

## Aggie Grammar Guide: Verb Tense and Form

### Intermediate Practice

Consider the verb tense and form in each of the following questions. First, identify the verb tense of the bolded verb in each question. Second, respond to the question with a complete sentence using a logical tense and verb choice. For more advanced practice, try using a different verb than the one in the question. Please note, there may be multiple revision options although you will see only one option in the answer key. Compare your revision to the answer and determine if one is more effective. Make sure your verb is in the same tense as the suggested answer.

Example:      *What is your favorite thing about UC Davis?*

Verb Tense:   *Simple Present*

Answer:        *I really **like** working out at the ARC.*

- 1) What **are** you **studying** at UCD?  
Verb Tense:  
Answer:
- 2) What problems **have** UCD students **been facing** for the last 10 years?  
Verb Tense:  
Answer:
- 3) What **will** you **be doing** after you graduate?  
Verb Tense:  
Answer:
- 4) Before you applied, why **were** you **considering** attending UCD?  
Verb Tense:  
Answer:
- 5) How long **had** you **been attending** school before you came to UCD?  
Verb Tense:  
Answer:
- 6) What **will** you **have accomplished** by this time next year?  
Verb Tense:  
Answer:
- 7) What person at UCD **made** the deepest impression on you?  
Verb Tense:  
Answer:
- 8) How long **will** you **have been going** to UCD by this time next year?  
Verb Tense:

Answer:

9) What successful skill in your field **have** you **learned** at UCD?

Verb Tense:

Answer:

10) What do you **think** of your professors at UCD?

Verb Tense:

Answer:

11) When **will** the next quarter **start**?

Verb Tense:

Answer:

## Advanced Practice

For this activity, you will read a paragraph with some correct and incorrect verb tenses. Each sentence is numbered with the verbs in bold. Answer each question that follows about verb tense logic following the directions indicated in each question's text.

Please note, there may be multiple response options although you will see only one option in the answer key. Compare your responses to the AGG responses and determine if one is more effective in terms of identifying and explaining tense shifts and revising any illogical verbs.

*Example: I can clearly remember one time I try to ask the math professor a question during my first lecture in college last quarter.*

*Is each verb in a logical tense? If the verbs are logical, write "yes," and if not, state which verb (or verbs) is illogical and revise so it is logical.*

*Response: No. "Try" is not in a logical tense. While "can remember" is logically in the present tense, "try" should be "tried," which is the past tense, because of the phrase "last quarter" later in the sentence.*

*Is there a tense switch within this sentence? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.*

*Response: The original sentence does not have a tense shift, which is illogical. After "try" is revised to "tried," the author shifts from present tense ("can remember") to past tense ("tried"). This shift is now logical because the author is currently remembering a past event.*

(1) I **was** "learning" English since elementary school. (2) The reason I **added** quotation marks **is** that in almost every Chinese school, rather than teaching students how to actually use English as a tool to communicate, educators **teach** students how to deal with English exams, which **consist** mostly of vocabulary and grammar. (3) After starting my college life in America, I **am** now proficient in reading and writing but still **had lacked** the ability to speak English in front of people. (4) Actually, this issue **has become** a major problem among Chinese students in American colleges. (5) I once **read** an article **written** by a professor at a university in America. (6) In the article, the author **said** that there **are** more and more Chinese students who **came** to America nowadays and they often **get** nice grades in class. (7) However, unlike native speakers, these Chinese students barely **speak** or **ask** questions during lectures.

Sentence 1: I **was** “learning” English since elementary school.

- i. Is each verb in sentence 1 in a logical tense? If the verb is logical, write “yes,” and if not, state which verb is illogical and revise so it is logical.

Sentence 2: The reason I **added** quotation marks **is** that in almost every Chinese school, rather than teaching students how to actually use English as a tool to communicate, educators **teach** students how to deal with English exams, which **consist** mostly of vocabulary and grammar.

- i. Is each verb in sentence 2 in a logical tense? If the verbs are logical, write “yes,” and if not, state which verb (or verbs) is illogical and revise so it is logical.
- ii. Is there a tense switch within sentence 2? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.
- iii. Is there a tense shift between "have been" in sentence 1 and "added" in sentence 2? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.

Sentence 3: After starting my college life in America, I **am** now proficient in reading and writing but still **had lacked** the ability to speak English in front of people.

- i. Is each verb in sentence 3 in a logical tense? If the verbs are logical, write “yes,” and if not, state which verb (or verbs) is illogical and revise so it is logical.
- ii. Is there a tense switch within sentence 3? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.
- iii. Is there a tense shift between "consist" in sentences 2 and "am" in sentence 3? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.

Sentence 4: Actually, this issue **has become** a major problem among Chinese students in American colleges.

- i. Is each verb in sentence 4 in a logical tense? If the verb is logical, write “yes,” and if not, state which verb is illogical and revise so it is logical.
  
- ii. Is there a tense shift between "lack" in sentence 3 and "has become" in sentence 4? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.

Sentence 5: I once **read** an article **written** by a professor at a university in America.

- i. Is each verb in sentence 5 in a logical tense? If the verbs are logical, write “yes,” and if not, state which verb (or verbs) is illogical and revise so it is logical.
  
- ii. Is there a tense switch within sentence 5? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.
  
- iii. Is there a tense shift between "has become" in sentence 4 and "read" in sentence 5? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.

Sentence 6: In the article, the author **said** that there **are** more and more Chinese students who **came** to America nowadays and they often **get** nice grades in class.

- i. Is each verb in sentence 6 in a logical tense? If the verbs are logical, write “yes,” and if not, state which verb (or verbs) is illogical and revise so it is logical.
  
- ii. Is there a tense switch within sentence 6? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.

- iii. Is there a tense shift between "written" in sentence 5 and "said" in sentence 6? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.

Sentence 7: However, unlike native speakers, these Chinese students barely **speak** or **ask** questions during lectures.

- i. Is each verb in sentence 7 in a logical tense? If the verbs are logical, write "yes," and if not, state which verb (or verbs) is illogical and revise so it is logical.
- ii. Is there a tense switch within sentence 7? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.
- iii. Is there a tense shift between "get" in sentence 6 and "speak" in sentence 7? Explain whether the tense shift (or lack of a shift) is logical or illogical. If you made any revisions in part i, explain how those changes affect your response.