CAPITOLO

8

Looking Back

"The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea / In a beautiful pea-green boat," — Edward Lear, "The Owl and the Pussy-cat"

OBIETTIVI

1. I can talk about the main events in a person's life (*be born, grow up, leave school, get married...*) and use time expressions such as *yesterday, last year, two days ago, in 1999*.
2. I can use *was / were* and *there was / there were* to describe the past.
3. I can form the past simple of regular verbs with the correct spelling and pronounce the *-ed* ending as /t/, /d/ or /ɪd/.
4. I can use about forty common irregular verbs, and make negatives, questions and short answers with *did*.
5. I can ask and answer questions about last weekend and show interest when I listen (*Really? Did you? What happened next?*).
6. I can write a short biography of a famous person and tell the story of Charles Darwin's life.

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Everybody has a story. Your grandparents remember a world without smartphones; your parents remember their first day at work; you remember your first day at primary school, or your first holiday abroad. Scientists, explorers and artists have stories too, and some of their stories changed the world. To tell any story about the past, English uses one tense more than any other: the *past simple*. In this unit Sam interviews his grandma about her life, Giulia and her friends talk about their weekend, and you meet two great British naturalists, Mary Anning and Charles Darwin. Part III of this book, *Then and Now*, starts here: it is time to look back.

8.1 Vocabulary: life events, time expressions and famous lives

8.1.1 Life events

A **life event** *(ita: tappa della vita)* is an important moment in somebody's life: the day they were born, the day they started school, their first job, their wedding. Tabella 8.1 shows the most common life events in their base form and in the past simple, the tense you study in this unit. The examples tell the story of Sam's grandma, Joan, whom you meet in the reading text.

Tabella 8.1 Life events

Life event	Past simple	Example
be born	was / were born	Grandma Joan was born in 1958.
grow up	grew up	She grew up in a village near Bath.
start school	started school	She started school at the age of five.
leave school	left school	She left school when she was sixteen.
go to university	went to university	Darwin went to university in Edinburgh.
get a job	got a job	Joan got her first job in a shoe shop.
meet (somebody)	met	She met Arthur at a dance.
get married	got married	They got married in 1980.
move house / move to…	moved	They moved to Bristol in 1981.
have a baby / have children	had	They had a baby, Helen, in 1983.
retire	retired	Joan retired in 2018.
die	died	Darwin died in 1882.

Look carefully at the first line. In English you **be born** *(ita: nascere)*: the verb is *be*, so in the past it is always *was born* or *were born*. To **grow up** *(ita: crescere, diventare grande)* is a phrasal verb: *I grew up in Turin*. When you finish school for ever, you **leave school** *(ita: finire la scuola, lasciare la scuola)*; when you go to live in a new home, you **move house** *(ita: traslocare)*. When you **get married** *(ita: sposarsi)*, there is a wedding; when you stop working at the end of your career, usually at around 65, you **retire** *(ita: andare in pensione)*.

Many life events use the verb **get**, which in these collocations means "become" or "obtain": *get married, get divorced, get a job, get a degree*. Remember that Sam's parents, David and Helen, are divorced: they *got divorced* some years ago. Figura 8.1 puts Grandma Joan's life events on a *lifeline*, a timeline of one person's life. The distances between the events are proportional to the years.

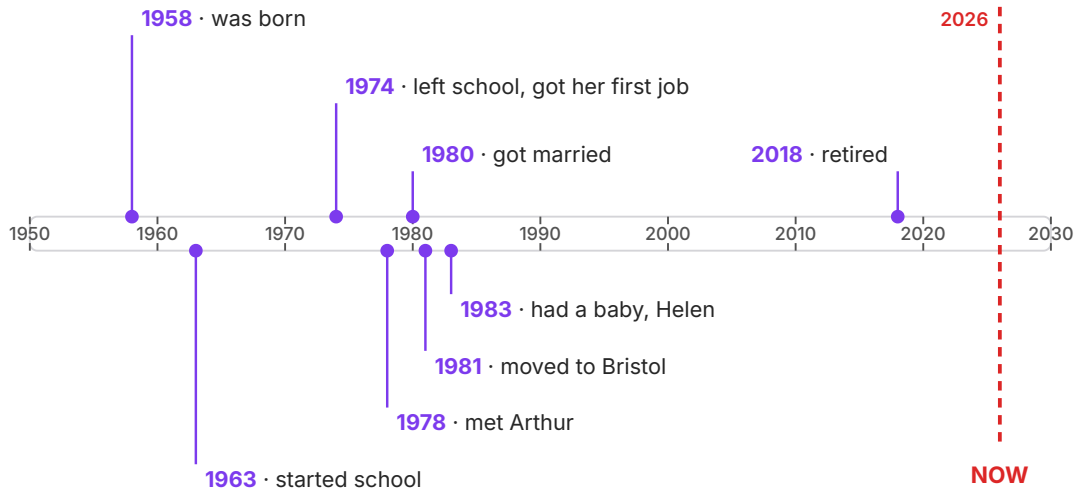


Figura 8.1 Grandma Joan's lifeline (proportional time axis, 1950–2030). Each dot is a life event in the past simple; the dashed red line marks NOW (2026).

8.1.2 Time expressions for the past

To say *when* something happened, you need **time expressions** *(ita: espressioni di tempo)*. Some take a preposition and some do not. Study Tabella 8.2: the prepositions *in, on, at* work as in Unit 3.

Tabella 8.2 Time expressions for the past

Expression	Examples	Note
yesterday	yesterday, yesterday morning / afternoon / evening, the day before yesterday	but *last night*, not ✗ *yesterday night*
last + time word	last night, last week, last month, last year, last Saturday, last summer	no preposition: ✗ *in last year*
period + *ago*	ten minutes ago, three days ago, two years ago, a long time ago	*ago* goes AFTER the period
in	in 1999, in June, in the summer, in the 1970s	years, months, seasons, decades
on	on Monday, on 12 February 1809, on my birthday	days and dates
at	at six o'clock, at the weekend, at the age of twelve	clock times, ages
when + clause	when I was six, when they got married	a whole sentence after *when*

The word **ago** *(ita: fa)* is special. It measures the time back from NOW, and it always comes after the period: *two days ago* = *due giorni fa*. You can ask *How long ago…?*: *How long ago did you move?* — *About three years ago.* Years are said in pairs of numbers up to 1999 (*1809* = *eighteen oh nine, 1958* = *nineteen fifty-eight*) and usually as *two thousand and…* for 2000–2009 (*2005* = *two thousand and five*). For 2010 and later both forms are common: *twenty eleven* or *two thousand and eleven*. A decade is written with an *s*: *the 1970s* (*the nineteen seventies*).

8.1.3 Famous lives and achievements

An **achievement** *(ita: risultato importante, impresa)* is something important that a person does after a lot of work. When we talk about famous lives, the same verbs come again and again. Notice the nouns that come from them: many people in this unit are good examples.

Tabella 8.3 Achievements: verbs, nouns and people

Verb	Noun (the thing)	Noun (the person)	Example
discover	a discovery	a discoverer	Mary Anning discovered many fossils.
invent	an invention	an inventor	Who invented the telescope?
explore	an exploration	an explorer	Explorers sailed round the world.
collect	a collection	a collector	Darwin collected thousands of plants.
write	a book, a novel	a writer	Dickens wrote *A Christmas Carol*.
win	a prize, an award	a winner	She won a prize for science.
become famous	fame	a celebrity	She became famous for her fossils.

Two more words are useful in this unit. A **fossil** *(ita: fossile)* is the remains of a very old plant or animal, preserved in rock: a bone, a shell, or the shape of a leaf. A **naturalist** *(ita: naturalista)* is a person who studies plants, animals and nature; in the 1800s it was the usual name for what we now call a biologist or a geologist.

8.2 Reading: Living memories

Before you read. Think of your grandparents or another older person you know. When were they fifteen? What was different in their world? Make a list of three things they didn't have.

This term Year 10 at Hillside Academy are working on a history project called *Living memories*: each student interviews an older person and writes an article for the school website. Here is Sam's.

Living memories: my grandma at fifteen

by Sam Taylor, Year 10

For our project I chose my grandma, Joan. She was born in 1958, so she was fifteen in 1973, more than fifty years ago — the same age as me now. I asked her about her life. Here is our conversation.

Where were you born, Grandma?
In a small village near Bath, in the west of England. I grew up there with my parents and my two brothers.

What was your house like?
It was small and cold! There wasn't any central heating. In winter there was a coal fire in the living room, and on very cold mornings there was ice on the *inside* of my bedroom window.

Did you have a TV?
Yes, we did, but it was black and white, and there were only three channels. We didn't have a phone. There was a red phone box at the end of our street, and I called my friends from there.

How did you get to school?
I walked — two miles there and two miles back, every day, in the rain too. My school was very strict. We wore a uniform with a hat, and we stood up when a teacher came into the room.

What was your favourite subject?
Maths. I loved numbers. And in 1971 Britain changed its money! Before that, there were 240 pence in a pound. After that, there were 100. Our teacher was very happy that year.

What did you do in your free time?
On Saturdays my friends and I took the bus into Bath. We didn't buy much, because we didn't have much money, but we looked at the clothes in the shops and listened to records in the music shop. Sometimes we went to the cinema.

When did you leave school?
In 1974, when I was sixteen. I got a job in a shoe shop in Bath. I was very proud of my first wages!

How did you meet Grandad?
At a dance, in 1978. He asked me to dance, but he was a terrible dancer! We laughed all evening. Two years later we got married, and in 1981 we moved to Bristol. Your mum was born in 1983.

Did you work in Bristol?
Yes, I did. I worked in the office of a children's hospital for more than thirty years. I retired in 2018.

Were you happy when you were young?
Yes, I was. Life wasn't always easy, but we were happy. We didn't have much, but we had a lot of fun.

Grandma's world at fifteen was very different from mine: no internet, no mobile phone, no central heating. But some things didn't change. She loved maths, she went to the cinema with her friends on Saturdays and she laughed a lot. So do I!

Language in context. Sam's article is all about the past, so it uses the *past simple*. Find these examples in the text: *was / were* (*She was born… we were happy*), *there was / there were* (*there was a coal fire, there were only three channels*), regular verbs in *-ed* (*walked, called, loved, laughed, retired*), irregular verbs (*grew up, wore, stood, took, got, met*), negatives with *didn't* (*We didn't have a phone*) and questions with *did* (*How did you get to school?*). You study all of them in section 8.3.

8.2.1 A poem: *The Owl and the Pussy-cat*

Edward Lear (1812–1888) was an English artist and a writer of **nonsense** poems: funny poems that don't need to make sense. *The Owl and the Pussy-cat* (1871) tells a story in the past simple. Here is the first **stanza** *(ita: strofa)*. *(owl: gufo; pussy-cat: micio; pea-green: verde pisello; five-pound note: banconota da cinque sterline)*

The Owl and the Pussy-cat went to sea
In a beautiful pea-green boat,
They took some honey, and plenty of money,
Wrapped up in a five-pound note.
The Owl looked up to the stars above,
And sang to a small guitar,
"O lovely Pussy! O Pussy, my love,
What a beautiful Pussy you are,
You are,
You are!
What a beautiful Pussy you are!"

— Edward Lear, "The Owl and the Pussy-cat" (1871), first stanza

8.3 Grammar: past simple of *be*, regular and irregular verbs, *did*, subject questions and *ago*

8.3.1 *was / were* and *there was / there were*

The past of *be* has only two forms: **was** for *I, he, she, it*, and **were** for *you, we, they*. There is no auxiliary: negatives add *not* (*wasn't, weren't*) and questions put *was / were* before the subject, exactly like *am / is / are* in Unit 1.

Tabella 8.4 Past simple of *be*

Affirmative	Negative	Questions	Short answers
I was at home.	I was not (wasn't) at home.	Was I late?	Yes, you were. / No, you weren't.
He / She / It was tired.	He / She / It wasn't tired.	Was she tired?	Yes, she was. / No, she wasn't.
You were great.	You were not (weren't) great.	Were you at school?	Yes, I was. / No, I wasn't.
We / They were happy.	We / They weren't happy.	Were they happy?	Yes, they were. / No, they weren't.
There was a phone box.	There wasn't a phone.	Was there a TV?	Yes, there was. / No, there wasn't.
There were three channels.	There weren't any computers.	Were there any shops?	Yes, there were. / No, there weren't.

There was and *there were* are the past of *there is / there are* (Unit 4). Use *there was* with a singular or an uncountable noun (*there was a coal fire, there wasn't any central heating*) and *there were* with a plural noun (*there were only three channels*). With question words: *Where were you yesterday? How was your weekend? What was the weather like?*

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Il passato di *be*. *Was* (1ª e 3ª persona singolare) e *were* (tutte le altre persone) traducono *ero / era, sono stato, fui*...: l'inglese ha una sola forma dove l'italiano ne ha tre (imperfetto, passato prossimo, passato remoto). *I was tired* = *ero stanco / sono stato stanco*. La forma negativa aggiunge *not* (*wasn't, weren't*); la forma interrogativa inverte soggetto e verbo (*Were you at home?*), senza ausiliare, come al presente. Risposte brevi: *Yes, I was. / No, I wasn't.*

There was / there were = *c'era / c'erano* (o *c'è stato / ci sono stati*): *There was a phone box* = *c'era una cabina telefonica*. Come al presente, *there* non si omette mai: ✗ *Was a fire* → ✓ *There was a fire*.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

"Sono nato nel 2011." In italiano *nascere* è un verbo come gli altri; in inglese è *be born*, e il tempo lo dà il verbo *be*. Quando si parla della propria nascita si usa sempre il passato.

✗ *I am born in 2011.* ✗ *I born in 2011.* ✗ *I was borned in 2011.* → ✓ *I was born in 2011.*
✗ *Where are you born?* → ✓ *Where were you born?*

8.3.2 Past simple: use and regular verbs

We use the **past simple** *(ita: passato semplice)* for actions and situations that are **finished** and happened at a **specific time in the past**. Often the sentence says when (*yesterday, in 1974, two days ago*); sometimes the time is clear from the situation (*Did you enjoy the film?* — the film is over). Look at Figura 8.2: each action is a point on the timeline, separate from NOW.

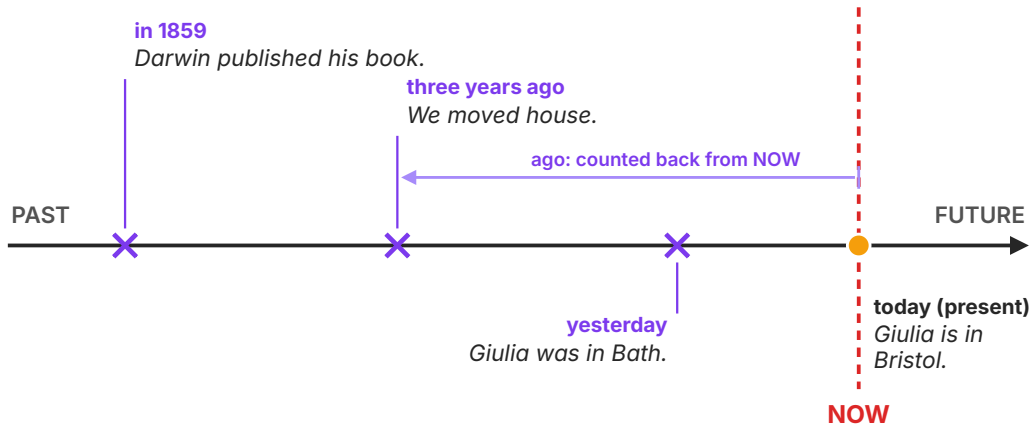


Figura 8.2 The past simple on a timeline. Each violet cross is a finished action at a specific time in the past (*in 1859, three years ago, yesterday*); *ago* measures the time back from NOW. The amber dot is the present, for contrast: *Yesterday Giulia was in Bath; today she is in Bristol.*

A **regular verb** *(ita: verbo regolare)* forms the past simple with **-ed**. The great news is that the form is the same for every person: *I walked, you walked, she walked, we walked, they walked*. There is no *-s* for *he / she / it*. The spelling, however, follows some rules (Tabella 8.5).

Tabella 8.5 Spelling of regular past simple forms

Rule	Examples
Most verbs: + *-ed*	walk → walked, want → wanted, play → played, open → opened
Verbs ending in *-e*: + *-d*	live → lived, love → loved, decide → decided, retire → retired
Consonant + *-y*: *-y* → *-ied*	study → studied, try → tried, carry → carried
Vowel + *-y*: + *-ed*	play → played, enjoy → enjoyed, stay → stayed
One syllable, one vowel + one consonant: double the consonant	stop → stopped, plan → planned, chat → chatted, drop → dropped
… but never double *w, x, y*	fix → fixed, snow → snowed, play → played
Two syllables, stress on the LAST syllable: double	prefer → preferred, regret → regretted
Two syllables, stress on the FIRST syllable: do not double	visit → visited, open → opened, happen → happened, listen → listened
BrE: one vowel + *-l* always doubles	travel → travelled, cancel → cancelled (AmE traveled, canceled)

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Il past simple dei verbi regolari. Si forma aggiungendo *-ed* alla forma base del verbo, ed è uguale per tutte le persone: *I / you / he / she / we / they worked*. Non serve nessun ausiliare nella frase affermativa. Le regole di ortografia sono quasi le stesse della forma in *-ing* (Unità 5): raddoppio della consonante finale dopo una vocale breve accentata (*stop → stopped*), *-y* che diventa *-ied* dopo consonante (*study → studied*), e in inglese britannico raddoppio della *-l* (*travelled*).

Confronto con l'italiano. Il past simple traduce sia il *passato prossimo* sia il *passato remoto* sia, spesso, l'*imperfetto*: *I walked to school* = *sono andato / andai / andavo a scuola a piedi*. Conta solo che l'azione sia finita e collocata in un momento del passato.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

Il passato prossimo non si traduce con *have*. In italiano diciamo *Ieri ho giocato a tennis*, con l'ausiliare *avere*. In inglese, con un tempo passato e finito (*yesterday, last week, in 2010, two days ago*) si usa il past simple, senza *have*.

✗ *Yesterday I have played tennis.* → ✓ *Yesterday I played tennis.*
✗ *Last summer we have gone to London.* → ✓ *Last summer we went to London.*

La forma con *have* esiste (è il *present perfect*), ma ha un altro uso: la studierai nell'Unità 13.

8.3.3 Pronouncing *-ed*

The *-ed* ending is always written the same, but it has three pronunciations. The rule depends on the last **sound** (not the last letter) of the base form:

- /ɪd/, an extra syllable, only after the sounds /t/ and /d/: *wanted* /ˈwɒntɪd/, *needed* /ˈniːdɪd/, *decided*, *started*, *visited*;
- /t/ after the other **voiceless sounds** *(ita: suoni sordi)*, /p k f s ʃ tʃ θ/: *stopped* /stɒpt/, *walked* /wɔːkt/, *laughed* /lɑːft/, *kissed*, *washed*, *watched*;
- /d/ after vowels and the other **voiced sounds** *(ita: suoni sonori)*: *played* /pleɪd/, *lived* /lɪvd/, *called* /kɔːld/, *opened*, *studied*.

To find out if a sound is voiced, put your fingers on your throat and say /vvvv/, then /ffff/: with /v/ you feel a vibration, with /f/ you do not. Remember that spelling can trick you: *laughed* ends in the sound /f/, so it is /lɑːft/; *fixed* ends in /ks/, so it is /fɪkst/; *liked* has a silent *e*, so it is /laɪkt/. Figura 8.3 sums up the rule.

/t/ after voiceless sounds /p/ /k/ /f/ /s/ /ʃ/ /tʃ/ /θ/		/d/ after vowels and voiced sounds /b/ /g/ /v/ /z/ /dʒ/ /m/ /n/ /l/ …		/ɪd/ only after /t/ and /d/ + one extra syllable	
walked	/wɔːkt/	**played**	/pleɪd/	**wanted**	/ˈwɒntɪd/
stopped	/stɒpt/	**lived**	/lɪvd/	**needed**	/ˈniːdɪd/
laughed	/lɑːft/	**called**	/kɔːld/	**started**	/ˈstɑːtɪd/
kissed	/kɪst/	**opened**	/ˈəʊpənd/	**decided**	/dɪˈsaɪdɪd/
washed	/wɒʃt/	**studied**	/ˈstʌdid/	**visited**	/ˈvɪzɪtɪd/
watched	/wɒtʃt/	**cleaned**	/kliːnd/	**ended**	/ˈendɪd/

Figura 8.3 The three pronunciations of the *-ed* ending. What counts is the last *sound* of the base form, not the last letter: *laughed* ends in the sound /f/, so its ending is /t/.

DA RICORDARE

Say the extra syllable /ɪd/ ONLY after /t/ or /d/. Never say ✗ /ˈwɔːkɪd/ for *walked* or ✗ /ˈlɪvɪd/ for *lived*: they have one syllable, /wɔːkt/ and /lɪvd/.

8.3.4 Irregular verbs

An **irregular verb** *(ita: verbo irregolare)* does not form the past simple with *-ed*: *go → went, see → saw, have → had*. There are not many irregular verbs, but they are the most frequent verbs of the language, so you need them all the time. As with regular verbs, the past simple form is the same for every person: *I went, she went, they went*. Tabella 8.6 groups forty common irregular verbs by pattern, which makes them easier to learn. The complete list, with the past participles that you will need in Unit 13, is in Tabella A.1 at the end of the book.

Tabella 8.6 Forty common irregular verbs, grouped by pattern

Pattern	Base form → past simple
No change	cost → cost · cut → cut · put → put
One vowel changes	begin → began · come → came · drink → drank · get → got · give → gave · run → ran · sit → sat · swim → swam · win → won
Other vowel changes	break → broke · drive → drove · eat → ate · find → found · grow → grew · know → knew · see → saw · speak → spoke · take → took · write → wrote
Ending in *-ought* / *-aught* /ɔːt/	bring → brought · buy → bought · think → thought · catch → caught · teach → taught
Ending in *-t* or *-d*	feel → felt · leave → left · lose → lost · meet → met · spend → spent · have → had · hear → heard · make → made · say → said · tell → told
Completely different	be → was / were · do → did · go → went

Two pronunciation points: *said* is /sed/, not ✗ /seɪd/; and the past of *read* /riːd/ is written *read* but pronounced /red/, like the colour. A good way to learn irregular verbs is to learn a few each day, in groups, and to say them aloud: *buy, bought — bring, brought — think, thought*.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

I verbi irregolari. Hanno una forma propria di past simple, che va imparata a memoria: *go → went* (*andai, sono andato, andavo*), *see → saw*, *buy → bought*. Come per i verbi regolari, la forma è unica per tutte le persone e nella frase affermativa non serve ausiliare. I verbi irregolari sono pochi (circa 150 in uso), ma sono i più frequenti: *be, have, do, go, get, make, say, see, take, come*.

Confronto con l'italiano. Anche in italiano i verbi più comuni sono irregolari (*essere → fui*, *andare → andai*, *fare → feci*). In inglese però l'irregolarità riguarda solo il past simple e il participio passato: tutte le altre forme sono regolari.

LEARNING TO LEARN

Learning irregular verbs. Don't learn the list from A to Z: learn the verbs in groups that sound the same. *buy, bring, think, catch, teach → bought, brought, thought, caught, taught*; *drink, sing, swim, begin → drank, sang, swam, began*; *cut, put, cost, let, hit* → no change. Learn ten verbs at a time, say them aloud (*go – went*), and use each one in a true sentence about you: *Last summer I swam in the sea every day.* Test yourself with flashcards — base form on the front, past simple on the back — and keep the verbs you get wrong for the next day. The full list is in the Reference pages at the end of the book.

APPROFONDIMENTO

Why are some verbs irregular? Most irregular verbs are very old. They come from Old English, the language of the Anglo-Saxons, which often showed the past by changing a vowel inside the verb — as German still does today: German *singen – sang – gesungen*, English *sing – sang – sung*. Over the centuries many of these verbs became regular. In Shakespeare's time people sometimes still used *holp* for *helped*, and Shakespeare wrote it in *Macbeth*. Today the process continues: some verbs have two forms, like *dreamt / dreamed* and *learnt / learned*. And new verbs are always regular: *text → texted*, *google → googled*.

8.3.5 Negatives, questions and short answers with *did*

In the present simple you use the auxiliary *do / does* (Unit 3). In the past simple the auxiliary is **did** for every person, and the main verb goes back to the **base form**: the past is already in *did*, so you do not need it twice.

Tabella 8.7 Past simple with *did* (all verbs except *be*)

Affirmative	Negative	Questions	Short answers
I walked to school.	I did not (didn't) walk.	Did you walk?	Yes, I did. / No, I didn't.
She went to Bath.	She didn't go to Bath.	Did she go to Bath?	Yes, she did. / No, she didn't.
We had a TV.	We didn't have a phone.	Did they have a car?	Yes, they did. / No, they didn't.
With a question word: *Where did you go? What did she buy? When did they get married? How did you get to school?*			

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Negativa e interrogativa del past simple. Si usa l'ausiliare *did* (passato di *do*), uguale per tutte le persone, e il verbo principale torna alla **forma base**: *She went → She didn't go → Did she go?* Il passato è "segnato" una sola volta, su *did*. Ordine della domanda: (parola interrogativa) + *did* + soggetto + forma base: *Where did you go?* Risposte brevi: *Yes, I did. / No, I didn't.*

Eccezione: il verbo *be* non usa mai *did*: ✗ *Did you be at home?* → ✓ *Were you at home?* In italiano basta l'intonazione per fare una domanda (*Sei andato a Bath?*); in inglese l'ausiliare è obbligatorio.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

Il passato due volte. Dopo *did* e *didn't* il verbo va alla forma base: il passato c'è già nell'ausiliare.

✗ *Did you saw Sam?* → ✓ *Did you see Sam?*
✗ *We didn't went out.* → ✓ *We didn't go out.*
✗ *Where you went?* → ✓ *Where did you go?*

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

Task: write a question about the words in bold. *Darwin went to Edinburgh* ***in 1825***.

1. Choose the question word: the bold words are a time → **When**.
2. Find the main verb: *went*. It is not *be*, so you need **did**.
3. Put *did* after the question word and before the subject: *When did Darwin…*
4. Change the verb to the base form: *went* → *go*.
5. Add the rest, without the bold words: ***When did Darwin go to Edinburgh?***

Now compare a sentence with *be*: *Darwin was* ***in Edinburgh*** *in 1825.* → no *did*, just invert: ***Where was Darwin in 1825?***

8.3.6 Subject questions and *ago*

Look at these two questions about the same sentence, *Mary Anning found a skeleton.*

- *What did Mary Anning find? — A skeleton.* The answer is the **object** of the verb, so you need *did* (an object question).
- *Who found the skeleton? — Mary Anning (did).* The answer is the **subject** of the verb: this is a **subject question** *(ita: domanda sul soggetto)*. The question word takes the place of the subject, and there is **no *did***: the verb is in the past simple, as in the affirmative.

Subject questions are very common with *Who…?* and *What…?*: *Who wrote* On the Origin of Species*? — Darwin. Who won the match? What happened next?* You will study subject and object que-

stions in more detail in Unit 14. Figura 8.4 shows how to choose the right question form.

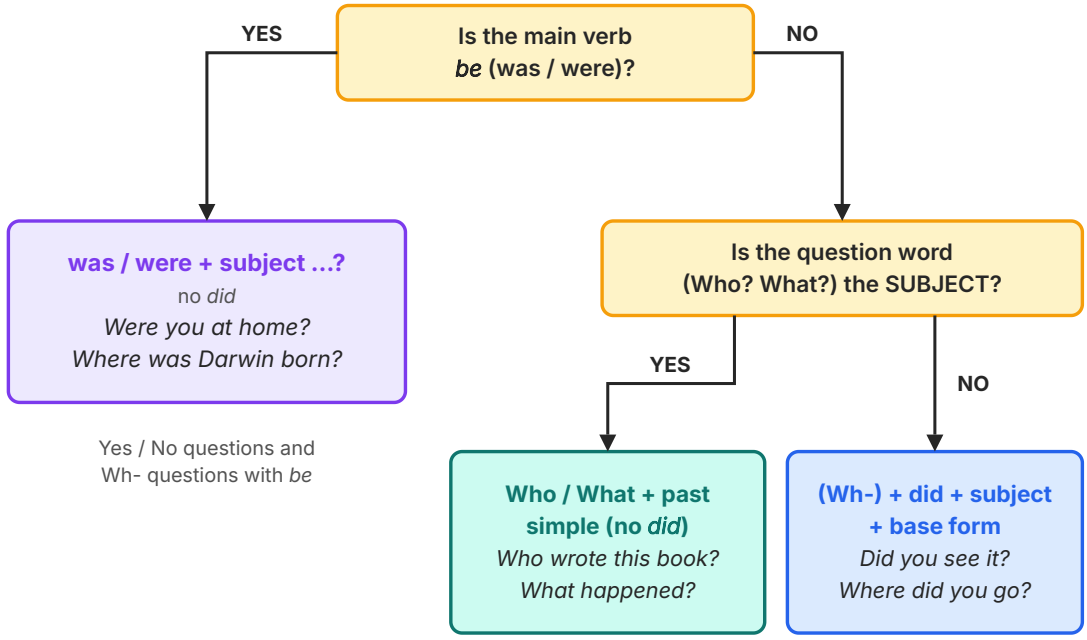


Figura 8.4 Choosing the right past simple question. *Be* never takes *did*; a subject question (*Who wrote...?*) has no *did*; all other questions use *did* + subject + base form.

Finally, **ago**. It means "before now", and it always follows a length of time: *three years ago, a week ago, a long time ago*. It goes with the past simple, because it points to a finished moment: *We moved here three years ago*. To ask about it: *How long ago did you move here?*

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Domande sul soggetto. Se la parola interrogativa (*who, what*) è il *soggetto* della frase, la domanda non usa *did* e il verbo resta al past simple: *Who found the skeleton? = Chi ha trovato lo scheletro?* Se invece la parola interrogativa è il *complemento oggetto*, serve *did*: *What did she find? = Che cosa ha trovato?* Confronta: *Who called you?* (chi ti ha chiamato?) / *Who did you call?* (chi hai chiamato?).

Ago = *fa* e va sempre DOPO l'espressione di tempo, con il past simple: *two days ago = due giorni fa*. Non si traduce con *before*: ✗ *before two days* ✗ *ago two days* → ✓ *two days ago*. ✗ *Who did find the skeleton?* → ✓ *Who found the skeleton?*

8.4 Listening and Speaking: talking about last weekend, showing interest

8.4.1 Monday morning

It's Monday morning at Hillside Academy. Before the first lesson, Giulia, Callum and Aoife talk about their weekend. Listen while three classmates read the script aloud, then read it. How many people had a problem at the weekend?

Tabella 8.8 Listening script — Monday morning

Callum	Hi, Giulia! How was your weekend?
Giulia	It was great, thanks. On Saturday Sam's family took me to Bath.
Callum	Oh, did they? What did you see?
Giulia	We visited the Roman Baths. They're nearly two thousand years old! Then it started to rain, so we went to a café and I tried a Bath bun. It was delicious.
Callum	Lucky you! I love Bath buns.
Aoife	Morning, everyone! Guess what? I found a fossil yesterday!
Giulia	Really? Where?
Aoife	In Lyme Regis, on the beach. We drove there early on Sunday morning. My dad looked for three hours and didn't find anything. Then I saw a stone with a spiral on it — an ammonite!
Callum	You're joking! Was it big?
Aoife	No, it wasn't. It was about the size of a coin. But it's about 190 million years old! What about you, Callum? Did you have a good weekend?
Callum	Not really. I flew to Edinburgh on Friday evening to see my mum, but the plane was late.
Aoife	Oh no! How late was it?
Callum	Four hours! There was a problem with the engine, so we waited at the airport and I didn't arrive until one o'clock in the morning.
Giulia	That's awful! Did your mum wait for you?
Callum	Yes, she did. And on Saturday we climbed Arthur's Seat. The view was amazing, so in the end it was a good weekend.
Aoife	And what happened next?
Callum	Next? The bell rang. Come on, it's maths!

The ammonite date is correct: the cliffs at Lyme Regis are made of rocks from the Early Jurassic period, about 200 to 185 million years old. Arthur's Seat is a hill in the centre of Edinburgh, the remains of an ancient volcano. Notice how the three friends keep the conversation going. They don't just listen: they react (*Lucky you! Oh no! That's awful!*), they ask short **echo questions** *(ita: domande di reazione, "ah sì?")* such as *Did they?* and *Really?*, and they ask for more details (*Was it big? How late was it? What happened next?*). An echo question repeats the auxiliary of the sentence you hear: *We went to Bath. — Did you? / The plane was late. — Was it?*

8.4.2 Useful language

Tabella 8.9 Useful language — talking about the past and showing interest

Function	Expressions
Asking about the past	How was your weekend? · What did you do at the weekend? · Where did you go? · Did you have a good time? · What was it like?
Answering	It was great / fantastic / OK / boring / a disaster. · Not bad, thanks. · Not really. · I didn't do much.
Showing interest (echo questions)	Really? · Did you? · Was it? · Were they? · Didn't you?
Reacting	Wow! · Lucky you! · That sounds amazing! · You're joking! · Oh no! · That's awful! · Poor you!
Asking for more	What happened next? · And then? · What did you do? · Who was there? · How long did it take?
Starting a story	Guess what? · You know what happened? · On Saturday morning…

Speaking.

1. **Pair work — last weekend.** Ask your partner five questions about last weekend (*Where did you go? Who were you with? What was the best moment?*). Your partner answers; you react to every answer with an expression from Tabella 8.9. Then swap roles.
2. **Role play — living memories.** Student A is an older person (a grandparent, a neighbour); Student B is a student doing the history project. B asks about A's life at fifteen: home, school, free time, first job. A invents the answers, using *was / were, there was / there were* and the past simple.
3. **Find someone who…** Walk around the class and ask *Did you…?* questions: *Did you go to the cinema last month? Did you get up before seven yesterday? Were you born in a different town?* When somebody says *Yes, I did*, ask one more question.

8.5 Writing: a short biography

A **biography** *(ita: biografia)* is the story of a person's life, written by somebody else (if you write the story of your own life, it is an *autobiography*). A short biography tells the main events in **chronological order** *(ita: ordine cronologico)*, the order in which they happened, and explains why the person is important. Read this model about a famous fossil hunter from the south of England.

Mary Anning, fossil hunter

(1) Mary Anning was a British fossil collector. She was born on 21 May 1799 in Lyme Regis, a small town on the south coast of England. Her family was poor.

(2) Mary's father, Richard, was a cabinetmaker. He also collected fossils on the beach and sold them to tourists, and Mary often helped him. After he died in 1810, the family needed money, so Mary and her brother Joseph continued his work.

(3) In 1811 Joseph found the skull of an ichthyosaur, a sea reptile from the time of the dinosaurs. Some months later Mary found the rest of the skeleton. She was only about twelve years old. After that, she made other important discoveries: in 1823 she found the first complete skeleton of a plesiosaur, and in 1828 a pterosaur, a flying reptile.

(4) Scientists bought her fossils and asked for her opinion, but she never became a member of the Geological Society of London, because it did not accept women. Mary Anning died in Lyme Regis in 1847. Today she is famous all over the world.

Tabella 8.10 The structure of the model biography

Paragraph	Content	Useful language
1 Introduction	Who the person was; when and where he or she was born	*X was a British… · She was born on 21 May 1799 in…*
2 Early life	Family, childhood, education	*As a child… · When she was… · After he died…*
3 Achievements	The main events and discoveries, in order	*In 1811… · Some months later… · After that… · Later…*
4 Later life and importance	Difficulties, death, why we remember him or her today	*Finally… · He / She died in… · Today he / she is famous for…*

The register is neutral: there are no contractions (*did not accept*, not *didn't*) and no exclamation marks. The past simple carries the story, and **time linkers** *(ita: connettivi temporali)* such as *in* + *year, after that, some months later, later, finally* show the order of the events. Notice also *on* + full date (*on 21 May 1799*), *in* + year (*in 1823*) and *at* + age (*at the age of twelve*).

Checklist. Before you hand in your biography, check that:

- you have four paragraphs: introduction, early life, achievements, later life and importance;
- the events are in chronological order, with dates and time linkers;
- regular verbs end in *-ed* with the correct spelling, and irregular verbs are correct (check Tabella A.1);
- negatives use *did not* + base form, and *be born* is always *was / were born*;
- every date and fact is true: check it in a reliable source.

Writing task. Write a short biography (80–100 words) of a famous person from the past: a scientist, an explorer, an artist or a sportsperson. Follow the four-paragraph plan in Tabella 8.10 (exercise 26).

8.6 Culture: Charles Darwin, a life of discovery

Charles Darwin was born on 12 February 1809 in Shrewsbury, a town in the west of England. His father, Robert, was a rich doctor, and his grandfather Erasmus was a doctor, a poet and a scientist. As a boy, Charles loved nature: he collected shells, stones and insects, and he spent hours outdoors.

In 1825 he went to the University of Edinburgh to study medicine, like his father. But he didn't like it: in those days there were no anaesthetics, and he could not watch operations. In 1827 he left Edinburgh, and the next year he went to Christ's College, Cambridge. There he studied to become a clergyman, but he spent a lot of his time collecting beetles.

The great adventure of his life began on 27 December 1831. Darwin was twenty-two when he sailed from Plymouth on HMS *Beagle*, a small ship of the Royal Navy, as the naturalist of the expedition. The voyage lasted almost five years. The *Beagle* sailed round the world: Darwin explored South America, the Galápagos Islands in the Pacific Ocean, Australia and southern Africa, and he collected thousands of plants, animals and fossils. On the Galápagos Islands he noticed that some animals, like mockingbirds and giant tortoises, were a little different on different islands. Why?

The *Beagle* arrived back in England on 2 October 1836. In 1839 Darwin married his cousin, Emma Wedgwood, and in 1842 they moved to Down House, a quiet home in the country in Kent. They had ten children. For about twenty years Darwin worked on his ideas, but he didn't publish them. Then, in 1858, a young naturalist called Alfred Russel Wallace sent him an essay with very similar ideas, and Darwin decided to act. On 24 November 1859 he published *On the Origin of Species*. In this book he explained his theory of **evolution** *(ita: evoluzione)* by **natural selection** *(ita: selezione naturale)*: living things change very slowly, over many generations, and new species appear.

The book was a great success, but many people were angry, because the theory did not agree with their religious ideas. Darwin continued to work and write at Down House until the end of

his life. He died there on 19 April 1882 and was buried in Westminster Abbey, in London, near Isaac Newton. From 2000 to 2018 his face was on the Bank of England £10 note.

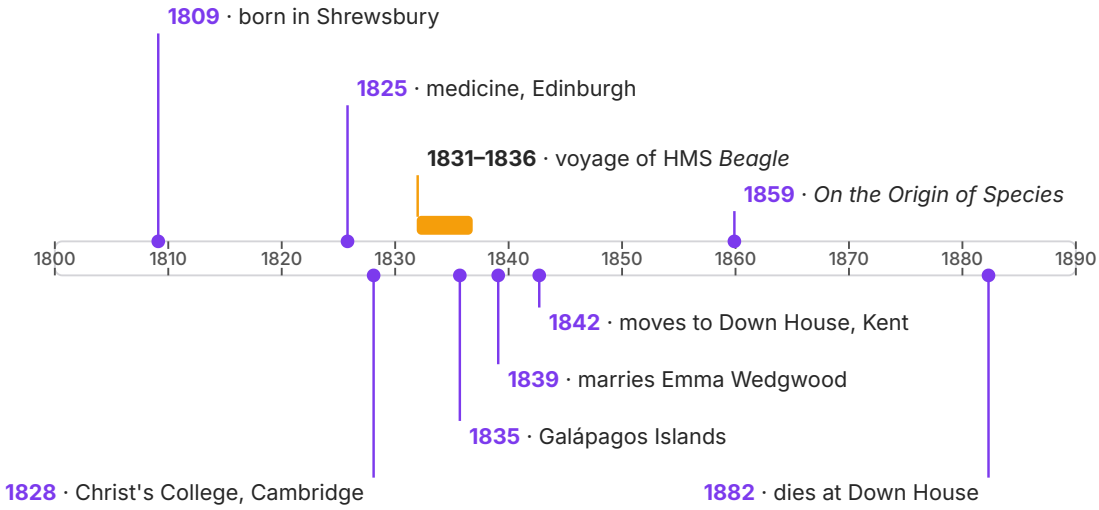


Figura 8.5 The life of Charles Darwin, 1809–1882, on a proportional time axis. The amber bar is the voyage of HMS *Beagle* (27 December 1831 – 2 October 1836).

COLLEGAMENTI

History and science: when was Newton born? Isaac Newton's date of birth is a small puzzle. In 1642 England still used the old Julian calendar, and in that calendar Newton was born on 25 December 1642. Most of Catholic Europe, including the Italian states, changed to the modern Gregorian calendar in 1582; Britain changed only in 1752, when 2 September was followed by 14 September. So in our calendar Newton was born on 4 January 1643. People often say that Newton was born in the year Galileo died — but that is true only if you mix the two calendars: Galileo died in Italy on 8 January 1642, in the Gregorian calendar.

Compare with Italy. Think of an Italian scientist: for example Galileo Galilei, Alessandro Volta, or Rita Levi-Montalcini, who was born in Turin, Giulia's city, in 1909. When and where was he or she born? What did he or she discover or invent? Was his or her life easy? Write five sentences in the past simple, then compare them with a partner.

SINTESI

- Life events: *be born, grow up, start / leave school, go to university, get a job, meet, get married, move house, have a baby, retire, die*.
- Time expressions: *yesterday, last night / week / year, two days ago, in 1999, on 12 February, at the age of twelve, when I was six*; no preposition with *last* and *yesterday*.
- *ago* (= *fa*) always follows the period: *three years ago* (✗ *before three years*).
- Past of *be*: *I / he / she / it was*, *you / we / they were*; *there was / there were* (= *c'era / c'erano*). *Be born* → *I was born in 2011*.
- The past simple is for finished actions at a specific past time; it translates *passato prossimo, passato remoto* and often *imperfetto*.
- Regular verbs: + *-ed*, same form for every person. Spelling: *lived, studied, played, stopped, preferred, visited*, BrE *travelled*.
- *-ed* is pronounced /ɪd/ only after /t/ /d/ (*wanted*), /t/ after voiceless sounds (*walked*), /d/ after voiced sounds (*lived*).
- Irregular verbs must be learnt: *go → went, see → saw, buy → bought, have → had, make → made* (Tabella 8.6 and A.1).
- Negatives and questions: *did / didn't* + base form: *She didn't go. Did she go? — Yes, she did. Be* never takes *did*: *Were you there?*
- Subject questions have no *did*: *Who found the skeleton?*; object questions do: *What did she find?*
- Showing interest: *Really? Did you? Was it? Lucky you! Oh no! What happened next?*
- Charles Darwin (1809–1882): the *Beagle* voyage (1831–1836) and *On the Origin of Species* (1859).

ESERCIZI

Vocabulary

1. ● Match the verbs (1–7) with the words (a–g) to make life events. 1 be · 2 grow · 3 leave · 4 get · 5 move · 6 go to · 7 have — a a baby · b born · c house · d married · e school · f university · g up

2. ● Put Grandma Joan's life events in the correct order. a got married · b was born · c retired · d left school · e started school · f had a baby · g got her first job

3. ● My little sister was born _____ 2023.

   A. on
   B. at
   C. in
   D. ago

4. ● We moved to Bristol two years _____ .

   A. ago
   B. before
   C. last
   D. past

5. ●● Complete the sentences with the words in the box: *ago · at · in · last · on · when · yesterday*. a I saw Callum _____ afternoon, after school. b Darwin was born _____ 12 February 1809. c My parents got married fifteen years _____ . d We went to Cornwall _____ summer. e Mary Anning found her first skeleton _____ the age of about twelve. f Joan left school _____ 1974. g I lived in Turin _____ I was a child.

6. ●● Find the odd one out and say why. a yesterday · last week · two days ago · tomorrow — b fossil · skeleton · bone · phone box — c went · saw · played · took — d wanted · needed · started · stopped

7. ●● Word formation. Complete each sentence with a word formed from the word in CAPITALS. a Darwin was a famous _____ . (SCIENCE) b Mary Anning's first great _____ was an ichthyosaur skeleton. (DISCOVER) c Mary Anning was a fossil _____ . (COLLECT) d Grandma Joan's _____ was in 2018. (RETIRE) e Darwin's date of _____ is 12 February 1809. (BORN) f Darwin brought home a large _____ of plants and animals. (COLLECT)

Grammar

8. ● Complete with *was, wasn't, were* or *weren't*. a Darwin _____ born in Shrewsbury. b My grandparents _____ rich, but they _____ happy. c _____ you at school yesterday? — No, I _____ . I was ill. d There _____ no mobile phones in 1974. e There _____ a phone box at the end of Joan's street. f The film _____ very good, so we left after half an hour.

9. ● Write the past simple of these regular verbs. a stop · b study · c play · d live · e travel (BrE) · f try · g plan · h enjoy · i decide · j prefer · k visit · l fix

10. ● How is *-ed* pronounced: /t/, /d/ or /ɪd/? a walked · b wanted · c lived · d watched · e needed · f played · g laughed · h decided · i opened · j stopped

11. ● Write the past simple of these irregular verbs. a go · b see · c have · d make · e take · f buy · g think · h find · i meet · j write · k come · l say

12. ●● _____ you go out last night?

    A. Were
    B. Did
    C. Do
    D. Was

13. ●● Who _____ the first complete plesiosaur skeleton?

    A. did find
    B. finded
    C. does find
    D. found

14. ●● Make the sentences negative. a Giulia went to London. b We had a good time. c Darwin studied medicine in Cambridge. d They were at home. e I saw the film. f There was a phone in Joan's house.

15. ●● Write questions and short answers. a you / enjoy / the trip? (Yes) b Aoife / find / a fossil? (Yes) c Callum's plane / on time? (No) d your grandparents / live / in London? (No) e the shops / open / on Sunday? (No)

16. ●● Each sentence has a mistake. Find it and correct it. a ✗ I am born in 2011. b ✗ Did you saw Sam yesterday? c ✗ We didn't went to school. d ✗ My parents got married before ten years. e ✗ Who did write this book? f ✗ Where you went last summer? g ✗ Yesterday I have played tennis.

17. ●●● Write questions about the words in **bold**. a Darwin married **Emma Wedgwood**. b **Mary Anning** found the plesiosaur. c Joan met Arthur **in 1978**. d **Callum** waited four hours at the airport. e Aoife found **an ammonite**. f They went to Bath **by car**.

18. ●●● Translate into English. a Dove sei andato sabato scorso? — Sono andato al mare con la mia famiglia. b Mia nonna è nata nel 1958. c Ieri non c'era nessuno a casa.

Reading and Listening

19. ● Read the interview in 8.2. Are the sentences true (T), false (F) or doesn't say (DS)? a Joan grew up in Bristol. b Joan's house had central heating. c There were three TV channels. d Joan's brothers went to the same school. e Joan's favourite subject was maths. f Joan met Arthur at a dance.

20. ●● Answer the questions about the interview. a How old was Joan in 1973? b How did Joan call her friends? c What did Joan and her friends do in Bath on Saturdays? d What happened to British money in 1971? e Where did Joan work in Bristol, and when did she retire?

21. ●● Find words or phrases in the interview that mean: a became an adult (2 words) · b a small building in the street with a public telephone (2 words) · c clothes that all the students of a school wear · d the money you get for your work · e stopped working because of age

22. ●● Read the listening script in 8.4.1 and answer. a Where did Giulia go on Saturday, and with whom? b Why did they go to a café? c What did Aoife find, and how big was it? d Why did Callum arrive in Edinburgh at one o'clock in the morning? e What did Callum and his mum do on Saturday?

23. ●● Match the headings (A–E) with the paragraphs (1–4) of the model biography in 8.5. There is one extra heading. A Important discoveries · B A famous family of scientists · C Who she was · D A difficult childhood · E Her later life and fame

24. ●● Read the first stanza of *The Owl and the Pussy-cat*. a Find four verbs in the past simple and write their base form. Which one is regular? b What did the two animals take with them? c What did the Owl do after he looked up to the stars? d Why is this a nonsense poem? Give one reason.

Writing and Speaking

25. ● Complete the sentences so that they are true for you. a I was born in… b When I was six, I… c Last weekend I… d Yesterday evening I didn't… e Two years ago I…

26. ●● Speaking. Interview a partner about last weekend. Ask at least five questions (with *Did…?*, *Where…?*, *What…?*, *Was it…?*) and react to each answer with an expression from Tabella 8.9.

27. ●●● Write a short biography (80–100 words) of a famous person from the past. Use four paragraphs, the past simple and at least four time linkers. Use the checklist in 8.5.

Towards B1

28. ●● Multiple-choice cloze. Choose the correct answer (A, B, C or D) for each gap.
Florence Nightingale (1) ___ born on 12 May 1820 in Florence, Italy, and her parents named her after the city. Her family was rich, and her parents (2) ___ want her to be a nurse. But Florence (3) ___ her mind. In 1854, during the Crimean War, she (4) ___ to a military hospital in Scutari, near Constantinople, with a team of 38 nurses. People (5) ___ her "the Lady with the Lamp". In 1860 she opened a school for nurses in London, and she died (6) ___ 1910.
(1) A is · B was · C were · D did
(2) A didn't · B weren't · C don't · D wasn't
(3) A doesn't change · B not changed · C didn't changed · D didn't change
(4) A goes · B went · C go · D gone
(5) A call · B calling · C called · D calls
(6) A on · B at · C ago · D in

29. ●● Open cloze. Write ONE word in each gap.
Last Saturday Sam and Giulia (1) ___ to the Natural History Museum in London. They took the train from Bristol, and the journey (2) ___ about an hour and a half. There (3) ___ a lot of people in the main hall. "(4) ___ you see the dinosaurs?" Giulia's mum asked on the phone that evening. "Yes, we (5) ___! And we saw Mary Anning's fossils. They were amazing," Giulia answered. They got home very late, (6) ___ they were very happy.

30. ●●● Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first. Use the word in CAPITALS and two to four words in total. a We moved here in 2023. It's 2026 now. AGO → We moved here _____ . b Grandma didn't have a phone at home. THERE → _____ phone in Grandma's home. c Aoife's dad didn't find anything. NOTHING → Aoife's dad _____ . d When did you arrive? TIME → What _____ arrive? e The trip was fantastic for us. ENJOYED → We really _____ .

31. ●● You went on a school trip last week. Write an email to an English-speaking friend (35–45 words). Say where you went, what you did and what you liked most.

32. ●● Read the notice. What does it say?
LYME REGIS MUSEUM — Last Saturday's talk on Mary Anning was cancelled because the speaker was ill. New date: Saturday 14 November, 3 pm.

A. The talk was on 14 November.

B. The talk took place last Saturday.

C. Nobody came to the talk last Saturday.

D. The talk didn't happen last Saturday.

PER APPROFONDIRE

- MUR — R. Murphy, *Essential Grammar in Use*: the units on *was / were*, the past simple, and past simple negatives and questions, with extra practice.
- SWA — M. Swan, *Practical English Usage*: entries on the past simple, irregular verbs, *ago* and questions without *do*.
- ROA — P. Roach, *English Phonetics and Phonology*: the chapter on voiced and voiceless consonants, which explains the three pronunciations of *-ed*.
- OAL — *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary*: check the past forms and their pronunciation for any verb you are not sure about.
- CED — D. Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of the English Language*: the history of Old English strong verbs and why some verbs became regular.

Glossario del capitolo

Achievement
risultato importante, impresa — something important that you do after a lot of work

Ago
fa — before now; it follows the period: *three years ago*

Be born
nascere — always with *be*: *I was born in 2011* (✗ *I am born*)

Biography
biografia — the story of a person's life, written by somebody else

Chronological order
ordine cronologico — the order in which events happened

Echo question
domanda di reazione — a short question that shows interest: *We went to Bath. — Did you?*

Evolution
evoluzione — the slow change of living things over many generations (Darwin, 1859)

Fossil
fossile — the remains of a very old animal or plant, preserved in rock

Get married
sposarsi — to become husband and wife: *They got married in 1980.*

Grow up
crescere, diventare grande — to change from a child into an adult: *She grew up near Bath.*

Irregular verb
verbo irregolare — a verb with a special past form: *go → went, buy → bought*

Leave school
finire la scuola — to finish your time at school for ever: *He left school at sixteen.*

Life event
tappa della vita — an important moment in somebody's life: being born, leaving school, getting married

Move house
traslocare — to go and live in a different home: *We moved house last year.*

Naturalist
naturalista — a person who studies plants, animals and nature: *Darwin was a naturalist.*

Past simple
passato semplice — the tense for finished actions at a specific past time: *I walked, she went*

Regular verb
verbo regolare — a verb with the past simple in *-ed*: *play → played*

Retire
andare in pensione — to stop working, usually because of age: *Joan retired in 2018.*

Subject question
domanda sul soggetto — a question where *who / what* is the subject, without *did*: *Who found it?*

Voiced / voiceless sound
suono sonoro / sordo — a sound made with / without vibration in the throat: /v/ is voiced, /f/ is voiceless

Soluzioni

1. 1 b (be born) · 2 g (grow up) · 3 e (leave school) · 4 d (get married) · 5 c (move house) · 6 f (go to university) · 7 a (have a baby). *Accettare anche 3 f (leave university) e 6 e (go to school): sono collocazioni corrette.*

2. b was born → e started school → d left school → g got her first job → a got married → f had a baby → c retired.

3. C (in 2023). *In + anno.*

4. A (two years ago). *Ago = fa, dopo il periodo.*

5. a yesterday · b on · c ago · d last · e at · f in · g when. *Ogni parola si usa una volta sola: in d anche "in summer" sarebbe corretto, ma in serve per f (in 1974).*

6. a tomorrow (it's in the future; the others are in the past) · b phone box (the others are parts or remains of old animals) · c played (it's regular; the others are irregular past forms) · d stopped (its *-ed* is pronounced /t/; in the others it is /ɪd/).

7. a scientist · b discovery · c collector · d retirement · e birth · f collection.

8. a was · b weren't … were · c Were … wasn't · d were · e was · f wasn't.

9. a stopped · b studied · c played · d lived · e travelled · f tried · g planned · h enjoyed · i decided · j preferred · k visited · l fixed.

10. a /t/ · b /ɪd/ · c /d/ · d /t/ · e /ɪd/ · f /d/ · g /t/ · h /ɪd/ · i /d/ · j /t/.

11. a went · b saw · c had · d made · e took · f bought · g thought · h found · i met · j wrote · k came · l said.

12. B (Did). *Go non è be: serve did + forma base.*

13. D (found). *Who è il soggetto: niente did, verbo al past simple.*

14. a Giulia didn't (did not) go to London. · b We didn't have a good time. · c Darwin didn't study medicine in Cambridge. · d They weren't (were not) at home. · e I didn't see the film. · f There wasn't (was not) a phone in Joan's house. / There was no phone in Joan's house.

15. a Did you enjoy the trip? — Yes, I did. · b Did Aoife find a fossil? — Yes, she did. · c Was Callum's plane on time? — No, it wasn't. · d Did your grandparents live in London? — No, they didn't. · e Were the shops open on Sunday? — No, they weren't. (also: Did the shops open on Sunday? — No, they didn't.)

16. a I was born in 2011. · b Did you see Sam yesterday? · c We didn't go to school. · d My parents got married ten years ago. · e Who wrote this book? · f Where did you go last summer? · g Yesterday I played tennis. *(g: con yesterday si usa il past simple, non have + participio.)*

17. a Who did Darwin marry? · b Who found the plesiosaur? (subject question, no *did*) · c When did Joan meet Arthur? / What year did Joan meet Arthur? · d Who waited four hours at the airport? (subject question) · e What did Aoife find? · f How did they go (get / travel) to Bath?

18. a Where did you go last Saturday? — I went to the seaside (to the beach) with my family. · b My grandma (grandmother) was born in 1958. · c There was nobody at home yesterday. / There wasn't anybody (anyone) at home yesterday. / Yesterday there was nobody at home.

19. a F (she grew up in a village near Bath) · b F (there wasn't any central heating) · c T · d DS · e T · f T.

20. a She was fifteen. · b From the red phone box at the end of her street (they didn't have a phone at home). · c They looked at the clothes in the shops and listened to records in the music shop; sometimes they went to the cinema. · d Britain changed its money: before 1971 there were 240 pence in a pound, after that there were 100. · e In the office of a children's hospital; she retired in 2018.

21. a grew up · b phone box · c uniform · d wages · e retired.

22. a To Bath, with Sam's family. · b Because it started to rain. · c An ammonite; it was about the size of a coin. · d Because his plane was four hours late: there was a problem with the engine. · e They climbed Arthur's Seat.

23. 1 C · 2 D · 3 A · 4 E. B is the extra heading.

24. a *went* (go), *took* (take), *looked* (look), *sang* (sing); *looked* is regular. (*Wrapped* here describes the money: "in a five-pound note".) · b Some honey and plenty of money, wrapped up in a five-pound note. · c He sang to a small guitar (a love song for the Pussy-cat). · d For example: an owl and a cat go to sea together in a boat, and the owl sings a love song to the cat — real animals don't do this.

25. Open answers. Model: a I was born in 2011 in Turin. · b When I was six, I started primary school. · c Last weekend I went to my cousin's birthday party. · d Yesterday evening I didn't watch TV. · e Two years ago I moved house.

26. Open answer. Model: A: How was your weekend? — B: It was great, thanks. — A: Really? Where did you go? — B: I went to Lake Garda with my family. — A: Lucky you! What did you do there? — B: We rented bikes and cycled along the lake. — A: Was the weather good? — B: Yes, it was sunny on Saturday, but it rained on Sunday. — A: Oh no! What did you do on Sunday? — B: We visited a castle. — A: Did you enjoy it? — B: Yes, I did. It was amazing. (Check: at least five questions with *did / was*, a reaction after each answer.)

27. Model answer (about 100 words): *Galileo Galilei was an Italian scientist. He was born on 15 February 1564 in Pisa. / As a young man he studied medicine at the University of Pisa, but he preferred mathematics, and later he taught maths in Pisa and in Padua. / In 1609 he built a telescope and studied the sky. In January 1610 he discovered four moons of Jupiter. After that, he wrote about his ideas, but the Church did not accept them. / In 1633 there was a trial in Rome, and Galileo spent the rest of his life at his house near Florence. He died in 1642.* (Check: four paragraphs, past simple, time linkers, true facts.)

28. 1 B (was) · 2 A (didn't) · 3 D (didn't change) · 4 B (went) · 5 C (called) · 6 D (in).

29. 1 went · 2 took / lasted · 3 were · 4 Did · 5 did · 6 but (also accepted: and).

30. a three years ago · b There was no / There wasn't a · c found nothing · d time did you · e enjoyed the trip / enjoyed it.

31. Model answer (43 words): *Hi Ella! Last Thursday my class went on a trip to Verona. We visited the Arena, a Roman amphitheatre, and we walked round the old town. I liked the Arena most — it was huge! Did you have a good week? Love, Giulia*

32. D. *Il talk è stato annullato (cancelled) e spostato al 14 novembre: sabato scorso non c'è stato.*