

ADVANCED NARRATIVE TENSES

B2 | Teens / Adults | Grammar Question Practice | 20-30 minutes

Tell a clear story with background, main events and earlier causes.

1. GET STARTED

Take turns asking and answering. Give details and ask a follow-up. You can invent personal details.

A: How did you end up on the wrong train?

B: I **was answering** a message and **didn't check** the destination. I'd **been rushing** all day.

A: Oh no. **Had you gone** very far before you noticed?

2. TELL THE WHOLE STORY

1. What unexpected event **happened** to you recently? Set the scene first.
2. What **were you doing** just before the main event? Who else was there?
3. What **had happened** earlier that affected the situation?
4. What **had you been doing** for some time before things changed?
5. How **did you react**? Explain the first two things you did.
6. What **happened** in the end? Did it change your plans afterwards?

Keep talking: What was happening around you? / Had anything gone wrong earlier? / And then?

3. A DIFFERENT POINT OF VIEW

Choose a prompt. Tell a complete story; invent details if necessary.

7. Describe a time someone **misunderstood** you. What **had you said**?
8. Tell a story about a surprise while you **were travelling**. What led up to it?
9. Describe a problem after you **had been preparing** something for weeks.
10. Tell a story about finding something you **had lost**. Why did it matter?

4. TELL IT FROM BOTH SIDES

Invent a mix-up involving two people. Explain what each person knew and what each had done.

One partner tells the story from the first person's view; the other retells it from the second's.

Example: I **was waiting** outside. Jo **had been looking** for me at the old entrance.

Compare the versions. Which earlier detail explains the misunderstanding?

Answer help: While ... / Earlier, ... had ... / ... had been ... / Eventually, ...

Remember: Past simple moves the story forward; past perfect establishes earlier events.