1. Focus

**Explain the Past Tense of Irregular Verbs**

**Say:** We know that we use present tense verbs to write about something that is happening now, and we use past tense verbs to write about what has already happened. The past tense of irregular verbs don’t end in -ed. Writers form them by changing the spelling of the present tense verb. For example, in the sentence “Caesar won the admiration of the soldiers,” the word won is the past tense form of the irregular verb win. To form the past tense of win and other irregular verbs, you do not add -ed. You change the spelling of the verbs. The past tense of irregular verbs do not follow a pattern, so you have to remember their spellings. Knowing the correct past tense of irregular verbs is important to biography writers because they write about people in the past.

**Model Identifying the Past Tense of Irregular Verbs**

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

1. The pirates realized that Caesar must be a wealthy man, so they took him hostage.
2. Shakespeare wrote a play about Julius Caesar.
3. Caesar grew up trained for a life in politics.

**Modeling Text**

**Read sentence 1.** **Say:** In this sentence, I see two past tense verbs, describing events in the past. The word realized is a regular verb in the past tense because it ends with the letters -ed, and the verb took is an irregular verb in the past tense because it does not end in -ed. The word took is the past tense form of the irregular verb take. Changing from take to took required respelling the present tense verb.

**Read sentence 2.** **Say:** In this sentence, the verb wrote is irregular in the past tense. It does not end in -ed. In order to form the past tense of the word write, the writer changed the letter i in write to an o to make the word wrote.

**Read sentence 3.** **Say:** In this sentence, grew is the past tense form of the irregular verb grow. To form the past tense of grow, the writer also had to change the vowel o to an e to make the word grew.

**Objectives**

In this mini-lesson, students will:

- Identify the past tense of irregular verbs.
- Brainstorm irregular verbs in the past tense.
- Practice changing irregular verbs from present tense to past tense.

**Preparation**

**Materials Needed**

- Chart paper and markers
- Past Tense of Irregular Verbs (BLM 5)
- Interactive whiteboard resources

**Advanced Preparation**

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

Practice Brainstorming Irregular Verbs in the Past Tense

Invite students to work with partners to brainstorm irregular verbs in the past tense. Ask them to record their ideas to share later with the whole group.

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

Share Irregular Verbs in the Past Tense

Have pairs share their irregular verbs with the class. Ask students the following questions to encourage discussion:

- What verbs did you identify that are irregular in the past tense?
- How do you know these verbs are irregular?
- What did you need to do to change each present tense verb to a past tense verb?

3. Independent Writing and Conferring

Say: We learned that irregular verbs in the past tense are not formed by adding -ed endings. The spelling of present tense irregular verbs changes when forming the past tense forms. We need to use the correct spelling of these verbs in our writing. Writers of biographies need to know how to use irregular verbs in the past tense because they are often writing about people and events from the past.

If you would like to give students additional practice recognizing and forming the past tense of irregular verbs, ask them to complete BLM 5.

4. Share

Bring students together. Review and provide corrective feedback based on students’ answers to BLM 5. Ask students to share what they learned about the past tense of irregular verbs.

Strategies to Support ELs

Beginning

Beginning ELs will need significant support to learn the past tense of irregular verbs. Concentrate on one or two very common verbs that they will need to use in oral language (e.g., draw/drew and make/made). Create a two-column chart with the column heads “Present” and “Past” and write the present and past tense forms of these verbs in the appropriate columns. Read the words with students and use them in sentences as you pantomime actions to build understanding. For example:

I draw a picture.
I drew a picture yesterday.

Intermediate and Advanced

Pair ELs with fluent English speakers to develop sentences using irregular verbs in the past tense. Make sure that students understand the meaning of each word before they begin the activity. Provide the following sentence frames to help students with their oral language:

The present tense verb is ______.
The past tense verb is ______.

Invite students to complete BLM 5 for more practice with the past tense of irregular verbs.