembered** / might remember).

² *Would* is possible grammatically speaking. However, it is only used in formal, literary contexts, which is not the case here.

³ See footnote 2.

ACTIVITY 5

Read the following text first to get a sense of what is said. Then fill in the banks with the appropriate modal verb.

Dr Faustus was sitting quietly in his study one winter evening when there was a knock at the door. '**MAY** I come in?' said a soft, distinguished voice. Faustus looked up from his book and saw that the door was ajar: he **MUST HAVE** left it open when he came in. 'I **SHOULD HAVE** made sure it was shut' he grumbled to himself. 'Oh, all right,' he said moodily, 'come in if you **WILL**' 'Thank you, you're too kind,' said the voice. And a tall stranger, dressed in black, who **MIGHT** have come straight out of a stage melodrama stepped into the room.

Faustus looked at him carefully and **COULD** scarcely suppress a shiver when he saw the ice-cold light in the blue eyes which belied the smile on the lips of the stranger. 'Perhaps I **SHOULD** tell you that I'm here on business,' he said. 'I hope we'll **BE ABLE TO** get it over quickly -I've **TO** go to another appointment in an hour.' 'Well,' replied Dr. Faustus calmly, 'I think we **WON'T PROBABLY** (not, probably) take as long as that. I've got an idea I **MIGHT** know what you've come about.' 'Oh good,' replied the tall dark man, 'that makes things much easier. I **DON'T HAVE TO** (not) remind you, then, of the agreement we made some years ago.' 'No, you don't,' replied Faustus, 'but I **MIGHT** as well tell you that I have no intention of keeping my part of the bargain. So you **SHOULD NOT HAVE/DIDN'T HAVE TO COME/NEEDN'T HAVE COME** (not) come here at all tonight -your journey was quite unnecessary.'

As soon as the words were out of his mouth, Faustus knew he **SHOULD NOT HAVE** (not) uttered them. The room suddenly felt cold, very cold. ('What's happening?' thought Faustus in fright. 'The fire **COULD HAVE** gone out, but I don't think it has.') At Faustus's words the stranger's eyes narrowed and his voice took on a hard edge: 'Really?' he said softly but menacingly. 'I'm afraid you **MUST** be under some misapprehension: I have the agreement here, signed in your blood; so you see, there's no doubt about it -you **CAN'T** get out of it.' And he stretched out a bony hand and took Faustus by the wrist. At the touch of the ice-cold flesh Faustus **COULDN'T** help crying out with fear. The stranger looked pained: **MUST YOU** make such a noise? he said. 'It gets on my nerves so. No, please come along quietly, **WILL** you?' 'Keep away from me! shouted Faustus hysterically; 'you **CAN'T** take me yet' 'Oh, **CAN'T** I?' said the stranger. 'No, it's not twelve o'clock yet.'

At that moment the church clock in the square outside began to chime. Faustus collapsed sobbing on the floor. 'I don't want to go! I don't want to go! he mumbled. 'You **SHOULD HAVE** thought of that before you made the agreement' said the stranger calmly. And with a terrific pull he lifted Faustus off the floor. Faustus still struggled, but the stranger **WAS ABLE TO** get him down the stairs into a big black coach, drawn by six black horses. Despite the cold, the horses were sweating: they **MUST HAVE** come from somewhere warm -where **MIGHT** it possibly be? And where was the stranger taking Faustus?

ACTIVITY 6

Translate the following sentences into English, with special attention to the verb forms.

1. ¿Has oído lo que le acabo de decir a tu hermana? Le vengo diciendo lo mismo desde hace una semana.
Have you heard what I('ve) just told your sister? I've been telling her the same (thing) for a week.
2. "Aún no ha venido la profesora", dijo el director.
"The teacher has not arrived yet", said the headmaster / the headmaster said.

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3. Lleva lloviendo desde el lunes; espero que el fin de semana haga buen tiempo.
It's been raining since Monday; I hope the weather is fine/looks up/clears up this weekend / by the weekend.
4. La camisa que compré la semana pasada ha encogido mucho.
The shirt I bought last week has shrunk quite a lot.
5. Vivo aquí desde que mi madre murió hace 8 años.
I've been living here since my mother died 8 years ago.
6. He encontrado la bufanda que creía haber perdido.
I've found the scarf I thought I had lost.
7. Si tuviera dinero, me compraría una casa en el campo.
If I had money, I would buy (me/myself) a house in the countryside.
8. Cuando se jubile el mes que viene, llevará enseñando 50 años en esta escuela.
By the time he retires next month, he will have been teaching for 50 years in this school.