

Past continuous tense – the next level

Part 1: The verb 'esse' ('to be') looks like this in the present tense...

<i>present</i>			
I am	sum	we are	sumus
you are	es	y'all are	estis
he/she/it is	est	they are	sunt

...and like this in the past continuous.

<i>past continuous</i>			
I was	eram	we were	eramus
you were	eras	y'all were	eratis
he/she/it was	erat	they were	erant

Exercise 1

For the Latin sentences below, find the part of the verb 'esse' and circle it. Next, tick the box to show whether it is past continuous or present tense. Finally, translate the sentence. The first two have been done for you.

1. paratus **eram.**

I was ready.

2. medici regis **estis?**

Y'all are the king's doctors?

3. fratres **sumus.**

We are brothers.

4. mater in horto **erat.**

Mum was in the garden.

5. duces cauti **sunt.**

The leaders are careful.

6. quieta **eras.**

You were calm.

7. sub aqua **eramus.**

We were under water.

8. fabula sororis non vera **est!**

The sister's story isn't true!

9. validus **sum.**

I am strong.

10. canis et equus in campo **erant.**

The dog and the horse were in the field.

present *past continuous*

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Part 2: Sometimes, the past continuous verbs sound best translated into English as ‘used to’ rather than “was ...ing.”

<i>past continuous endings</i>			
I	bam	we	bamus
you	bas	y'all	batis
he/she/it	bat	they	bant

Exercise 2

For the Latin sentences below, find the past continuous verb and circle it. Then translate the sentence using ‘used to’ rather than ‘was ...ing.’ New words are underlined and their English meanings can be found on the right hand side of the page. The first one has been done to show you how.

1. in villa matris habitabam.

I used to live in mum's house.

2. frater meus me semper vexabat.

My brother always used to annoy me.

3. in taberna nova laborabas.

You used to work in the new shop.

4. milites cotidie pugnabant.

The soldiers used to fight every day.

5. ad scholam ambulabamus.

We used to walk to school.

6. tacebam sed nunc multas fabulas narro.

I used to be quiet but now I tell many stories.

7. frequenter montes ascendebatis.

Y'all often used to climb mountains.

8. femina suaviter cantabat.

The woman used to sing sweetly.

9. reges iuste non regebant.

The kings did not use to rule fairly.

words to help

meus my
me me
semper always

cotidie every day

schola school

nunc now
multi many

frequenter often

suaviter sweetly,
pleasantly

iuste fairly,
justly