

English Plus 2 (Part 1)

Unit 4 Dare!

LANGUAGE FOCUS □ Past continuous: affirmative and negative

I can describe what was happening at a past event.

1 Complete the sentences with words in the box. Check your answers in the text about Niagara Falls. Then choose the correct words in the rule.

was carrying was standing
were watching weren't expecting

- 1 He _____ on the tight rope.
- 2 He _____ a man on his back.
- 3 They _____ Blondin, a famous daredevil at Niagara Falls.
- 4 People _____ to see Annie alive.

Niagara Falls – don't look down!

At Niagara Falls, on the border between the USA and Canada, the River Niagara suddenly falls more than fifty metres. Every hour, 2.5 million litres go over the waterfalls. Niagara Falls is popular with tourists and in the past it was also popular with daredevils. Three of the most famous were The Great Blondin, Signor Farini and Annie Taylor.

In 1859, Blondin walked across Niagara Falls eight times. Once he cooked eggs while he was standing on the tightrope. Another time, he nearly fell into the river while he was carrying a man on his back. That day, a man called William Hunt was at Niagara with his girlfriend. As they were watching Blondin, Hunt decided to invent stunts which were more spectacular and daring than Blondin's. He changed his name to Signor Farini and began to practise.

In 1860 a crowd went to see Farini at Niagara. He was walking along his tightrope when he stopped and climbed down a thirty-metre rope to a boat. He had a drink, then climbed up the rope again and continued walking. He was the new king of the falls.

There were many heroes of Niagara and also some heroines. In 1901 Annie Taylor became the first woman to go over the falls in a barrel. People were waiting for forty minutes before Annie's helpers opened the barrel. People weren't expecting to see Annie alive, but in fact she survived.


Many others survived stunts at the falls in barrels, balls or simply a bathing suit, but a lot of people also died. These days, daredevil acts are prohibited there and there is a maximum fine of \$10,000.

○ RULE

The past continuous describes a **finished action** / **an action in progress** in the past.

2 Complete the text using the past continuous form of the verbs in brackets.

Alain Robert: Spiderman



Alain Robert, 48, loves tall buildings. He wanted to climb up the Petronas Towers (452 metres) in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Sonia Marks saw him: '1 _____ (walk) across a bridge near the Petronas Towers one day. The street was full of people, but it was strange. They were very quiet – they 2 _____ (not talk). They 3 _____ (look) at one of the towers. I looked and I saw a man on the building. He 4 _____ (climb) up the metal wall. He 5 _____ (not wear) a helmet or special clothes. Then I realized he 6 _____ (not use) ropes!'

3 Write true sentences about today. Use the affirmative or negative form of the past continuous.

I / sleep / at 9 a.m.

I was sleeping at 9 a.m.

1 my friends / play football at 6 a.m.

2 I / sit / in a car at 8.15 a.m.

3 we / listen / to the teacher five minutes ago

4 my friends and I talk / at 8.45 a.m.

5 I / sleep / at 5 a.m.

6 it / rain / before school

4 ACTIVATE Work in pairs. Look at the photos and imagine you saw the event. Describe what was happening. Use the questions to help you.

1 What were you doing when you saw this?

2 What was the stunt person doing?

3 Who was watching?

4 What were the crowd doing?



Finished?

Imagine that you are one of the daredevils in this unit. Write the story of one of your stunts.

I was at Niagara Falls. I was walking across the falls on a tightrope ...

English Plus 2

Answers

Language focus Past continuous: affirmative and negative

Exercise 1. 1 was standing 2 was carrying 3 were watching 4 weren't expecting

Rule. an action in progress

Exercise 2. 1 was walking 2 weren't talking 3 were looking 4 was climbing 5 wasn't wearing 6 wasn't using

Exercise 3.

1 My friends were / weren't playing football at 6 a.m.

2 I was / wasn't sitting in a car at 8.15 a.m.

3 We were / weren't listening to the teacher five minutes ago.

4 My friends and I were / weren't talking at 8.45.

5 I was / wasn't sleeping at 5 a.m.

6 It was / wasn't raining before school.

Workbook (1)

Exercise 1. 1 were 2 wasn't 3 weren't

Exercise 2. 1 were 2 wasn't 3 was 4 were 5 wasn't 6 weren't

Exercise 3.

1 Gina was playing football an hour ago.

2 They were climbing down the mountain at seven o'clock.

3 She wasn't skiing this time last Saturday.

4 Naomi and Paul were swimming half an hour ago.

5 It wasn't raining this afternoon.

6 You were sailing at this time last Sunday.

Exercise 4.

1 weren't listening 2 were having 3 were cycling 4 was sailing 5 wasn't doing 6 was relaxing 7 were watching