

3 Please Send Me a Card

Postcards always spoil my holidays. Last summer, I went to Italy. I visited museums and sat in public gardens. A friendly waiter taught me a few words of Italian. Then he lent me a book. I read a few lines, but I did not understand a word. Every day I thought about postcards. My holidays passed quickly, but I did not send any cards to my friends. On the last day I made a big decision. I got up early and bought thirty-seven cards. I spent the whole day in my room, but I did not write a single card!



Comprehension Précis and Composition

Answer these questions *in not more than 50 words*.

1. Do postcards always spoil the writer's holidays or not?
2. Where did he spend his holidays last summer?
3. What did he think about every day?
4. Did he send any cards to his friends or not?
5. How many cards did he buy on the last day?
6. Where did he stay all day?
7. Did he write any cards or not?

Key Structures

What happened?

Read this short conversation. Pay close attention to the verbs in *italics*. Each of these verbs tells us *what happened*.

POLICEMAN: Did you see the accident, sir?

MAN: Yes, I did. The driver of that car *hit* that post over there.

POLICEMAN: What happened?

MAN: A dog *ran* across the road and the driver *tried to avoid* it. The car suddenly *came* towards me. It *climbed* on to the pavement and *crashed* into that post.

POLICEMAN: What did you do?

MAN: I *ran* across the street after the dog.

POLICEMAN: Why did you do that? Were you afraid of the car?

MAN: I wasn't afraid of the car. I was afraid of the driver. The driver *got out* of the car and *began shouting* at me. He was very angry with me. You see, it was my dog.

Exercises

A. Look at the passage 'Please Send Me A Card'. Put a line under all the verbs which tell us what happened to the writer when he was on holiday in Italy.

B. Give the correct form of all the verbs in brackets. Do not refer to the passage until you finish the exercise:

Last summer, I (go) to Italy. I (visit) museums and (sit) in public gardens. A friendly waiter (teach) me a few words of Italian. Then he (lend) me a book. I (read) a few lines, but I (not understand) a word. Every day I (think) about postcards. My holidays (pass) quickly, but I (not send) any cards to my friends. On the last day, I (make) a big decision. I (get) up early and (buy) thirty-seven cards. I (spend) the whole day in my room, but I (not write) a single card!

C. Give the correct form of the verbs in brackets in the passage below. Each verb must tell us *what happened*:

My friend, Roy, (die) last year. He (leave) me his record player and his collection of gramophone records. Roy (spend) a lot of money on records. He (buy) one or two new records every week. He never (go) to the cinema or to the theatre. He (stay) at home every evening and (listen) to music. He often (lend) records to his friends. Sometimes they (keep) them. He (lose) many records in this way.

Special Difficulties

He lent me a book. (l. 5)

Instead of saying:

He lent me a book.

He sent me a card.

He passed me the salt.

She bought me a tie.

She made me a cake.

We can say:

He lent a book to me.

He sent a card to me.

He passed the salt to me.

She bought a tie for me.

She made a cake for me.

Exercise

Write each of the following sentences in a different way:

1. He paid the shop-keeper some money.
2. He handed me the prize.
3. The waiter brought a bottle of beer to the man.
4. He sold all his books to me.
5. The shop-assistant chose some curtain material for me.
6. He did me a big favour.
7. She showed her husband her new hat.
8. She promised a reward to the finder.
9. He gave his son some advice.
10. His uncle left him some money.
11. He is teaching English to us.
12. I bought this bunch of flowers for you.
13. Bring that book to me please.
14. He offered me a cigarette.
15. Read me the first paragraph.
16. I've ordered some soup for you.
17. I owe him a lot of money.
18. Pass the mustard to your father.