

Mixing It Up: Verb Tense Consistency

Directions for the teacher:

Step 1 – Ask students to list several possible replies to the question “How are you?” Ask them if the list changes if the question changes to “How are you doing?” If necessary, add a few replies to demonstrate the use of different verb forms:

I’m fine. Thank you.

I’ve been okay. How about you?

I’m doing well. Thanks.

I just got over being sick, but I feel just fine now.

Briefly discuss why it’s possible to answer with a verb form other than the one used in the question.

Step 2 – Have students complete Tasks A and B. Correct their work as a class. Explain all possibilities as needed.

Task A correct responses:

1. Don’t forget your book is due at the library.
 - a. I know. I’m going to return it today.
 - b. Oh yeah. Actually, I did forget. I’ll return it today.
2. Our essays on folklore are due on Monday.
 - a. I’ll finish mine this weekend.
 - ~~b. I’ve finished mine this weekend.~~
3. The professor keeps choosing stories with a moral.
 - a. Yeah. I noticed that, too.
 - b. Yeah. I’ve noticed, but I don’t mind.
4. You answered so many questions in class today. How did you know about all those stories?
 - a. I read a lot of fairytales and legends when I was a kid.
 - b. I had read some of them for another course, so a lot was already familiar.
5. What’s that?
 - a. Oh, it’s just something I’m working on for school this week.
 - b. Oh, it’s just something I’ve been working on these last few days.

Task B answers:

1. If I had a magic wand, I [would use] it.
2. When a brave knight goes into battle, he usually [wins].
3. I hope the princess [escapes / will escape] from the evil witch.
4. If a story has a witch, she usually [is] scary.
5. [Have you ever read / Did you ever read] *Rumpelstiltskin*?

Step 3 – Students may do Task C in pairs. They can share their work with the class or in groups.

Possible answers:

This tale follows the adventures of a prince and princess. The story begins as the young prince battles a fierce [dragon]. He [succeeds] and [rescues] the princess, who has been trapped in a [tower]. The two travel far and wide to find the necessary magical [weapons] that [will help] them protect their two kingdoms from the evil [sorcerer] who wants to rule both their lands.

Two winters ago, the prince and princess [fell] in love, but their fathers, the two kings of neighboring lands, [have disliked] each other their whole lives. It is only after the prince and princess [work] together to save the two kingdoms that their fathers make peace. The tale [teaches] the strength of unity.

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Task A. Circle the correct response(s).

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2. Our essays on folklore are due on Monday.
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 - b. I had read some of them for another course, so a lot was already familiar.
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 - a. Oh, it's just something I'm working on for school this week.
 - b. Oh, it's just something I've been working on these last few days.

Task B. Circle the correct verb forms. In some cases, there is more than one correct answer.

1. If I had a magic wand, I [would use / used] it.
2. When a brave knight goes into battle, he usually [won / wins].
3. I hope the princess [escapes / will escape] from the evil witch.
4. If a story has a witch, she usually [is / would be] scary.
5. [Have you ever read / Did you ever read] *Rumpelstiltskin*?

Task C. Complete the text. The words in blue will guide your choices.

This tale follows the adventures of a prince and princess. The story begins as the young prince battles a fierce _____ [person or creature]. He _____ [form of *succeed*] and _____ [form of *rescue*] the princess, who has been trapped in a _____ [place]. The two travel far and wide to find the necessary magical _____ [thing(s)] that _____ [form of *help*] them protect their two kingdoms from the evil _____ [person or creature] who wants to rule both their lands.

Two winters ago, the prince and princess _____ [form of *fall*] in love, but their fathers, the two kings of neighboring lands, _____ [form of *dislike*] each other their whole lives. It is only after the prince and princess _____ [form of *work*] together to save the two kingdoms that their fathers make peace. The tale _____ [form of *teach*] the strength of unity.