+49 511 4739339
james@englisch-lehrer.com · www.englisch-lehrer.com

C2 TENSES ≈ 27 MIN

Literary Tense Shifts – *practice on paper*

You know the effect; now use present-tense close-ups deliberately and in the right register.

> The **historic present** brings one selected moment closer; formal records keep a **stable past frame** .

NAME _____ DATE _____

YOUR BUILD — 1 · SORTING ○ — 2 · FILL-IN ○ — 3 · CORRECT ○ — 4 · WRITE ○

BRICK 1 · SORT BY EFFECT AND REGISTER · APPROX. 4 MIN ●○○

Sort them: **present-tense close-up** on the left, **stable past frame** in formal writing on the right.

- The candidate smiles and changes the mood.
- At dinner, my phone rings and everyone turns.
- She pauses, then reveals the result.
- The founder opens a letter and finds an order.
- The demo stalls, but the host keeps talking.
- The board adopted the charter and logged a vote.
- Operations logged the outage at 08:40.
- The auditor requested proof and closed the case.
- Procurement rejected the bid after the deadline.
- The chair ended the meeting at noon.

PRESENT-TENSE CLOSE-UP	STABLE PAST FRAME

BRICK 2 · COMPLETE WITH THE RIGHT STORYTELLING FORM · APPROX. 6 MIN ●●○

Complete the verb. Follow the stated **register** and intended effect.

01 Anecdote: The investor _____ forward and smiles. (lean)

02 Interview story: So there I _____ , without a backup copy. (be)

03 Founder story: She opens the message and _____ an order. (see)

04 Minutes: The board _____ the amendment. (approve)

05 Compliance record: The inspector _____ the fault at 09:12. (note)

06 Summary: The article _____ the firm's overseas launch. (describe)

07 Reported plan: Mira said she _____ results on Monday. (publish)

08 Past story: Last summer, the supplier _____ . (withdraw)

YOUR BUILD

1 · SORTING ○ | 2 · FILL-IN ○ | 3 · CORRECT ○ | 4 · WRITE ○

BRICK 3 · FIND AND CORRECT THE MISTAKE · APPROX. 7 MIN ●●○

Each sentence contains one error in tense or register choice. Correct the whole sentence.

01 Anecdote: The courier arrives and said my name.

02 Minutes: The team agrees and requested a new draft.

03 Last month, the buyer has cancelled the trial.

04 Then she has told us the server was offline.

05 Our director said she will release the figures on Tuesday.

06 Summary: The founder opened a lab and faces resistance.

BRICK 4 · CONTROL CLOSENESS AND DISTANCE · APPROX. 8 MIN ●●●

Write one English sentence for each prompt. Signal the **register** through a clear tense choice.

01 Presentation: bring one past moment into present.

02 Customer story: highlight a reaction with historic present.

03 Founder story: place a literary turning point in present.

04 Formal report: record two events in a stable past frame.

MINI-CHECK – CAN I DO THIS YET?

- ☐ I use historic present only for a recognisable effect.
- ☐ I label conversational or literary register clearly.
- ☐ I use summary present only for represented content.
- ☐ I keep formal texts in a stable time frame.

Unsure? Mark the register and high point first; without a clear effect, keep a stable past frame.

Answer key

Check only when you have finished. Every answer comes with the **why** — the rule matters more than the result.

BRICK 1 · SORTING

01 The candidate smiles and changes the mood.
Interview anecdote: Present brings the turning point closer.

02 At dinner, my phone rings and everyone turns.
Conversational anecdote: Present creates a close-up.

03 She pauses, then reveals the result.
Presentation story: Present highlights the high point.

04 The founder opens a letter and finds an order.
Founder story: Present makes the turning point immediate.

05 The demo stalls, but the host keeps talking.
Conversational anecdote: Present brings the scene closer.

06 The board adopted the charter and logged a vote.
Formal minutes: Past simple records the steps.

07 Operations logged the outage at 08:40.
Incident report: Past simple keeps the frame stable.

08 The auditor requested proof and closed the case.
Compliance text: Past simple documents both actions.

09 Procurement rejected the bid after the deadline.
Formal report: Past simple keeps the distance.

10 The chair ended the meeting at noon.
Minutes: Past simple keeps the time unambiguous.

BRICK 2 · FILL-IN

01 Anecdote: The investor **leans** forward and smiles.
Close-up: Historic present highlights the reaction.

02 Interview story: So there I **am**, without a backup copy.
Conversational anecdote: Historic present creates closeness.

03 Founder story: She opens the message and **sees** an order.
Founder story: Present keeps the close-up stable.

04 Minutes: The board **approved** the amendment.
Minutes: Past simple records the decision.

05 Compliance record: The inspector **noted** the fault at 09:12.
Compliance text: Past simple keeps the frame stable.

06 Summary: The article **describes** the firm's overseas launch.
Content summary: Summary present describes the article.

07 Reported plan: Mira said she **would publish** results on Monday.
Backshift: Said calls for would publish here.

08 Past story: Last summer, the supplier **withdrew**.
Past frame: Last summer calls for past simple.

BRICK 3 · CORRECT

01 Anecdote: The courier arrives and **says** my name.
Close-up: Both verbs stay in historic present.

02 Minutes: The team **agreed** and requested a new draft.
Minutes: Both steps stay in past simple.

03 Last month, the buyer **cancelled** the trial.
Past frame: Last month calls for past simple.

04 Then she **told** us the server was offline.
Story frame: The completed action uses past simple.

05 Our director said she **would release** the figures on Tuesday.
Backshift: Said calls for would release here.

06 Summary: The founder **opens** a lab and faces resistance.
Content summary: Both actions stay in summary present.

BRICK 4 · WRITE

Answers vary; check that effect, tense, and register align.

01 We were discussing the final option when the sponsor **stands up** and offers a solution.
Presentation story: Historic present highlights the turning point.

02 The customer **reads** the first result, looks at us and asks for a rollout.
Customer story: Present creates a clear close-up.

03 He had one sample left. He **calls** the distributor and wins the trial.
Founder story: The shift marks the turning point.

04 The system **failed** at 11:20, and support **restored** access.
Formal report: Past simple records both events.

NEXT BRICKS — KEEP BUILDING FREE ONLINE

PREREQUISITE
Narrative Tenses
englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons/narrative-tenses

PREREQUISITE
Aspect and Viewpoint
englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons/aspect-and-viewpoint

ALL LESSONS
45+ free lessons
englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons

HANOVER
Schaufelder Straße 11 · 30167
englisch-lehrer.com/hannover

BERLIN
Kurfürstendamm 30 · 10719
englisch-lehrer.com/berlin

ONLINE COURSES
englisch-lehrer.com/online
worldwide on Zoom

CONTACT
+49 511 4739339
james@englisch-lehrer.com