Grammar Exercises – Past Continuous Tense

Multiple Choice Questions

Choose the correct answer:

1. I _____ when the phone rang.
   a) was sleeping
   b) slept
   c) sleep
   d) am sleeping
2. While they _____ dinner, the lights suddenly went out.
   a) have eaten
   b) were eating
   c) eat
   d) are eating
3. What _____ you _____ at 8 p.m. last night?
   a) were / doing
   b) did / do
   c) are / doing
   d) was / doing
4. We _____ about our vacation plans when you called.
   a) are talking
   b) was talking
   c) were talking
   d) talked

Fill-in-the-Blanks

Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verb in the Past Continuous:

1. I _____ (watch) TV when I heard a loud noise outside.
2. They _____ (not, listen) to the teacher during the lesson.
3. What _____ (you, do) when the accident happened?
4. At this time last year, we _____ (travel) through Europe.
5. While we _____ (wait) for the bus, it started raining heavily.

Sentence Transformation

Rewrite the sentences using the Past Continuous tense:

1. She talks to her friend on the phone.

   (Change to express what she was doing yesterday at 5 p.m.)
2. I read a book when you called.

   (Express this action as ongoing at the time of the call.)
3. They are playing football right now.

   (Change to describe what they were doing last Sunday afternoon.)
4. He studies all night before the exam.

   (Make it about what he was doing last night.)
5. We usually sit in the garden after lunch.

   (Change it to describe what you were doing when it started raining yesterday.)

Answer Key

Multiple Choice Questions

1. **a) was sleeping**
   Explanation: The action was in progress when the phone rang, so Past Continuous is required.
2. **b) were eating**
   Explanation: "While" introduces a background action that was ongoing when another action happened.
3. **a) were / doing**
   Explanation: A question asking about an ongoing action in the past, requiring Past Continuous.
4. **c) were talking**
   Explanation: The action was in progress when the call occurred, so Past Continuous is needed.

Fill-in-the-Blanks

1. **was watching**
   Explanation: The action was ongoing when something else (hearing a noise) happened.
2. **were not (weren't) listening**
   Explanation: A negative form is needed to show that the action was not in progress.
3. **were you doing**
   Explanation: This is a question about an ongoing action in the past, requiring Past Continuous.

4. **were travelling**

   Explanation: "At this time last year" indicates an ongoing past action, requiring Past Continuous.

5. **were waiting**

   Explanation: The action of waiting was ongoing when another event (raining) occurred.

Sentence Transformation

1. **She was talking to her friend on the phone at 5 p.m. yesterday.**

   Explanation: Present action "talks" is changed to Past Continuous to describe an action in progress at a specific time in the past.

2. **I was reading a book when you called.**

   Explanation: "Read" is changed to Past Continuous to describe the action that was in progress when interrupted by the call.

3. **They were playing football last Sunday afternoon.**

   Explanation: The present action "are playing" is changed to Past Continuous to refer to an ongoing past activity.

4. **He was studying all night before the exam.**

   Explanation: "Studies" is changed to "was studying" to express an ongoing action in the past.

5. **We were sitting in the garden when it started raining yesterday.**

   Explanation: "Sit" is changed to Past Continuous to describe the action that was happening when interrupted by rain.