**Past Perfect Tense**

**Objectives**

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Identify past perfect tense verbs.
- Learn how to form past perfect tense verbs.
- Use past perfect tense verbs in sentences.

**Preparation**

**Materials Needed**

- Chart paper and markers
- Past Perfect Tense (BLM 8)
- Interactive whiteboard resources

**Advanced Preparation**

If you will not be using the interactive whiteboard resources, copy the modeling text and the practice text onto chart paper prior to the mini-lesson. If necessary, copy the sentence frames from “Strategies to Support ELs” on chart paper.

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**1. Focus**

**Explain Past Perfect Tense**

*Say:* Past tense verbs tell us about something that happened in the past. Past perfect tense verbs show action that happened before a specific time in the past. Let’s look at examples of sentences that contain past perfect tense verbs and see how they are formed.

**Model Using Past Perfect Tense**

Display the modeling text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources, and read it aloud to students.

| 1. Before the horses escaped, the men had resumed eating their dinner. |
| 2. Patrick had been one of the best carpenters in town before he joined the army. |

**Modeling Text**

After sentence 1. *Say:* In the first sentence, the past perfect tense verb is **had resumed**. I will underline **had resumed**. This verb is formed using the word **had** and the past participle of **resume**, which is **resumed**. In regular verbs, the past participle is the same as the past tense form of the verb. This verb tense tells me when the men resumed eating their dinner—before the horses escaped. This is a specific time in the past.

After sentence 2. *Say:* I will also underline **had been** in the second sentence. This one is a little different because **be** is an irregular verb. The past tense form of **be** is **was**. But I can’t say **had was**. I need to use the past participle, which is **been**. In historical fiction, authors write about events in the past, so they often use the past perfect tense in addition to the past tense to help readers understand the order in which events happened.
2. Rehearse

Practice Using Past Perfect Tense

Display the practice text on chart paper or using the interactive whiteboard resources.

Ask students to form pairs. Invite pairs to revise the practice sentences to include the past perfect tense of the underlined verb. (Students do not need to copy sentences.)

1. Patrick forced himself to swallow.
2. It was clear that she felt responsible for the men.
3. The men began to depend on Sacagawea.

Practice Text

If your class includes English learners or other students who need support, use “Strategies to Support ELs.”

Share Sentences with Past Perfect Tense

Invite pairs to share how they changed the verb in each sentence to the past perfect form. Make note of student pairs that struggle with this activity. Use this information to plan further instruction.

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that the past perfect tense of a verb tells us that an action happened before a specific time in the past. A past perfect verb consists of the word had and the past participle of the verb. In regular verbs, the past participle is the same as the past tense form. But in irregular verbs, the past participle has a different spelling than the past tense. Remember to use the past perfect tense when you write historical fiction to clarify when things happened in the past.

If you would like to give students additional practice using the past perfect tense, have them complete BLM 8.

4. Share

Bring students together. Invite volunteers to share their answers and the sentences they wrote on BLM 8. Provide corrective feedback as necessary.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Help beginning ELs understand that when they see had in front of another verb, the action occurred before a specific time in the past. Write the following sentences on chart paper, circling the past perfect verbs. Use pantomime to show students that the action in the second part of each sentence happened before the action in the first part of the sentence.

Before Mom left, she asked if I had finished my homework.
When I got to the theater, the movie had started already.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers to revise the practice sentences. Make sure that students understand the meaning of each sentence before they begin. Provide the following sentence frames to help students talk about the past perfect tense.

The past participle of the verb is ______.
The past perfect tense of the verb is ______.