THE STORY OF A WALL

EAE Learning objectives for this lesson

Review and practice the past tenses. Comprehension and discussion activities.

Activity One - ***Test your general knowledge*** - with a partner see if you know the answers to these questions about the history of the Berlin Wall.



1. In 2014 it's the anniversary of the date when the Berlin wall was knocked down. Which anniversary is it?(How many years).
2. Why was the Berlin wall built and who built it?
3. Why was it knocked down in the end and who knocked it down?
4. Where is Berlin situated exactly?
5. What was Checkpoint Charlie?

Activity Two - **Telling stories or talking about history in the past tenses**. Read the information.

When we talk about past events in English we usually use the past simple, it's the most commonly used past tense. This is why you really need to learn the irregular past participles off by heart. (See the list at the end of this lesson).

When you are unsure of which past tense to use, if you choose the simple past then at least you can be sure that people will understand that you are talking about the past and more often than not it is the right choice. So, don't worry and hesitate, just use the simple past when you are not sure.

Don't be tempted to use the Present perfect systematically. French students of English tend to do (mainly because they are translating directly from French). For example they think *'j'ai mangé un gateau'* and say 'I have eaten a cake' because in French there is an auxiliary verb in this sentence.

In English you should say 'I ate a cake' if you are talking about an action that is finished with no link to the present. So, no auxiliary verb. We only use the present perfect (have done) when there is some connection or link to what you are talking about in the present or to your present situation. This is one of the most common errors French people make with the past tense in English. When we are making a simple statement about the past, something that is over and finished, you use the simple past tense.

Another common mistake is to use the present tense when you are talking about something that started in the past and continues today. For example people often say - ~~I am working~~ in Berlin for two years. The correct sentence is **I have been working** in Berlin for two years. This is the present perfect continuous, an action in the past which is still happening today.

Let's **review** the different past tenses and their uses so that you can feel more confident.



SIMPLE PAST

I went to Berlin and I saw the wall.

Action in the past taking place once, never or several times
Actions taking place one after another

PRESENT PERFECT

Have you been to Berlin before?

We use the Present Perfect to say that an action happened at an unspecified time before now. You **can't** use it with specific time expressions such as: yesterday, one year ago, last week, etc.

PAST CONTINUOUS

I was visiting Berlin when the East Europeans built the wall.

Use the Past Continuous to indicate that a longer action in the past was interrupted. The interruption is usually a shorter action in the Simple Past. Remember this can be a real interruption or just an interruption in time.

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

I have been living in Berlin for five years.

We use the Present Perfect Continuous to show that something started in the past and has continued until now.

PAST PERFECT

I had studied German for three years before I moved to Berlin.

The Past Perfect shows that something happened before another action in the past or before a specific time in the past.

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

She had been living in East Berlin for several years before the wall was built.

We use the Past Perfect Continuous to show that something started in the past and continued up until another time in the past.

Activity Three ***Identify the different past tenses in the short text below and explain why they are used.***

With David Bowie's song Heroes David Bowie told the story of a couple who were determined to be together despite the secrecy of their relationship. So every day they met under a gun turret on the Berlin Wall. Bowie was recording an album in a studio just next to the wall at the time. He was writing songs as he looked out of the window and saw the couple kissing by the wall. This was a interesting time to be living in Berlin. Bowie was very inspired at the time. When he was interviewed later about the work he did during that period he said that he had been influenced by the atmosphere of 'Zeitgeist'* of the era. *(*Spirit of the time and place).*

Two years before the wall was destroyed Bowie played his song in a concert at the Berlin wall. Thousands of people were singing along to it as he played. He said later that when he had played there it was one of the most emotional moments of his life. The song was played again at the anniversary of the demolition of the wall. So it really is the song that symbolises the period. This is partly because it was written there and partly because describes a moment of beauty surrounded by the ugliness of the wall.

Activity Four - ***Role Plays:*** With a new partner act out the following situations:

A/ *You are Angela Merkel making a speech about the Berlin Wall anniversary and you are interrupted by a protestor who shouts out a question that you feel you have to answer.*

B/ *You wake up in the morning and find that there is a large wall outside where you live. You won't be able to get to the other side of the wall to visit your family in West Berlin any more. You go and wake up your wife to tell her all about it.*

C/ *You are half way over the Berlin wall, trying to escape to the other side, when a red guard sees you and makes you come back down. You are captured and interrogated.*

D/ *You are a journalist interviewing Walter Ulbricht the German Communist leader of East Berlin at a press conference. He is talking about how East Germany will be a better place under communist lead than West Germany.*

Activity Five - **Listening** Activity. Listen to the song and follow the lyrics. Listen for any references you can find in the song to the Berlin Wall. Try to understand what the song is about and what it describes.

Heroes - *By **David Bowie***

I, I will be king
And you, you will be queen
Though nothing will drive them away
We can beat them, just for one day
We can be Heroes, just for one day

And you, you can be mean
And I, I'll drink all the time
'Cause we're lovers, and that is a fact
Yes we're lovers, and that is that

Though nothing, will keep us together
We could steal time,
just for one day
We can be Heroes, for ever and ever
What d'you say?

I, I wish you could swim
Like the dolphins, like dolphins can swim
Though nothing,
nothing will keep us together
We can beat them, for ever and ever
Oh we can be Heroes,
just for one day

I, I will be king
And you, you will be queen
Though nothing will drive them away
We can be Heroes, just for one day

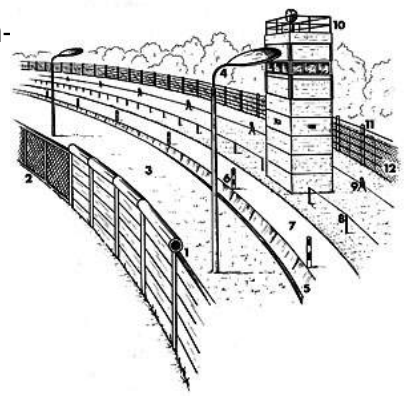
We can be us, just for one day

I, I can remember (I remember)
Standing, by the wall (by the wall)
And the guns shot above our heads
(over our heads)
And we kissed,
as though nothing could fall
(nothing could fall)
And the shame was on the other side
Oh we can beat them, for ever and ever
Then we could be Heroes,
just for one day

We can be Heroes
We can be Heroes
We can be Heroes
Just for one day
We can be Heroes

We're nothing, and nothing will help us
Maybe we're lying,
then you better not stay
But we could be safer,
just for one day

Oh-oh-oh-ohh, oh-oh-oh-
just for one day



"The shame was on the other side"..

"It's more constructive to build bridges than to put up walls. "

Activity Six - **Listening comprehensions.**

Watch the videos and answer the questions. Let's read the questions first so that we know what to listen for: Remember - you are only supposed to understand the general meaning. Listen out for key words which will help you to understand the information you need to answer the questions.

Video One
http://www.history.co.uk/shows/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-berlin-wall/videos/no-escape
(H history - the Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall - No escape).

1. Name the different installations which **prevented** people from getting across the Berlin wall.

2. What **could** be seen in the sand?

3. Why **could** Guards never 'turn a blind eye'?

Video Two
http://www.history.co.uk/shows/the-rise-and-fall-of-the-berlin-wall/videos/building-of-the-wall
(H history - the Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall - Building of the wall).

1. What was too easy?
2. Who was Walter Ulbricht?
3. What solution was he looking for?
4. What does he think can solve his problem?
5. What does he say at the Press conference about a wall?
6. What did Kruschtov Say about Berlin?
7. What did Kennedy say about Berlin?
8. What festival is being hosted just before the wall is built?



Activity Seven - In teams - take the following facts and include them in a documentary style presentation. Prepare a 'TV' style presentation with interviews with people about their experiences of the time. All the facts below need to be in your presentation IN THE PAST TENSE.

1. Date of construction August 13th 1961.
2. Reason for construction: to separate the zones controlled by France Britain and America from the zone controlled by the Soviet Union.
3. Objective: Prevent East Germans from going to West Germany.
4. Well over 100,000 citizens of the GDR try to escape across the inner-German border or the Berlin Wall between 1961 and 1988. More than 600 of them are shot and killed by GDR border guards or die in other ways during their escape attempt. They drown, suffer fatal accidents, or kill themselves when they are caught.
5. Graffiti - On the West side but not on the East side.
6. Unofficial use of the wall - as a rubbish tip. West Berliners use it to throw things they don't want over the other side knowing that they would not have to go and get it.
7. The end of the wall - gradual - people have a lot of small parts of it as souvenirs.
8. Ghost stations - on the underground rail system - heavily guarded stations, dim lighting, no western underground trains stop there as they are under East Berlin.
9. Total length of the border to West Berlin155 km
10. Inner-city border between East and West Berlin 43 km

LIST OF COMMON IRREGULAR VERBS

be	was, were	been
beat	beat	beat
become	became	become
begin	began	begun
bend	bent	bent
bet	bet	bet
bleed	bled	bled
blow	blew	blown
break	broke	broken
bring	brought	brought
build	built	built
burn	burnt	burnt
burst	burst	burst
buy	bought	bought
catch	caught	caught
choose	chose	chosen
come	came	come
cost	cost	cost
cut	cut	cut
deal	dealt	dealt
dig	dug	dug
dive	dived	dived
do	did	done
draw	drew	drawn
dream	dreamed	dreamed
drive	drove	driven
drink	drank	drunk
eat	ate	eaten
fall	fell	fallen
feed	fed	fed
feel	felt	felt
fight	fought	fought
find	found	found
fly	flew	flown
forbid	forbade	forbidden
forget	forgot	forgotten
forgive	forgave	forgiven
freeze	froze	frozen
get	got	gotten
give	gave	given
go	went	gone
grow	grew	grown
hang	hung	hung
hear	heard	heard
hide	hid	hidden
hit	hit	hit
hold	held	held
hurt	hurt	hurt
keep	kept	kept
kneel	knelt	knelt
knit	knit	knit
know	knew	known
lay	laid	laid
lead	led	led
learn	learned	learned
leave	left	left
lend	lent	lent
let	let	let
lose	lost	lost
make	made	made
mean	meant	meant
meet	met	met
mistake	mistook	mistaken
pay	paid	paid
prove	proved	proved
put	put	put
quit	quit	quit
read	read	read
ride	rode	ridden
ring	rang	rung
rise	rose	risen
run	ran	run
say	said	said
see	saw	seen
sell	sold	sold
send	sent	sent
shine	shone	shone
shoot	shot	shot
show	showed	showed
shut	shut	shut
sing	sang	sung
sink	sank	sunk
sit	sat	sat
sleep	slept	slept
slide	slid	slid
speak	spoke	spoken
speed	sped	sped
spend	spent	spent
spit	spat	spit
split	split	split
spread	spread	spread
stand	stood	stood
steal	stole	stolen
stick	stuck	stuck
sting	stung	stung
stink	stank	stunk
strike	struck	struck
string	strung	strung
swear	swore	sworn
swim	swam	swum
take	took	taken
teach	taught	taught
tear	tore	torn
tell	told	told
think	thought	thought
throw	threw	thrown
tread	trod	trodden
understand	understood	understood
uphold	upheld	upheld
upset	upset	upset
wake	woke	woken
wear	wore	worn
wind	wound	wound
win	won	won
write	wrote	written