Unit 8 · Talking about the Past

STUDY NOTES

The unit in one line

- **talk about the past**: the **past simple** (*They **set off** early.*), **used to** for old habits (*People **used to** walk everywhere.*)
- a story (*A Trip to a Village*), an autobiography (**Anuradha Koirala**); **and, but, although, however**; the three sounds of **-ed**; a fable from a picture outline

Getting started

- **question** with **did** + plain verb, **answer** with the past form:
  - *What **did** you **do** yesterday? → I **went** hiking.*
  - *I **visited** the zoo. I **watched** a film. I **ate** dal bhat.*
- **song** (*Return to Sender*, Elvis Presley, 1962): a letter given to the postman comes back, marked "no such address": the girl sent it back
- the song's pasts: give → **gave**, put → **put**, bring → **brought**, write → **wrote**
- verbs that don't change: *put, cut, hit, let, set, shut*

Reading I: A Trip to a Village

- the steps:
  1. three friends **set off** by car early for a holiday in a **mountain village**; tea at a **wayside café**; a **winding** road; the map says 15 miles
  2. night and **rain**, hard to see; 15 miles and no village: **obviously** a bad map
  3. 5 miles on the car stops: not **run out of** petrol (**on examination**), something else; they can't start it
  4. a night in the car: very little food, hardly any **room**, **uncomfortable**
  5. morning: a driver says the village is **just over the hill**; he **pulls** their car to the top, it rolls down to the village; a hotel and a good **breakfast**
  6. **the twist:** had they walked up the hill, they would have slept in a bed
- **true / false:** they stopped for tea; they **had** a map (a bad one); not out of petrol; an **uncomfortable** night; another car **pulled** theirs
- after tea they drove about **20 miles** (about 32 km; 1 mile ≈ 1.6 km)

Reading II: Anuradha Koirala (an autobiography)

- **autobiography** = your own life, written by you (*I*); **biography** = by someone else (*she*)
- **born 14 April 1949**; school at **St. Joseph Convent, Kalimpong** (India), where her **devotion** to social work began; **Mother Teresa** her greatest **inspiration**
- taught children around Kathmandu for **20+ years**: happy, but a **bigger calling**: girls and women **trafficked**
- **1993**: founded **Maiti Nepal** (माइती = a woman's parents' home, a safe place) for those who had **endured** great suffering
- **Maiti Nepal:** prevention and transit homes, **hospices**, a school; **1,000+** children a day; awareness, rescue, **apprehending** traffickers, legal help, **empowerment** of women; through her **determination**
- **numbers:**
  - **38** awards
  - **1999** Prabal Gorkha Dakshin Bahu Medal
  - **2006** Courage of Conscience Award
  - **2010 CNN Hero**: an honor for the **whole nation**
  - **5 September**: Nepal's anti-trafficking day

Key words

set off: start a journey.
wayside café: a small café beside the road.
winding: with many bends.
obviously: clearly.
run out of: use up all of something.
examination: looking at something very carefully.
room: space.
uncomfortable: not physically relaxed.
devotion: great care and support for something.
inspiration: what makes you want to do something.
endure: bear something painful.
hospice: a home caring for the very ill.
determination: what keeps you going.
apprehend: catch and arrest.
empowerment: giving somebody more power.
evil: morally bad and cruel.

Pronunciation: the three sounds of -ed

- decided by the **last sound** of the plain verb

Last sound	-ed sounds	Examples
t, d	/ɪd/ (an extra beat)	decided, wanted, demanded, nodded, planted
quiet: p, k, s, sh, ch, f	/t/	reached, stopped, asked, walked, pumped, practiced, jumped, finished, hatched, briefed
buzzing: vowels, l, n, r, m…	/d/	pulled, cheered, enjoyed, played, turned

- finger on the throat: no buzz → /t/, buzz → /d/

- only **t / d** add a beat: *asked* is one beat (askt)

Grammar I: and, but, although, however

Word	Job	Example
and	adds	*They went on, **and** then the car stopped.*
but	a contrast, in one sentence	*It was late, **but** we kept walking.*
although	starts the part that makes the other surprising	***Although** it was late, we kept walking.*
however	starts the second of two contrasting sentences	*It was late. **However,** we kept walking.*

- **although** first: comma after its part; or in the middle: *We kept walking although it was late.*
- **however**: a **full stop** or **semicolon** before, a **comma** after: *It was late; however, we kept walking.*
- after a **semicolon**, only *however* fits the gap
- a **reason** isn't a contrast:
  - *I feel tired **because** I went to bed late.*
  - *I went to bed early; **however**, I feel tired.*
- answers: *Although it was raining, we still went. · He was late **but** was allowed in. · She is rich **and** helpful. · I finished the homework, **although** it wasn't easy.*

Listening: Mary's weekend

- **Peter** and **Mary**, friends
- Mary on Saturday:
  - went shopping, **bought** a new dress
  - saw a film (*Jurassic Park III*)
  - **took** a shower at home
  - **ate** at the **Green Steak** with **Tom**; **enjoyed** the dinner
- Peter stayed home: he **had** a **cough and a fever**
- the questions: *What **did** you **buy**? **Did** you **enjoy** your dinner?*

Grammar II: used to and the past simple

used to + plain verb	past simple
a habit or state in the past that has **stopped**	**one action** at one time
*She **used to teach** children, but now she doesn't.*	*She **established** Maiti Nepal in 1993.*
*People **used to travel** on foot.*	*I **played** football yesterday.*

- negative and question: **didn't use to**, **Did** you **use to**…? (after *did*, no **d**)
  - *Dinesh **didn't use to like** watching sport.*
  - *My sister **used to have** short hair.*
- not with one time: ✗ *I used to play football yesterday.*
- **Charles and Beth**: went, attended, started, enjoyed, walked, was, talked, **weren't** (asleep), waited, were, told, put, were, was

Speaking

- **past habits:** *I used to sleep with my grandmother. I didn't use to eat green vegetables, but now I like saag.*
- **last week:** *What did you do last Tuesday?* → *I **helped** my mother make sel roti.*
- **picture story:** an old crane, the fish, a crab, a heap of **fish bones**; the crab asks *What did you do with the fish?*, the crane says *I ate them all*; the crab kills the crane

Writing

- **my last trip**: when → where → how → who → what → how you felt; questions with **did** + plain verb, answers in the past form
- **the crane and the crab** (Panchatantra), from cues, in the past:
  - *can no longer* → **could no longer**; *finds* → **found**; *tells* → **told**
  - join with *and, but, so, one day, at last*; give it a title
  - the crane **could** no longer catch fish, **starving**; he **told** the fish a fisherman would come; **carried** them off and **ate** them; a crab **asked** to go; the crab **noticed** the bones; the crab **killed** him with his **pincers**
- **project:** ask an elderly neighbor what they **used to / didn't use to** do; write what happens **now** beside each

Extra bit: the greedy dog (Aesop)

- **was**, searched, **found**, picked up, started, was, started, **saw**, **thought**, was, wanted, started, **fell**, opened, **lost**
- a hungry dog with a bone sees his reflection from a bridge, barks for the "other" bone, drops his own
- **lesson:** greedy for more, you may lose what you have; titles *The Greedy Dog* / *The Dog and Its Reflection*

COMMON MISTAKES

✗ What did you bought?
✓ What did you **buy**?

✗ I didn't went to school yesterday.
✓ I didn't **go** to school yesterday.

✗ Did you used to play kabaddi?
✓ Did you **use** to play kabaddi?

✗ We use to live in Hetauda.
✓ We **used** to live in Hetauda.

✗ I used to play football yesterday.
✓ I **played** football yesterday.

✗ I was tired, however, I finished my homework.
✓ I was tired; however, I finished my homework.

✗ asked as "ask-ed" (two beats)
✓ **askt** (one beat)