

# Participle clauses in focus

GRAMMAR

LEVEL  
Advanced

NUMBER  
C1\_3031G\_EN

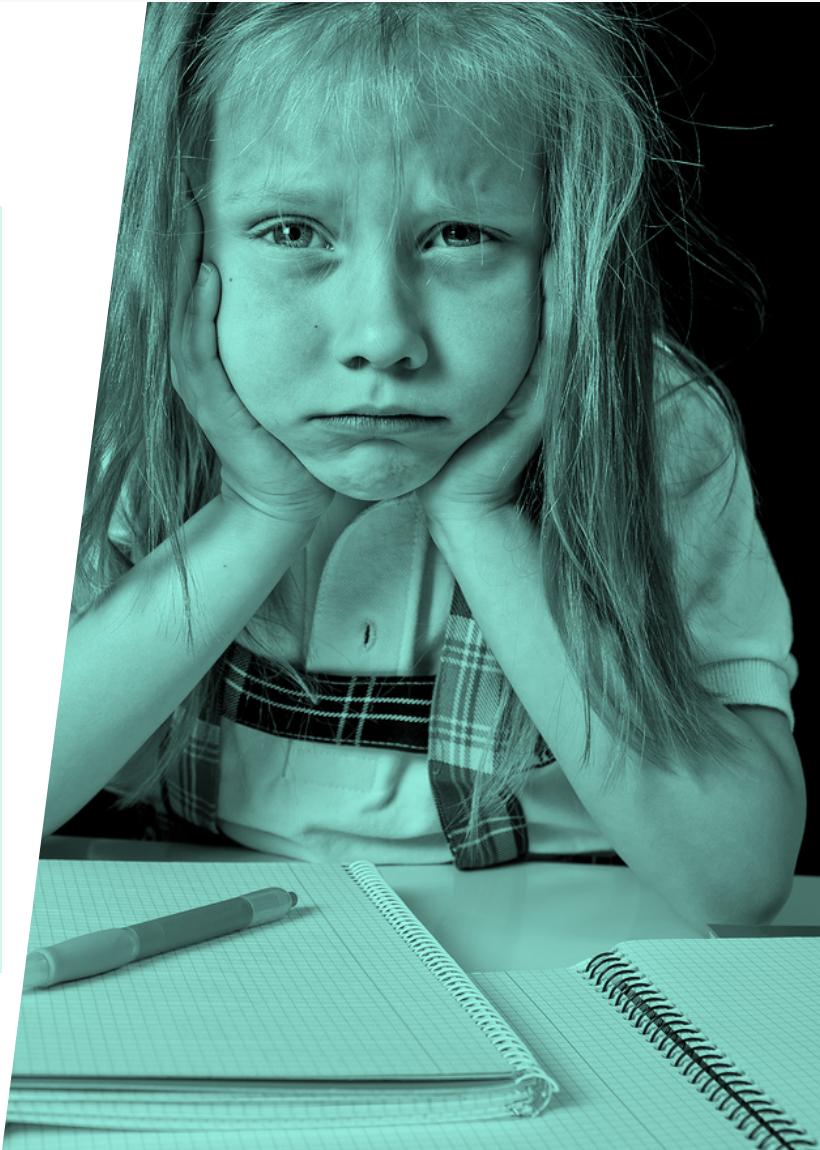
LANGUAGE  
English

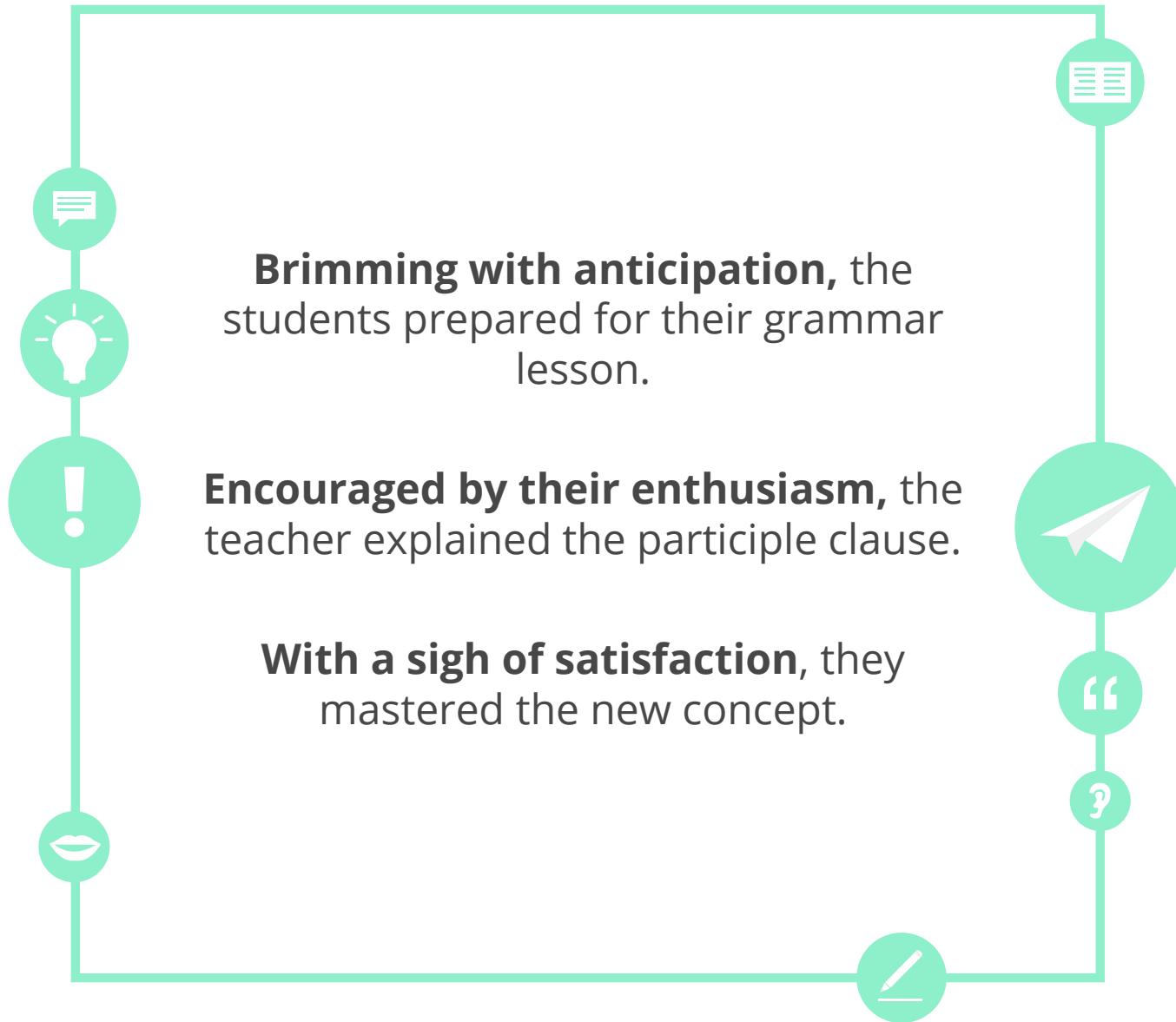




## Goals

- Can identify the different participle clauses and explain their uses.
- Can explain when to use tense shifting and use it when creating my own sentences with participle clauses.







## Participle clauses

- Participle clauses are a type of **adverbial clause**.
- They can help us communicate more **efficiently**.
- They are often seen in newspaper articles due to their **passive** voice.



**Passing the concert hall on my right,** I remembered our performances with the school band.

“

## Present and past participle

**Participle clauses** begin with **present** or **past participles**.

- **Present participles** of regular verbs end in **-ing**.
- **Past participles** of regular verbs end in **-ed**.
- Observe some regular verb examples below.
- **Some past participles** are **irregular**, and do not follow the **-ed** rule (as in **sung** below).

Past participle	Present participle
laughed	laughing
cycled	cycling
hurried	hurrying
followed	following
sung	singing





# Create past and present participles from the following verbs. Some are irregular!

Past participle

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Present participle

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run

perform

steal

pass

bring

remember

sing

show

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## Participle clauses

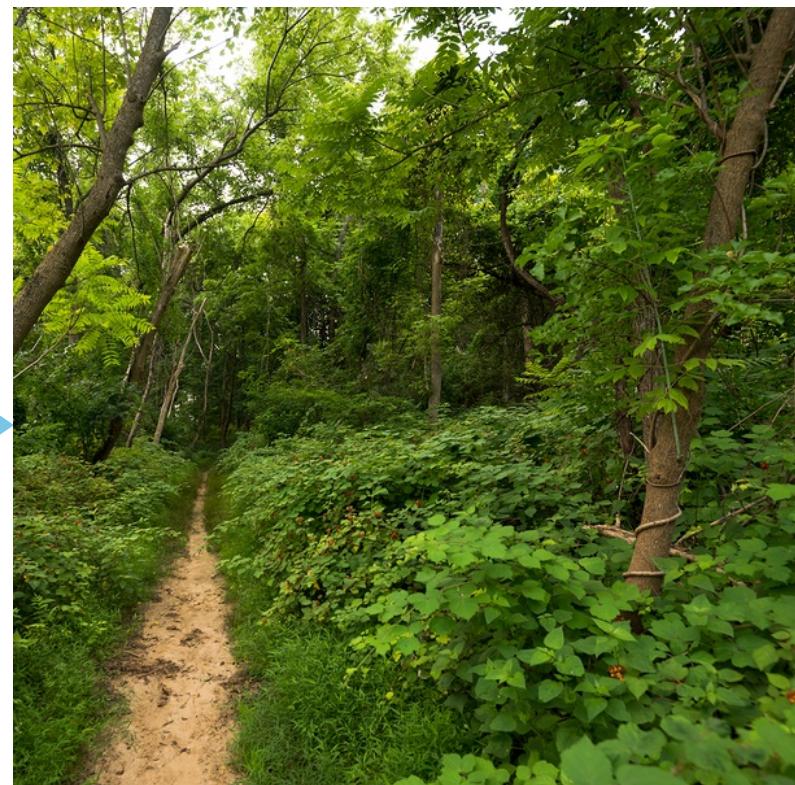
- Participle clauses begin with a **present** or **past participle**.
- Participle clauses function as **adjectives** in a sentence.
- Observe the examples below.

- **Sipping through his straw loudly,** Jimmy stared at the new student.

The **participle clause** adds more information to the sentence, **describing** what Jimmy was doing as he stared.

- **Walking briskly down the path,** Lucy kept her eyes peeled for singing robins.

The **participle clause** here **explains what** Lucy was doing and how she was doing it as she was looking for singing robins.



# Participle clauses

Add an independent clause to each participle clause to complete the sentence. What will each of the participle clauses below describe?

# Talking with an air of authority

Bringing as much energy as he could to the performance

Feeling  
unsettled after  
watching the  
film

## Viewing the lecture from the back row

# Running under the bridge

Watched with  
caution by the  
sheep

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## Tell your teacher

Why might participle clauses be effective and useful tools in our writing?



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## Presenting facts and emphasising time

- Participle clauses can be used to **add more information** to a **sentence** or to **present facts**.
- They can also be used to **emphasise when something happened** in a sentence, and **if it went before** something else.
  - When we do this, we use the following structure, the **perfect participle**:
    - **having + past participle**

### Presenting facts/information:

- The people **living down the road** are very disruptive.
- The refugees **being transported to better housing** are all very friendly.
- The group of people **protesting by the factory** are getting tired.

### Emphasising time:

- **Enjoying myself at the party**, I realised all of a sudden I hadn't made an important phone call.
- **Sleeping through her alarm**, Cate woke with a start and realised she would be late.
- The children were let out to play **having completed their homework**.
- **Having completed all of her chores for the day**, Leila treated herself to a nap.



## Quick review

Turn back to the exercise on p. 6  
and make a perfect participle with  
all of the verbs on the page.

“

## Expressing a condition

- Participle clauses can also be used to **express a condition**.
- A sentence like '**If you look at it closely, the paper is actually quite straightforward.**'
  - Replacing the 'if' with the past participle gives us:
  - '**Looked at closely, the paper is actually quite straightforward**', a more efficient and less verbose sentence.

- **Looked after well**, these boots will last up to ten years.
- You will be able to play two encores, **judging by the audience's mood**.



“

## Expressing a reason

- **Participle clauses** are also useful for expressing a **reason**
- A sentence expressing a **reason** for something might look like this:
  - **I wanted to talk to Laura about our plans for the Christmas party**, so I organised to meet her for coffee.
- Look at the format below and see how you can express this more efficiently using a **participle clause**.

- Remove the **so** (or **therefore** if a different joining conjunction is used).
- Change the **active verb** to a **present participle**.
- The sentence becomes:

**Wanting to talk to Laura about our Christmas party plans**, I organised to meet her for coffee.



“

## Expressing a result of something

- **Participle clauses** are also useful for expressing a **result of something**.
- A sentence expressing a **result of something** might look like this:
  - I couldn't bear to talk about the restaurant again, **since I listened to Andy complaining all morning.**
- Look at the format below and see how you can express this more efficiently using a **participle clause**.

- Remove the **because** , **since**, or **as a result of**.
- Change **listened** to the **perfect participle: having listened**.
- The sentence becomes:

I couldn't bear to talk about the restaurant again, **having listened to Andy complaining all morning.**





## Rewrite the sentences to include participle clauses.

I wanted to organise a trip to South Africa, so I started looking online for flights.

Although I enjoyed the food at the party, I realised that I disliked the host.

If you approach it with commitment, the guitar is an easy instrument to learn.

Tom wasn't in the mood to sit through the film, since he had seen it the week before.

“

## Correct punctuation

- When using a **participle clause** to **introduce an independent clause**, or when following an independent clause with a participle clause, **separate** the two clauses with a **comma**.
- When putting a participle clause in the middle of a sentence, i.e. breaking up an independent clause, no comma is needed.

Notice the comma use in the sentences below:

- **Running back to the bungalow,** Josie realised her backpack was gone.
- Josie ran back to the bungalow, **having realised her backpack was gone.**

**No comma** is needed when you are using a participle clause in the middle of an independent clause:

- The people **living in the woods** were very nice.





## Punctuate these sentences correctly

1. Staring out the window mournfully David thought of his friend back home.



Staring out of the window mournfully, David thought of his friend back home.

2. Silenced by the roar of the aeroplane Jacinta held her tongue.



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3. Humming quietly to himself Jan flung the newspaper into the yard.



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4. Thundering in the distance the storm rapidly approached the coast.



\_\_\_\_\_

5. My brother finally bought a house encouraged by the healthy market.



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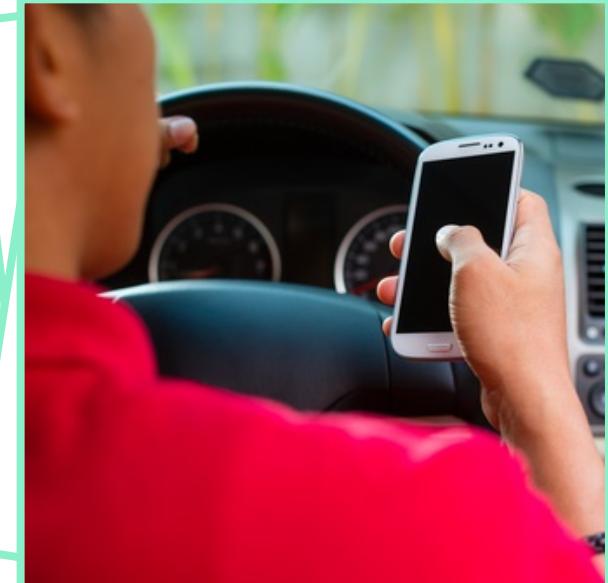
**Write sentences including participle clauses to describe these pictures. Use the examples for help if you need it.**

Having stopped a few times already...



Tired from the hike...

Checking his phone repeatedly...



Not paying proper attention...



## Rewrite these sentences to include participle clauses

1. The animals were very underfed.



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2. While I was walking to the train, I realised I had forgotten my textbooks.



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3. We wanted to see the performance, so organised the day off work.



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4. That tablet is very good value.



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5. The cake is nearly ready.



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## Add participle clauses to these sentences

**Remember, you can place the structure in differing parts of the sentence. The first one has been done for you.**

1. The lady fell off her chair, having laughed until her sides ached.
2. My uncle's suit was immaculately pressed and tailored.
3. Freddy approached the abandoned house.
4. I waited impatiently for the nurse to call my name.
5. I followed the driver through the centre of town, and out towards the industrial district.



## Participle clauses

In what kinds of contexts might  
using participle clauses be  
effective?



## Combine the sentences in each pair below into single sentences using participle clauses.

I waited for my friend to arrive outside the flat.

I watched a cat playing in the rubbish.

The man ate the jar of pickles slowly.

He was sitting in a stately green armchair.

The girls were chasing each other in the playground.

I watched the girls playing.

Sandra concentrated intensely, eyes focused on the mirror.

She was giving herself a haircut.

I tried to finish watching the film a few times.

I gave up and went to bed.



Watching a cat play in the rubbish, I waited for my friend to arrive outside the flat.

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The man ate the jar of pickles slowly, He was sitting in a stately green armchair.

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The girls were chasing each other in the playground, I watched the girls playing.

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Sandra concentrated intensely, eyes focused on the mirror, She was giving herself a haircut.

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I tried to finish watching the film a few times, I gave up and went to bed.

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## When to use participle clauses

- Participle clauses are used mostly in **written English**. They sound **too formal** to be used regularly in **speech**.
- They are effective and useful tools for including **a large amount of information** in a sentence without making it overly long or clumsy.

- Speaking to her friend with the telephone in her left hand, Georgia painted her nails with the brush in her right hand.

This sentence is much more effective and snappy than the long form below.

- Georgia was speaking to her friend with the telephone in her left hand and painting her nails with the brush in her right hand.



“

## Dangling participle



- Be aware that it is very **easy to misuse** participle clauses and create **dangling participles**.
- When a modifying part of the sentence is placed too far away from the subject it modifies you end up with **poorly constructed sentences** that readers can find **confusing**.
- The clause should **relate clearly** to a **noun** or a **pronoun** in a sentence. If not, it is left to hang there with nothing to grasp on to.

- I was walking down the highway. The traffic roared loudly.
- Walking down the highway, the traffic roared loudly.
- **Traffic** is the subject of the sentence above, and they follow the **participle clause**. What the clumsy sentence is saying is that the **traffic was walking down the highway** – not what was intended.
- To fix dangling participles, **add the proper subject** immediately **after the clause**.
- Walking down the highway, **I could hear** the traffic roaring loudly.

“

## Dangling participle

- Be careful when **combining two clauses** that **refer to different subjects**.
- Observe the sentences below:
  - I climbed carefully into the boat. The captain was starting the engine.

If we change the first sentence to a participle clause and drop the **I** we can easily end up with a confusing sentence:

- Climbing carefully into the boat, the captain was starting the engine.

This example makes it seem like the captain was climbing into the boat.

To avoid this, **add the I** to the sentence:

- Climbing carefully into the boat, **I saw** the captain starting the engine.





## Alter the sentences

**Rewrite these sentences to fix the dangling participle.**

1. Running quickly up the path, the trees swayed in the distance.
2. Sailing swiftly over the rapids, the waterfall rumbling softly ahead.
3. Hungrily eyeing the table, the food sat untouched.
4. Running after the pigeons, the ears flopped in the breeze.
5. Listening to the music, the records sat arranged on the bookshelf.

“

## Arranging participle clauses

- Participle clauses can appear at the beginning, middle or end of a sentence.
- Be aware that **shifting the clause** to different positions can make some sentences sound more awkward or confusing.

- Finding law school difficult, Sandra decided to drop out and try something new.
- Sandra decided to drop out and try something new, finding law school difficult.
- Sandra, finding law school difficult, decided to drop out and try something new.





## Rewrite these sentences, placing the participle clause in another part of the sentence.

1. Disgusted by the behaviour of his teammates, Richard decided he would never attend training again.



Richard decided he would never attend training again, disgusted by the behaviour of his teammates.

2. Reading the second page of the newspaper, Grandfather fell asleep in his chair.



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3. Singing from the heart, Brandon reveled in the skill and beauty of his voice.



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4. Talking to the bus driver, Jenny didn't notice the 5 dollar note slip out of her wallet.



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5. I really didn't understand what the lecture was about, sitting in the back row.



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## Rewrite the passage, inserting participle clauses where appropriate.

Barbara stepped softly into the graveyard. She could hear a soft wailing in the distance. Behind her she could feel the gaze of some unseen being. She felt a shiver down the back of her spine and glanced behind her. Two luminous eyes glowed in the darkness like fireflies. They pierced her heart and filled her soul with fear. She turned to run and tripped over her own feet.





## Write a description

You have recently returned from a stimulating four day hike of some local mountain ranges with some close friends. Describe the day-to-day events and what you saw in detail. Use participle clauses to avoid becoming overly verbose. Try to vary the length of your sentences.

A sheet of white paper with a vertical blue margin line on the left side. There are ten sets of horizontal lines for writing, each set starting with a small circular dot at the top.

Remember, you can use participle clauses at the beginning, middle and end of the sentence.





## Reflect on the lesson

Take a moment to review any new **vocabulary, phrases, language structures** or **grammar points** you have come across for the first time in this lesson.

Review them with your teacher one more time to make sure you don't forget!



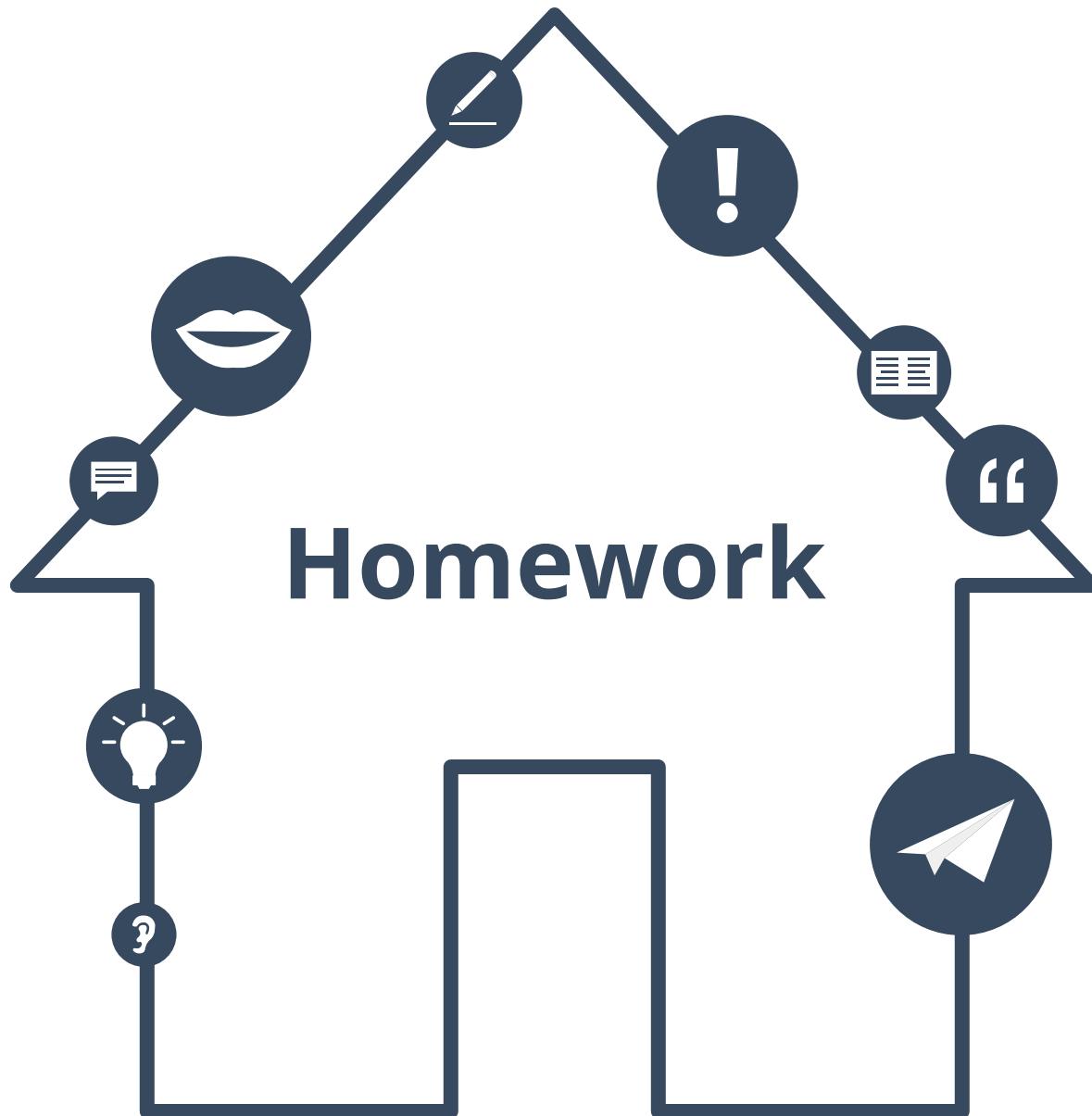


## Answer key

Exercise p. 6  
Run: run, running, Perform: perform, performing, Steal: stolen, stealing, Pass:  
Passed, passing, Remember: remember, rememberring, Bring: brought, bringing,  
Sing: Sung, singing, Show: shown, showing  
Exercise p. 11  
Having run, having performed, having stolen, having passed, having remembered,  
having brought, having sung, having shown.

Exercise p. 14  
Wanting to organise a trip to South Africa, I started looking online for flights.  
Despite having enjoyed the food at the party, I realised I disliked the host.  
Tom wasn't in the mood to sit through the film, having seen it the week before.  
Approached with commitment, the guitar is an easy instrument to learn.

Exercise p. 17:  
Add a comma between participle clause and independent clause each time.





## Matching: complete the sentences

1. Fearing that my house might be robbed,

2. Sitting in the windswept garden,

3. Sneaking past the sentries,

4. Giuseppe tucked into his meal

a. I studied the carefully arranged flowerbeds with curiosity.

b. the soldier advanced stealthily past the front line.

c. I double locked my front door when I went to work.

d. slurping the spaghetti noisily between his lips.



# Creative writing activity

Pick one of the characters in the previous homework activity. Write a short account of their day, from morning to evening. Be sure to use a range of participle clauses to include additional information.

Rising from their bed...



## Homework answer key

Homework task p.31 - 1C, 2A, 3B, 4D



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