

Syntax and Grammar

Task A: *Present - Regular Past Tense Verbs*

Change the verbs from present tense to past tense below by adding – *ed* to the target verb/s. You can use the text as reference if needed. Encourage students to produce past tense verb exercises without first consulting the text. Example: '*Guff's heart flips like a fish when the bull mammoth suddenly stomps close to where he lies,*' becomes...*Guff's heart flipped like a fish when the bull mammoth suddenly stomped close to where he lay.*' The first exercise has been completed for you.

1. The dry grass pressed fierce into Guff's legs.

pressed

2. The mammoths graze on the long sweet grass, unaware of the hunters.

3. Above the hunters looms a mighty mammoth

4. The giant was close enough that the snort of its breath ripples Guff's hair.

5. The stink of its shaggy mane fills Guff's senses.

6. Sweat beads Guff's forehead.

7. Guff's heart thumps fierce.

8. Spears soar and buzz through the air like insects.

9. Guff tries to call him but his mouth fails to form the words.

10. Guff senses rather than sees something enormous shadow him.

11. The foggiest in Guff's head clears.

12. Guff shivers, huddling in his furs.

13. Guff slowly sorts his limbs and silently prepares his spear.

14. The monster snarls and bounds away.

Task B: *Present - Irregular Past Tense Verbs*

Change the verbs from present tense verbs to irregular past tense verbs. Again, you can use the text as reference if needed. Example: '*My forehead runs slick with sweat*' becomes... '*My forehead ran slick with sweat.*' The first exercise has been completed for you.

1. The dry grass pressed fierce into Guff's legs as he **lay** in the dirt.

The dry grass pressed fierce into Guff's legs as he lies in the dirt.

2. Guff runs blindly...

3. Guff gets to his feet.

4. Guff could hear shouts from members of the tribe...

5. Guff binds the bones with twine.

6. Guff stands very still.

7. Guff lifted the fish out of the water and **flings** it onto the riverbank.

8. Guff **sees** nothing.

9. Guff **throws** some dried leaves on the flame and gently **blows** on it.

10. The leaves **catch** fire.

11. Guff could **feel** the rhythmic crunch of its legs impact the ground just behind him.

12. The half-light before dark **creeps** with long fingers across the land.

13. Mountains **rise** sharp and **pitiless** on all sides.

Task C: *Choose the Correct Word*

Task C: *Correct Word*

Choose the correct word for each sentence. The first one has been completed as a guide.

1. Guff hunted the *bear*
with his spear. *bear* *bare*
2. Asa stuck _____
on her fishing line. *bait* *bate*
3. Guff ran until his _____
ached. *mussels* *muscles*
4. Guff cooked the _____
over the fire. *meet* *meat*
5. Utha couldn't see Guff in
the _____. *mist* *missed*
6. Guff slept through
the _____. *night* *knight*
7. Guff's leg was in _____
after his foot slipped down
a hole. *pain* *pane*
8. Guff gave a _____ of
fish to Asa. *peace* *piece*

9. Asa _____ the water
into a jug. *poored* *poured*
10. The saber tooth cat
hunted its _____. *pray* *prey*
11. The dark clouds opened
and it began to _____. *rain* *rein*
12. Asa made a trap to catch
the _____. *hair* *hare*
13. Guff waded through the
long _____. *reeds* *reads*
14. Utha _____ the boat
down the stream. *road* *rowed*
15. Asa _____ the seeds
in the ground. *sewed* *sowed*
16. Guff felt cold. The _____
was starting to turn. *weather* *whether*
17. Guff walked across the
_____ ground. *rough* *ruff*
18. Guff had _____ into
a strong young man. *grown* *groan*

19. Asa _____ the net
out of the water. *halled* *hailed*
20. Guff retreated as the
_____ cat advanced. *great* *grate*
21. Utha's _____ beat quickly
as he hunted the mammoth. *hart* *heart*
22. Asa picked a wild _____
from the field. *flour* *flower*
23. Guff was given his _____
spear by his proud father. *knew* *new*
24. Guff wanted to _____
as the cat approached. *flea* *flee*
25. Guff ducked as the eagle
_____ overhead. *flu* *flew*
26. Guff noticed that the _____
was about to change. *weather* *whether*
27. Asa _____ the rug until
it was clean. *beat* *beet*
28. Guff's tribe carefully approached
the _____ of mammoths. *heard* *herd*

Task D: *Syntax Exercises*

Create compound sentences from simple sentences using coordinating conjunctions.

The task for this exercise is to combine short simple sentences into compound sentences. Compound sentences are connected together by coordinating conjunctions such as *but*, *and*, *so*, etc. Encourage students to use *pronouns* for some sentences. For instance, “*Guff had greasy fingers so Guff cleaned his hands*,” looks better written as, “*Guff had greasy fingers so he cleaned his hands*.”

1. **and** The water was cold. The air was crisp.

Example: *The water was cold and the air was crisp.*

2. **but** Guff walked quickly. He didn’t get far.
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3. **so** The fish ate the bait. Asa caught the fish.
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4. **or** Guff could take his axe. Guff could take his spear.
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5. **yet** Asa fished all day. Asa didn’t catch a fish.
-

6. **but** Utha chased the deer. Utha couldn't get close.

7. **and** The forest was dark. The ground was wet.

8. **or** Asa could go fishing. Asa could go hunting.

9. **but** The cliff was steep. Guff felt confident.

10. **and** Guff's boots were torn. Guff's spear was broken.

11. **so** Utha was hungry. Utha ate some meat.

12. **but** The day was cloudy. The day was hot.

13. **and** Asa carried her fishing rod. Asa carried her basket.

14. **yet** Guff climbed the tree. Guff could not reach the nest.

15. **so** Asa cleaned the fish. Asa could eat the fish.

16. **and** Guff threw his spear. Guff took aim.

17. **but** Guff couldn't get warm. Guff made a fire.

18. **so** Guff climbed a tree Guff stole bird eggs.

19. **and** Asa filled her jug with water. Asa walked to the river.

Task E: *Syntax Exercises*

Task E: *Contracting Compound Sentences*

The task for this exercise is to break down compound sentences into short simple sentences. The goal is for students to become familiar with the construction of compound sentences and note how they differ from simple sentences.

1. Guff caught the fish and Asa cleaned it.

Example: *Guff caught the fish.*

Asa cleaned the fish.

2. Asa helped her mother to cook and her father to make a fire.

3. Guff climbed the mountain and looked out over the ocean.

4. The eagle swooped down but narrowly missed Guff's head.

5. Guff wanted to walk but Asa wanted to run.

6. Utha scaled and cleaned the fish so his family could eat it.

7. Asa was tired yet she climbed to the top of the mountain.

8. Guff heard the cat growling and spun around quickly.

9. Utha repaired his axe and Guff sharpened his spear.

Task F: *Syntax Exercises*

Task F: Creating complex sentences from simple sentences, using conjunctions.

The task for this exercise is to combine short simple sentences into complex sentences. Complex sentences are connected together by coordinating conjunctions such as *after, because, before, until, since, unless, where, which, if, that, as, while*, etc. A complex sentence has a main clause and a subordinate clause. The main clause is a complete thought so is a *complete* sentence, whereas a subordinate clause *depends* on the main clause to be complete. *For instance, "Before Guff stepped in the water, he took off his boots."* The main clause is *"He took off his boots."* The subordinate clause is, *"Before Guff stepped in the water..."*

Encourage students to shorten phrases and use pronouns when needed to improve the flow of the connected sentences.

1. Guff ate the fish. He was hungry.

Example: *Guff ate the fish because he was hungry.*

2. Asa wore her bearskin rug. It was cold.

Asa _____ because _____.

3. Utha is a great hunter. Utha is very brave.

Utha _____ who _____.

4. Guff made the fire. Guff cooked the fish.

After _____ he _____

5. Guff put the shell into his pouch. The pouch was full of trinkets.

Guff _____ which _____.

6. Utha went hunting. Utha sharpened his spear.

Before _____ he _____.

7. Asa hid from the cat. The cat hunted her.

Asa _____ that _____.

9. Asa cooked the raw fish. The fish was ready to eat.

Asa _____ until _____.

10. Guff touched his dark stone. The dark stone hung around Guff's neck.

Guff _____ which _____.

Task G: *Syntax Exercises*

Task G: *Contracting Complex Sentences*

The task for this exercise is to break down complex sentences into short simple sentences. The goal is for students to become familiar with the construction of complex sentences and note how they differ from simple and compound sentences.

1. Guff did not cross the river, because it was too deep.

Example: *Guff did not cross the river.*

The river was too deep.

2. Asa was very quiet because she was hunting rabbits.

3. While Guff was on the open plain, he was in danger.

4. Before Utha hunted for mammoth, he checked his spear for cracks.

5. As Guff scaled the cliff face, his arms became tired.

6. When it was hot, Guff loved to swim in the river.

7. It was very dangerous to approach a mammoth, unless the entire hunting party was there as a support.

8. Utha, the tribal elder, who was very brave, led the hunting party on its first great hunt of the spring.

Task H: *Syntax Exercises*

Task H: *Expanding Sentences with Adjectives*

The task for this exercise is to expand the length of the sentence by adding an adjective to it. Adjectives also add extra detail to a character or scene. Students are encouraged to select one of the adjectives listed or choose another. Students may wish to combine several adjectives together such as '*Asa washed her hands in the clean clear water.*'

1. Asa washed her hands in the water.

Asa washed her hands in the clear water.

clear

clean

muddy

2. Utha is a hunter.

Utha is a _____ hunter.

cunning

strong

powerful

3. Guff walked in the forest.

Guff walked in the _____ forest

dark

leafy

scary

4. The mammoth raised its head.

The mammoth raised its _____ head.

massive

mighty

shaggy

5. Guff hunted the mammoth herd with his tribe.

Guff hunted the _____ herd with his tribe.

large roaming small

6. Utha collected honey from the beehive.

Utha collected _____ honey from the beehive.

sweet sticky yellow

7. The old tree's branches rose high above the forest.

The old tree's branches rose high above the _____ forest.

dry tall wet

8. The wind blew through Asa's hair.

The _____ wind blew through Asa's hair.

strong fierce gentle

9. Utha ran for his life as the saber-toothed cat attacked.

Utha ran for his life as the _____ saber-toothed cat
attacked.

ferocious angry huge

10. The wind current lifted the eagle high into the sky.

The wind current lifted the _____ eagle high into the sky.

beautiful graceful large

11. The lightning struck the tree and split its trunk.

The lightning struck the _____ tree and split its trunk.

old ancient tall

12. Guff swam in the river.

Guff swam in the _____ river.

cold warm green

13. Asa placed her toes in the river and watched as _____
fish swam past her feet.

silver colourful tiny

14. Guff ran up the hill.

Guff ran up the _____
hill.

green steep wet

Task I: *Syntax Exercises*

Task I: *Arrangement of Words to create Complete Sentences*

The goal here is to form complete and grammatically correct sentences from the jumbled sentences. The correct sentences can be found in the text, but refer to the text only when needed. A good strategy for this exercise is to cut out the words at the end of this section and move them to make different combinations until the pieces take shape and make sense as a complete sentence.

1. walked hill the tribe up

Example: *The tribe walked up the hill.*

2. roared the loudly mammoth

3. morning Guff woke next the

4. mammoths long grass the ate the

5. bush behind Guff the hid

6. river follow to Guff decided the

7. rested under Guff tree old an

8. the water cold Guff waded into

9. river's walked Guff along the edge

10. terrible Guff in danger was

11. wrapped fish in Guff the leaves

12. Guff flames fish roasted the over

13. the ran tree Guff life for his to

Task J: *Syntax Exercises*

Task J: *Assembling paragraphs.*

Paragraphs are a series of sentences grouped around a single main idea. In a story, a paragraph indicates particular events, setting or time, or introduces a new character or event. Students are encouraged to assemble the following individual sentences into complete paragraphs.

1. *Sentence Example:* He then carefully climbed down the cliff-face.

Guff gripped the hard rock with his fingers.

Guff slipped but held on to the rock.

Guff came to a steep cliff. *Guff gripped the hard rock with his fingers. He carefully climbed down the cliff-face. Guff slipped but held on to the rock.* Finally, with a gentle hop, Guff landed at the bottom.

2. *Sentences:* The rain came down in sheets of water.

The lightning terrified Asa.

The thunder sounded like huge drums.

Asa felt the storm coming before she saw it. _____

_____ Asa hid in
the shelter.

3. Sentences: He backed away slowly.

Guff thrust his spear at the cat.

When the big cat pounced, Guff ran for his life.

The saber toothed-cat approached Guff, snarling. _____

Guff climbed the tree just in time.

4. Sentences: Guff stepped into the water and felt it surge past his legs.

Guff slipped and fell into the flowing waters.

Guff was strong and able to swim across the mighty river.

The river was deep and swift but Guff needed to cross it.

_____ Coughing up water, Guff made it to the opposite riverbank.