CAPITOLO

2

When I Was Younger

Every grown-up was once a child who thought that childhood would last for ever.

OBIETTIVI

1. I can talk about childhood, memories and life changes, and use *remember*, *remind*, *grow up* and *bring up* correctly.
2. I can use the past perfect to talk about an earlier past, and combine the narrative tenses in a story.
3. I can talk about past habits and states with *used to* and *would*.
4. I can tell an anecdote, reminisce about the past and react to other people's stories.
5. I can write a short story that begins or ends with a given sentence.
6. I can describe the life of children in Victorian Britain and compare the history of compulsory school in Britain and Italy.

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English 2 · Parte I · Connections · versione 1.0
Capitolo 2: When I Was Younger · pagine 45–68 del volume completo · estratto per lo studio

Everybody has a story that begins *"When I was little…"*. Your grandparents have hundreds of them, your parents have a few that they tell at every family dinner, and you are already collecting your own. In this unit the friends of the **Bristol–Turin Link** look back at their childhood: Sam interviews his grandad about growing up in Bristol, Giulia and Marta find a box of old toys, and Sam tells the story of a very wet morning in Dublin.

To tell stories about the past you need more than the past simple. You learn the **past perfect**, which takes you back to an earlier past, you put the three **narrative tenses** together, and you learn to talk about old habits with **used to** and **would**. You write a short story, and you travel back to the Britain of Charles Dickens, when many children worked instead of going to school.

2.1 Vocabulary: Childhood and Memories

2.1.1 Childhood words

Your **childhood** *(ita: infanzia)* is the time when you are a child. In the UK many children go to a **nursery** *(ita: asilo, scuola materna)* before they start school; at four or five they start **primary school** with a first year called **Reception** — the class that Sam's sister Lily started this year. At break time children run to the *playground (ita: cortile della scuola, parco giochi)*, with its *swings (ita: altalene)* and *slides (ita: scivoli)*. Their *toys (ita: giocattoli)* change as they grow: a *teddy bear*, *building blocks*, a *doll*, a *board game*, a *bike with stabilisers* (AmE *training wheels*). Tabella 2.1 compares the first stages of school in England and in Italy.

Tabella 2.1 The first years of school in England and in Italy (usual ages)

Age	England	Italy
0–3	nursery (optional)	*nido* (optional)
3–4	nursery or pre-school (optional)	*scuola dell'infanzia* (optional)
4–5	**Reception** (the first year of primary school)	*scuola dell'infanzia*
5–11	primary school, Years 1–6	*scuola primaria* (6–11), five years
11–16	secondary school, Years 7–11 (GCSEs in Year 11)	*scuola secondaria di primo grado* (11–14), then *liceo* or another school

So Sam, at sixteen, is in his twelfth year of school, counting Reception, while Giulia, also sixteen, is in her tenth: children in England start full-time school at four or five, about two years earlier than in Italy.

2.1.2 Growing up and remembering

In *English 1* (Unit 8) you met *grow up*: *I grew up in Turin* = I was a child there. If someone **brings you up** *(ita: crescere, allevare qualcuno)*, they take care of you and educate you while you are a child: *My grandparents brought me up*; *I was brought up in a small village.* Italian uses one verb, *crescere*, for both ideas — English needs two, as the box below shows.

Your **memories** *(ita: ricordi)* are the things you remember from the past: *I have happy memories of that summer.* When you *remember* something, it comes back into your mind; when something or someone **reminds** you of something, it makes you remember it: *This song reminds me of my first holiday by the sea.* You can also *remind somebody about* an appointment, or *remind somebody to do* something: *Remind me to call Aoife tonight.* To talk with pleasure about the past with other people is to **reminisce** /ˌremɪˈnɪs/: grandparents love it.

Childhood is also a time of **life changes**: you *learn to ride a bike*, *lose your first tooth*, *change schools*, *get a pet*, *move house*. Remember the *-ed / -ing* adjectives from *English 1* (Unit 9): the first day at school can be *frightening*, and a small child is often *frightened*; a long car journey is *boring*, and the children in the back are *bored*.

> **ERRORE FREQUENTE**
>
> ***Crescere*** ha tre traduzioni. Una persona che diventa adulta: *grow up* (✓ *I grew up in Bristol*). Chi si prende cura di un bambino: *bring up* (✓ *My aunt brought me up*; ✗ *My aunt grew me up*). Una persona, una pianta, un numero che diventa più grande: *grow* (✓ *Lily has grown a lot this year*).
>
> ***Ricordare***: *remember* = ricordare qualcosa io; *remind* = far ricordare a qualcuno. ✗ *Remember me to buy bread* → ✓ *Remind me to buy bread.* ✗ *This photo remembers me of Bristol* → ✓ *This photo reminds me of Bristol.*

2.1.3 Word formation: adjectives with *-ful* and *-less*

Many adjectives are made from a noun + **-ful** (= with, full of) or + **-less** (= without). Often the two adjectives are opposites: a *careful* driver drives with care, a *careless* one makes mistakes because he does not pay attention. See Tabella 2.2.

Tabella 2.2 Adjectives with *-ful* and *-less*

Noun	+ *-ful* (with)	+ *-less* (without)
care	**careful**: *Be careful with the scissors!*	**careless**: *a careless mistake*
use	**useful**: *a useful app*	**useless**: *This old phone is useless.*
help	**helpful**: *a helpful neighbour*	**helpless** = unable to do anything: *a helpless baby*
pain	**painful**: *a painful injury*	**painless**: *The injection was painless.*
hope	**hopeful** = expecting something good	**hopeless**: *I'm hopeless at drawing.*
harm	**harmful**: *harmful chemicals*	**harmless**: *This spider is harmless.*
—	**beautiful, wonderful** (no *-less* form)	**homeless, endless, sleepless** (no *-ful* form)

Three details. The suffix is spelt with **one l**: *careful*, ✗ *carefull*. A final *-y* after a consonant changes to *-i-*: *beauty* → *beautiful*. And the opposite of an adjective in *-ful* is not always the *-less* form: the opposite of *helpful* is *unhelpful* (*helpless* means something else). **Pronunciation:** both suffixes are unstressed and have a weak vowel: *careful* /ˈkeəfl/, *careless* /ˈkeələs/, *useful* /ˈjuːsfl/, *useless* /ˈjuːsləs/.

2.2 Reading: My Grandad's Bristol

Before you read. Think of an older person in your family. Where did they grow up? What games did they play? Write down two questions that you would like to ask them about their childhood.

This month the Bristol–Turin Link has a project called *When I Was Younger*: every student interviews an older relative and posts the interview on the shared blog. In Turin, Giulia interviewed her *nonna*. In Bristol, Sam chose his grandad, Arthur, Joan's husband. Read Sam's post. (*testo della redazione*)

Grandad Arthur, Bristolian

The Link Blog · When I Was Younger — *by Sam Taylor, Year 11, Bristol*

Last year I interviewed my grandma Joan for a history project. This year it was Grandad Arthur's turn. He was born in 1956, and unlike Grandma, who grew up in a village near Bath, he is a real Bristolian. We sat in his kitchen with two cups of tea, and I pressed "record".

Where did you grow up, Grandad?
In a terraced house in south Bristol. I was the youngest of four, and there were six of us in a house with two bedrooms, so I shared a bed with my brother Ray until I was eleven. He used to kick me all night!

What did you use to do after school?

We used to play in the street. There weren't many cars in those days, so the street was our playground. We would play football until it got dark, and then my mum would open the window and shout, "Arthur! Tea!" I didn't have many toys: a football, a few marbles and a wooden lorry that my dad had made for my fifth birthday. I loved that lorry.

Did you use to like school?

Not at first. On my first morning at primary school I cried for an hour, because I had never been away from my mum before. But then I met my teacher, Miss Lewis. She used to read us a story every afternoon, and that's when I fell in love with books. I still read every day.

What's your favourite memory?

That's easy: 1969. I was thirteen. One afternoon I was walking home from school when I heard a strange, loud noise. Everybody in the street had stopped and was looking at the sky. It was Concorde, on one of its first test flights from Filton, in the north of the city. I had never seen anything so beautiful. That day I decided I wanted to work with machines.

And did you?

Yes. I left school at sixteen and became an apprentice in an engineering company. A few years later I got a job in Bath, and that's where I met your grandma, at a dance. You know that story. She still says I was a terrible dancer, and she's right. In 1981 we came back to Bristol, and I've lived here ever since.

Was life better for children then?

Different. We were much freer. On Saturdays my friends and I would take our bikes and ride down to the docks to watch the ships, and we wouldn't come home until we were hungry. Nobody had a phone, of course, so our parents had no idea where we were. But there wasn't any central heating either. In winter I used to get dressed under the blankets!

Has Bristol changed a lot?

Enormously. The docks used to be full of ships and cranes; now there are museums and cafés where the warehouses were. The city is bigger, busier and much more international. But some things are the same. It still rains, and people still call you "my lover" at the bus stop.

When I asked him if he missed the old days, he laughed. "I miss being young," he said. "But I don't miss that cold bedroom — or your Uncle Ray's feet!"

Language in context

- **Past perfect**: *a wooden lorry that my dad had made for my fifth birthday · I had never been away from my mum before · Everybody had stopped* — an action earlier than the moment of the story.
- **used to**: *We used to play in the street · He used to kick me all night · What did you use to do?* — past habits and states that are not true now.
- **would**: *We would play football until it got dark · my mum would open the window and shout* — repeated actions in the past.
- **Narrative tenses**: *I was walking home from school when I heard a strange, loud noise.*

- **Bristol English**: *my lover* is a friendly, informal way of saying "dear" in Bristol and the west of England; a *Bristolian* is a person from Bristol. A *lorry* is a big vehicle for goods (AmE *truck*).

COLLEGAMENTI

Technology and history: Concorde. Concorde was a supersonic passenger aircraft, designed and built jointly by Britain and France: it could fly at about twice the speed of sound. The first prototype flew from Toulouse in March 1969; the first British one took off from Filton, in the north of Bristol, on 9 April of the same year. Concorde carried passengers from 1976 to 2003, and the last Concorde ever built returned to Filton in 2003. Today it is in the Aerospace Bristol museum, where Grandad Arthur sometimes takes Lily to look at it.

Maths link: the speed of sound in air at 20 °C is about 343 m/s. How fast is that in km/h? (343 × 3.6 ≈ 1,235 km/h.)

2.3 Grammar: Past Perfect, Narrative Tenses, *used to* and *would*

2.3.1 The past perfect

When we tell a story in the past, sometimes we need to go back to an action that happened **before** the moment we are talking about. For this "earlier past" English uses the **past perfect** *(ita: trapassato prossimo)*: *When Sam got to the station, the train **had left**.* First the train left, then Sam arrived: see Figura 2.1. Compare: *When Sam got to the station, the train **left*** means that the train left at the moment he arrived — so he saw it go.

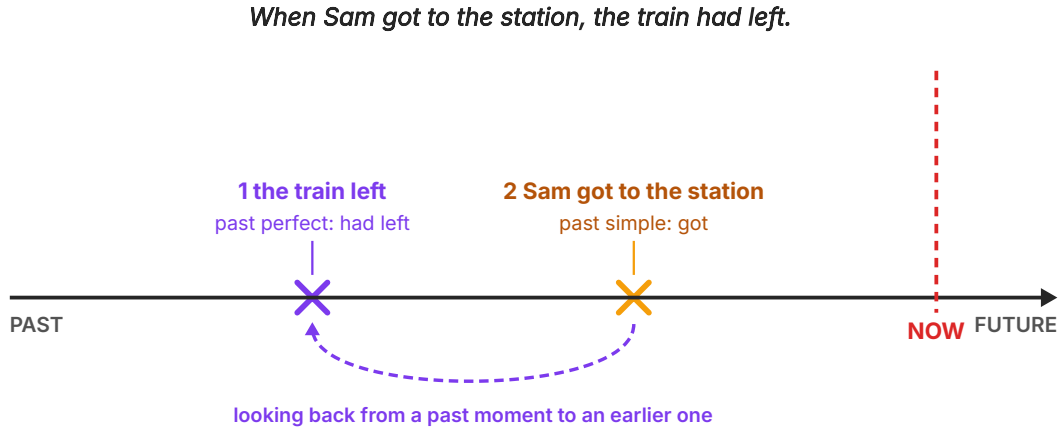


Figura 2.1 The past perfect looks back from a moment in the past (amber) to an earlier action (violet). Both are complete actions before NOW.

Tabella 2.3 Past perfect: form (*had* + past participle)

Affirmative	Negative	Questions	Short answers
I / you / he / she / it / we / they ***had left*** (*'d left*)	*I / you / he…* ***had not left*** (hadn't left)	***Had*** *you* ***left****?* *Where* ***had*** *she* ***gone****?*	*Yes, I had.* *No, I hadn't.*

The past perfect has the same form for every person: *had* + the past participle that you learnt for the present perfect (*English 1*, Unit 13). The short form *'d* is common in speech (*She'd already gone*); be careful, because *'d* can also mean *would*.

Time words with the past perfect

- **by the time** (= not later than the moment when): ***By the time*** *we arrived, the film had started.*
- **already, just, never… before**: *I had* ***already*** *eaten, so I said no. They had* ***just*** *left when I phoned. I had* ***never*** *seen the sea* ***before*** *that summer.*
- **when, after, before, because**: *I went to bed* ***after*** *I had finished my homework. Giulia was sad* ***because*** *she had lost her photos.*

With *after* and *before* the order of events is already clear, so the past simple is often possible too: *I went to bed after I finished my homework.* With *when*, on the other hand, the tense changes the meaning, as in the example of the train. The rule of thumb: use the past perfect when the reader needs it to understand the order of events — not every time an action is "very past".

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

Il *past perfect* (trapassato prossimo). Si forma con *had* + participio passato, uguale per tutte le persone: *I had left, she had left* (forma contratta *'d*). Negativa: *hadn't left*; interrogativa: *Had you left?*

Uso. Indica un'azione avvenuta **prima** di un altro momento del passato, come il trapassato prossimo italiano: *Quando sono arrivato, il treno era già partito = When I arrived, the train had already left*.

Confronto con l'italiano. L'uso è molto simile, ma l'inglese è più "economico": se l'ordine degli eventi è chiaro (con *before*, *after*, o in un elenco di azioni in sequenza) basta il *past simple*. E il *past perfect* non serve per dire che un fatto è "molto lontano" nel tempo: *Nel 2015 ero stato a Londra* si traduce, se non c'è un altro momento passato di riferimento, con *I went to London in 2015*.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ *I had gone to London last year.* → ✓ *I went to London last year.* (un solo evento passato, finito: *past simple*).

✗ *When I arrived, the train has left.* → ✓ *When I arrived, the train had left.* (nel racconto al passato non si usa il *present perfect*).

✗ *She had went home.* → ✓ *She had gone home.* (dopo *had* ci vuole il participio passato, non il *past simple*).

ESEMPIO SVOLTO

Join the two sentences with *when*. *Callum got back to the flat. Sam and Aoife left for the station ten minutes before.*

1. **Find the moment of the story.** The main event is Callum getting back: past simple → *Callum got back*.
2. **Which action happened earlier?** Sam and Aoife left **before** that moment → past perfect: *had left*.
3. **Add a time word if it helps.** *already* makes the order even clearer.
4. **Put it together:** *When Callum got back to the flat, Sam and Aoife had already left for the station.*

Check the meaning: with the past simple (*When Callum got back, Sam and Aoife left*) they leave at the moment he arrives — a different story!

2.3.2 Narrative tenses

A good story uses three past tenses together, the **narrative tenses**. Each one has its own job (Tabella 2.4): the past continuous paints the **background** — the scene, what was happening; the past simple tells the main events, one after the other; the past perfect jumps back to something that had happened before. Figura 2.2 shows the three tenses on one timeline.

Tabella 2.4 Narrative tenses and their jobs

Tense	Job in the story	Example
past continuous	the background: the scene, actions in progress	*It **was raining** and Aoife **was waiting** on the platform.*
past simple	the main events, in order	*Callum **ran** onto the platform and **jumped** on the train.*
past perfect	an earlier event, a “flashback”	*He **had left** his raincoat at the flat.*

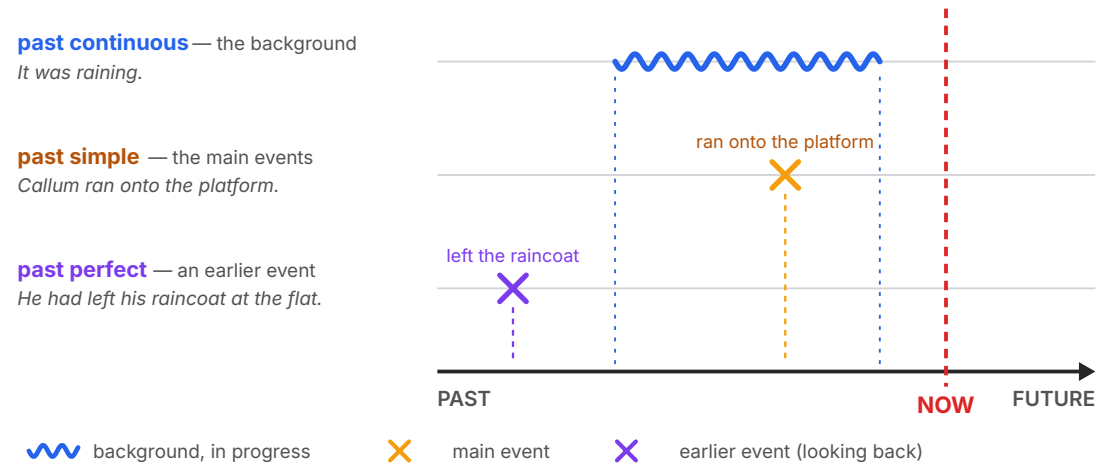


Figura 2.2 Narrative tenses together: the past continuous gives the background (blue wave), the past simple the main events (amber), the past perfect an event that happened earlier (violet).

Read how the tenses work in a short story: *It **was** a cold Saturday morning. Lily **was playing** in the garden and Mum **was reading** in the kitchen. Suddenly Lily **screamed**. Mum **ran** outside. Biscuit **had escaped** from his hutch — he **had learnt** to open the door by himself!* The first two sentences set the scene, the next two tell what happened, and the last one explains, by looking back, why it happened.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

I tempi del racconto (*narrative tenses*). In un racconto al passato si usano insieme tre tempi: il *past continuous* per lo sfondo (le azioni in corso), il *past simple* per gli eventi principali, il *past perfect* per un fatto avvenuto prima.

Confronto con l'italiano. Lo schema corrisponde a **imperfetto** (sfondo) + **passato remoto / passato prossimo** (eventi) + **trapassato prossimo** (fatto anteriore): *Pioveva e Aoife aspettava; Callum arrivò di corsa: aveva dimenticato l'impermeabile*. Attenzione però: l'imperfetto italiano non corrisponde sempre al *past continuous*. Se descrive uno stato (*era stanco, c'era il sole*) o un'abitudine (*giocavo a calcio ogni giorno*) l'inglese usa il *past simple*, *used to* o *would*: lo vedrai nei paragrafi che seguono.

2.3.3 *used to*

We use **used to** + base form to talk about past **habits** (repeated actions) and past **states** that are no longer true: *Grandad **used to** play in the street* (a habit: he doesn't now); *I **used to** have short*

hair (a state: my hair is long now). *Used to* always refers to a period of time that is finished, as Figura 2.3 shows.

Tabella 2.5 *used to*: form

Affirmative	Negative	Questions	Short answers
I / you / he / she / it / we / they ***used to*** *play*	*I / you / he…* ***didn't use to*** *play* (*never used to*)	***Did*** *you* ***use to*** *play?* *What* ***did*** *you* ***use to*** *do?*	*Yes, I did.* *No, I didn't.*

Notice the spelling: after *did* / *didn't* the verb is in the base form, so we write *use to* without *-d*: ✓ *Did you use to…?*, ✓ *I didn't use to…*. In speech *used to* and *use to* sound exactly the same, /ˈjuːs tə/, with an /s/ — not with the /z/ of the verb *use* (*I used a pen* /juːzd/). *Used to* has **no present form**: for present habits use the present simple and an adverb of frequency (*I usually get up at seven*).

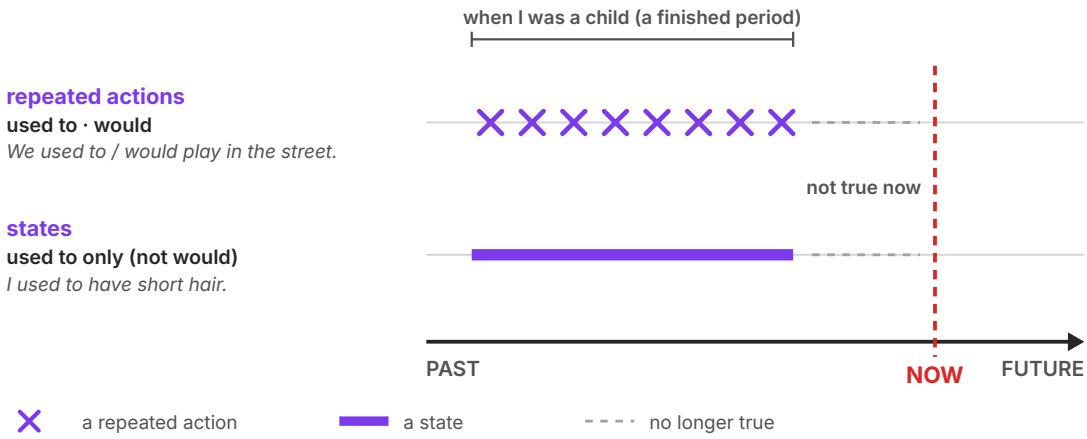


Figura 2.3 *used to* and *would*. Both describe repeated actions in a finished period of the past (crosses); only *used to* describes past states (the bar). Neither is true now.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

***used to* + forma base.** Esprime abitudini (*I used to walk to school* = andavo a scuola a piedi) e stati del passato (*She used to be shy* = era timida) che **oggi non sono più veri**. È uguale per tutte le persone. Negativa: *didn't use to*; interrogativa: *Did you use to…?* (senza *-d*).

Confronto con l'italiano. Corrisponde all'**imperfetto** abituale (*giocavo, andavo, ero*) o a *ero solito, avevo l'abitudine di*. Non esiste al presente: *di solito mi alzo alle sette = I usually get up at seven*.

ERRORE FREQUENTE

✗ *I use to get up at seven.* → ✓ *I usually get up at seven.* (*used to* non ha il presente).

✗ *I didn't used to like vegetables.* → ✓ *I didn't use to like vegetables.* · ✗ *Did you used to…?* → ✓ *Did you use to…?*

✗ *I used to go to Dublin last October.* → ✓ *I went to Dublin last October.* (un'azione sola, non un'abitudine: *past simple*).

2.3.4 *would* for repeated past actions

When we reminisce about the past, we can also use **would** + base form for **repeated actions**: *On Saturdays we **would** take our bikes and ride down to the docks. Would* is typical of stories and memories, often after a sentence with *used to* or a time phrase that sets the scene (*when I was a child, every summer, on Saturdays*). The short form is *'d*: *We'd play until it got dark.*

Only actions, never states. *Would* cannot describe a past state (with verbs like *be, have, live, like, know*): ✓ *I used to have long hair*, ✗ *I would have long hair*; ✓ *We used to live in Milan*, ✗ *We would live in Milan*. When you are not sure, *used to* is always correct for habits and states.

GRAMMAR IN ITALIANO

***would* + forma base per le abitudini passate.** Descrive azioni ripetute nel passato, come l'imperfetto abituale: *Ogni estate andavamo al mare e facevamo il bagno tutto il giorno = Every summer we would go to the seaside and swim all day*.

Attenzione. Questo *would* non è un condizionale (*andremmo*): il contesto al passato ne chiarisce il significato. E non si usa con i verbi di stato: *avevo i capelli lunghi* = ✓ *I used to have long hair*, ✗ *I would have long hair*.

APPROFONDIMENTO

***used to* vs *be / get used to* (B1+).** Do not confuse *used to* + base form (a past habit) with *be used to* + noun or *-ing*, which means "be familiar with something, find it normal": *Aoife **is used to** the rain* (it doesn't surprise her); *I'**m** not **used to getting** up so early* (it is new and difficult for me). *Get used to* describes the change: *Giulia found the English food strange at first, but she soon **got used to** it.*

Here *to* is a preposition, as in *look forward to*, so a verb after it takes *-ing*: ✓ *I'm used to walking*, ✗ *I'm used to walk*. And *be used to* exists in every tense: *I'm used to it, I was used to it, you'll get used to it.*

2.4 Listening and Speaking: Telling an Anecdote

An **anecdote** *(ita: aneddoto)* is a short, true story about something funny or strange that happened to you. A good anecdote catches the listeners' attention at the start, sets the scene, tells the events in order — and needs listeners who react! Listen to your teacher and your classmates reading the two scripts (books closed), then read them.

Listening 1. It is Thursday, the day of the weekly Link video call, and Callum is in charge as usual. The topic this week is "a funny story". Listen (books closed): where were the boys going? What had Callum forgotten — or had he?

Tabella 2.6 Listening script — The raincoat

Callum	Right, can everybody hear us? Turin? Great. This week's topic is "a funny story". Who wants to start?
Giulia	Sam! You promised to tell us about Ireland.
Sam	OK. Did I ever tell you about the train to Galway?
Marta	No! What happened?
Sam	Well, it was the Monday of half-term. We'd spent two nights at Aoife's cousin's flat in Dublin, and our train was at ten o'clock. So at half past nine we were walking to the station with our bags…
Callum	Plenty of time, we thought.
Sam	Exactly. But when we got to the station, Callum suddenly stopped and went white. He'd left his raincoat at the flat.
Marta	Oh no! In Ireland!
Callum	Aoife had told us a hundred times: "Bring a good raincoat."
Sam	So he ran all the way back to the flat. Aoife and I were waiting on the platform, and I was getting really nervous. At five to ten there was still no Callum.
Giulia	And then?
Sam	At two minutes to ten he ran onto the platform. He was soaking wet, because it had started to rain while he was running!
Marta	No way! How funny!
Sam	Wait, it gets better. When we finally sat down on the train, Callum opened his bag… and the raincoat was inside. He'd packed it the night before.
Giulia	You're joking!
Callum	I'm not proud of it.
Sam	And the best part? It rained every single day in Galway, so that raincoat was the most useful thing in his bag.

Marta	Poor Callum! Well, at least he had it with him.
Callum	Thank you, Marta. OK, your turn next Thursday. Same time?

Listening 2. Giulia has finally decided to paint her pink bedroom, and Marta has come to help. Under the bed they find a box. Listen (books closed): who is Bruno? How did Giulia and Marta become friends?

Tabella 2.7 Listening script — The box under the bed

Marta	Giulia, what's in this box? It's really heavy.
Giulia	Oh, my old things. Mum put them there when I left for Bristol. Open it!
Marta	Look — a teddy bear! He's only got one eye.
Giulia	That's Bruno! I used to take him everywhere. Every night my dad would invent a new story about him: Bruno at the seaside, Bruno on the moon…
Marta	How sweet! And who's this little girl with short hair?
Giulia	That's me at the *scuola dell'infanzia*. I was four. I used to have really short hair — Mum said it was easier.
Marta	Did you use to like it there?
Giulia	Not really. I didn't use to eat anything at lunch. I would hide the vegetables in my pockets, and Mum would find them in the evening.
Marta	No way! I used to do exactly the same thing!
Giulia	Do you remember our first day at primary school?
Marta	Of course I do. I'd lost my new pencil case on the bus, before we even got to school, and I was crying in the corridor.
Giulia	And I gave you one of my pencils. That was the start of a beautiful friendship.
Marta	And I've still got it, you know. Somewhere.
Giulia	Somewhere! You haven't changed a bit. You were always losing things.
Marta	Hey! Some things have changed. I didn't use to like heights. Now I climb twice a week.
Giulia	That's true. Oh, this room really reminds me of when we were ten. I used to love pink.
Marta	Well, not any more. Pass me the white paint.

Notice how the speakers build their stories. Sam **starts with a question** that catches attention (*Did I ever tell you about…?*), **sets the scene** with the past continuous (*we were walking to the station*), **tells the events** in the past simple, **looks back** with the past perfect (*He'd left his raincoat*) and **keeps the best part for the end** (*Wait, it gets better*). The listeners help him with reactions

and questions: *What happened? And then? You're joking!* In the second script, Giulia and Marta **reminisce** with *used to*, *would* and *Do you remember…?* The most useful phrases are collected in Tabella 2.8.

Tabella 2.8 Useful language — telling an anecdote, reminiscing and reacting

Function	Phrases
Starting an anecdote	*Did I ever tell you about…? · You'll never guess what happened… · Something funny happened to me last week. · Have you heard about…?*
Telling the events	*At first… · Then… · Suddenly… · Just then… · Luckily / Unfortunately… · Wait, it gets better. · In the end…*
Reminiscing	*Do you remember when…? · I remember (the day when)… · When I was little, I used to… · That reminds me of… · Those were the days!*
Reacting	*What happened (next)? · And then? · No way! · You're joking! · Oh no! · How funny / awful / embarrassing! · That sounds scary! · Poor you!*

Speaking tasks

1. **Pair work: a funny story.** Think of something funny, embarrassing or surprising that happened to you or to someone in your family. Make notes: the scene, three main events, one thing that had happened before. Tell your anecdote to a partner in about one minute. Your partner must react at least three times with phrases from Tabella 2.8.
2. **Reminiscing: then and now.** In pairs, talk about your childhood: your favourite toy, your nursery or primary school, what you used to do on Sundays, what you didn't use to like. Find three things that you used to do differently and one thing that you both used to do.
3. **Interview.** Prepare five questions with *Did you use to…?* and *What did you use to…?* for an older person in your family. Ask the questions at home (in Italian, if necessary!) and report the answers to the class in English: *My grandmother used to…*

2.5 Writing: A Story

In many B1 exams you write a short story that starts or ends with a sentence you are given. The examiner wants to see a clear story, the narrative tenses, some linkers and a little direct speech — in about 100 words, or a little more. For the Link's writing competition the students had to start with this sentence: *When Lily went into the garden that morning, the hutch was empty.* Read Sam's story.

Tabella 2.9 Model text — a story

The Escape
When Lily went into the garden that morning, the hutch was empty. Biscuit had disappeared!
It was raining, and Lily was crying in the kitchen. While Mum was phoning the neighbours, Josh and I were searching the garden. We looked under every bush, but we couldn't find him anywhere. "Somebody has stolen him!" Lily sobbed.
Then I remembered something. The evening before, I had seen Biscuit open the door of his hutch by himself. He was clever — and he was always hungry.
I ran next door to Mr Green's vegetable garden. And there he was, sitting among the carrots and eating happily. He had already eaten six of them!
"Biscuit!" shouted Lily, laughing through her tears. Luckily, Mr Green wasn't angry. "Bring him back in the spring," he said with a smile. "I'll plant more carrots."

Structure. Opening: the given sentence and a short, strong second sentence that creates a problem (*Biscuit had disappeared!*). **Background**: the scene, in the past continuous (*It was raining, Lily was crying*). **Main events**, in order, in the past simple. **Turning point**: a flashback in the past perfect gives the key to the mystery (*I had seen Biscuit open the door*). **Ending**: the problem is solved, with a little direct speech and a light final line.

Language. Linkers of time and sequence (*while, then, the evening before, luckily*) guide the reader. Direct speech makes the story come alive: put the words in inverted commas, with the punctuation inside, and vary the reporting verbs (*said, shouted, sobbed*) — you studied direct speech in *English 1* (Unit 9). Short sentences create tension (*Biscuit had disappeared!*); a few vivid adjectives and adverbs (*happily*) add colour.

Checklist. Before you hand in a story, check:

- Did I start with the given sentence, exactly as it is written (or end with it, if the task says so)?
- Is there a clear problem, a turning point and an ending?
- Did I use the past continuous for the background, the past simple for the main events and at least one past perfect for an earlier event?
- Did I use time linkers (*first, then, while, suddenly, in the end*)?
- Is there some direct speech, with the right punctuation?
- Did I count the words? (About 120–150 for this task; in an exam, follow the number given.)

Task. Write a story (120–150 words) for a teen magazine competition. Your story must begin with this sentence: *I had never been so nervous in my life.*

2.6 Culture: Childhood in Victorian Britain

Grandad Arthur played in the street until it got dark. A hundred years before him, many children of his age were not playing at all: they were working. The Victorian age takes its name from Queen Victoria, who reigned from 1837 to 1901. It was the age of the Industrial Revolution, of railways and of fast-growing cities — and, for millions of poor children, of long days of hard work.

Children at work

In the early nineteenth century **child labour** *(ita: lavoro minorile)* was normal. Poor children worked in textile mills, in coal mines, on farms, in the streets as sellers and messengers, and as "climbing boys" who cleaned chimneys from the inside. Their families needed the money, and factory owners liked them because they were cheap and small enough to move under the machines. Slowly, Parliament passed laws to protect them. The Factory Act of 1833 banned children under nine from working in textile mills, and the Mines Act of 1842 stopped women, girls and boys under ten from working underground.

For the poorest families there was the **workhouse** *(ita: ospizio dei poveri, casa di lavoro)*. After the Poor Law Amendment Act of 1834, poor people who asked for help usually had to live in one. Life inside was deliberately hard, so that only the desperate would come: families were separated, the food was poor and everybody had to work.

School for everyone

At the start of Victoria's reign there was no national school system: some children went to schools run by churches and charities, many never went to school at all. The Elementary Education Act of 1870 set up local **school boards**, which had to build schools where there were not enough, so that every child aged five to twelve could find a place. The Act of 1880 made school **compulsory** *(ita: obbligatorio)* for children aged five to ten, and in 1891 elementary education became free. For the first time, almost every child in England learnt to read and write.

Charles Dickens

Nobody described these children better than Charles Dickens, the most popular novelist of his time (Figura 2.4). He knew their life from experience. Born in Portsmouth in 1812, he was twelve when his father was sent to a debtors' prison in London, and young Charles had to leave school and work in a factory, sticking labels on pots of shoe polish (*blacking*). He never forgot it. In his novels — *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *Great Expectations* — poor children, orphans and cruel institutions appear again and again, and his readers began to see them with new eyes. He died in 1870, the year of the first Education Act.

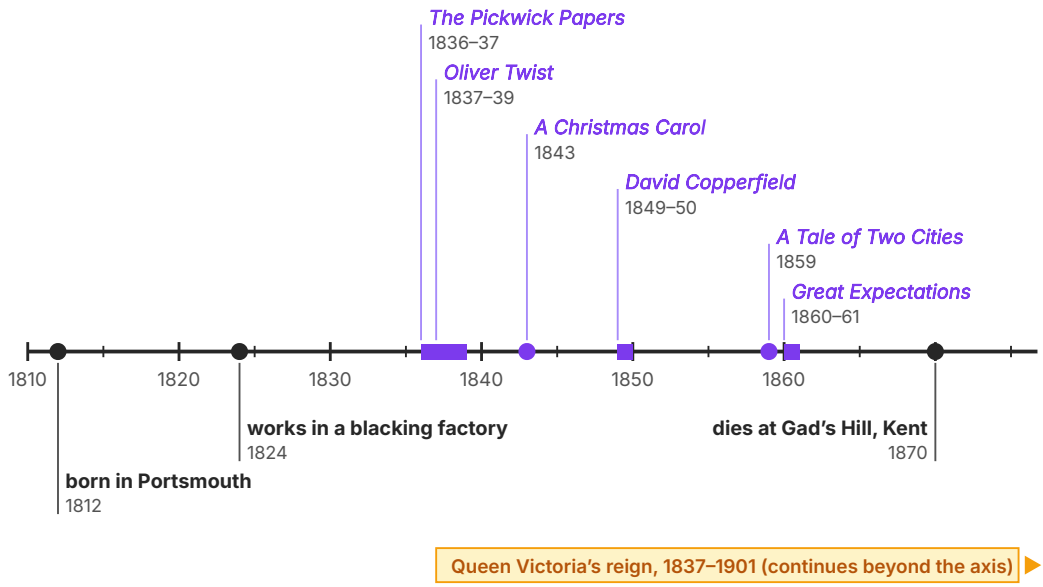


Figura 2.4 The life of Charles Dickens (1812–1870) and his main novels on a proportional time axis. Bars show novels published in monthly parts over more than one year; the amber band is Queen Victoria's reign.

COLLEGAMENTI

Maths: drawing a proportional timeline. On a proportional timeline, equal distances mean equal periods of time. Figura 2.4 goes from 1810 to 1875 (65 years) and is 520 units wide, so one year = 520 ÷ 65 = 8 units. *Oliver Twist* (1837) is 27 years after the start, so it is 27 × 8 = 216 units from the left end of the axis. Where is Dickens's death (1870)? (60 × 8 = 480 units.) Try it: draw a timeline of your own life, 1 cm for each year.

2.6.1 Literature: *Oliver Twist*

Oliver Twist appeared in monthly parts from 1837 to 1839. Oliver is an orphan, born in a workhouse. In the most famous scene of the novel, in chapter 2, he asks for a second bowl of food. Here is the scene, retold in simple English, with Oliver's words exactly as Dickens wrote them.

Retold in simple English (*testo della redazione*). Oliver was nine years old, and he lived in a workhouse with many other boys. Three times a day the master gave each boy one small bowl of *gruel*, a thin soup made of oats and water. The boys were always hungry. For three months they had eaten nothing else, and they had become thin and desperate. One evening they decided that one of them must ask for more, and they chose Oliver by chance. After supper, Oliver stood up, walked to the master with his bowl and spoon in his hand, and said:

“Please, sir, I want some more.” — *Charles Dickens,* Oliver Twist*, chapter 2*

The master was a fat, healthy man, but he turned very pale. He looked at the small boy in astonishment, and the other boys were paralysed with fear. Then he hit Oliver on the head with his ladle, the big spoon for the gruel, held him tight and shouted for the beadle, the official of the parish. The gentlemen who ran the workhouse were horrified that a boy had asked for more. The next day they put a notice on the gate: they offered five pounds to anybody who would take Oliver away.

1. Why were the boys so hungry? How long had they eaten only gruel?
2. How did the boys choose who would ask for more? Why do you think Dickens tells us this?
3. Oliver says *I want some more*, not *I would like some more*. Why does his short sentence sound so shocking to the master?
4. Who are the real “criminals” in this scene, in your opinion? What does Dickens want his readers to feel?

LEARNING TO LEARN

The best way to learn a lot of words, almost without noticing, is **extensive reading**: reading many easy, enjoyable books, for pleasure, without a dictionary. A **graded reader** is a book written or retold for learners, at a certain level, like the retelling of *Oliver Twist* above; many classics are available as graded readers, from A1 to C1.

- **Choose the right level.** Read the first page: if there are more than four or five new words, choose an easier book. You should understand almost everything.
- **Choose a story you want to read**: a mystery, a love story, a classic you know in Italian.
- **Don’t stop at every new word.** Guess it from the context, or skip it. Look up only the words that come back again and again.
- **Read a little every day** — ten pages before you go to sleep — and keep a list of the books you finish.

Compare with Italy

In Italy, compulsory schooling began with the *legge Casati* of 1859, a law of the Kingdom of Sardinia that later applied to the whole of united Italy: it made the first two years of elementary school free and compulsory, but it had no real penalties for families who did not send their children, so many children stayed at home or worked. The *legge Coppino* of 1877 made school compulsory from six to nine and introduced penalties for parents. Today education in Italy is compulsory for ten years, until the age of sixteen.

1. Britain and Italy made school compulsory in about the same years. Why do you think it was difficult to send all children to school in the nineteenth century?

2. Do you know any stories about the childhood of your great-grandparents? Did they go to school? Did they work?
3. Is there an Italian writer who wrote about poor children, like Dickens? (Think of De Amicis's *Cuore* or Verga's "Rosso Malpelo".)

SINTESI

- Childhood: *nursery, Reception, primary school, playground, toys*; *grow up* (become an adult) vs *bring up* (raise a child); *remember* vs *remind somebody of / about / to*; *memories, reminisce*.
- Adjectives with **-ful** (with) and **-less** (without): *careful / careless, useful / useless, painful / painless*; one *l*; the opposite of *helpful* is *unhelpful*.
- Past perfect: *had* + past participle, for an action **before** another past moment: *When I arrived, the train had left.*
- Time words: *by the time, already, just, never… before, when, after, because*; with *after / before* the past simple is often enough.
- Do not use the past perfect for a single finished event: ✓ *I went to London last year.*
- Narrative tenses: past continuous = background, past simple = main events, past perfect = earlier events (flashback).
- *used to* + base form: past habits and states that are no longer true; *didn't use to*, *Did you use to…?*; no present form.
- *would* + base form: repeated past actions in stories and memories — never states (✗ *I would have long hair*).
- *be / get used to* + noun or *-ing* = be / become familiar with something (B1+).
- Anecdotes: catch attention, set the scene, tell the events, keep the best for the end; listeners react (*No way! And then?*).
- A story: given first sentence, problem, turning point, ending; narrative tenses, time linkers, direct speech.
- Victorian Britain: child labour, the workhouse, the Education Acts (1870, 1880, 1891); Dickens (1812–1870), *Oliver Twist*; in Italy the *legge Casati* (1859) and the *legge Coppino* (1877).

ESERCIZI

Vocabulary

1. ● Match the words (1–6) with the definitions (a–f). 1 childhood · 2 nursery · 3 playground · 4 Reception · 5 memories · 6 bring up — a the first year of primary school in England · b things that you remember from the past · c the time when you are a child · d take care of and educate a child · e an outdoor area where children play · f a place where very young children are looked after before they start school

2. ● This old photo always _____ me of my first day at school.
   A. remembers
   B. recalls
   C. reminds
   D. memorises

3. ● Sam's grandparents, Arthur and Joan, _____ their only daughter, Helen, in Bristol.
   A. brought up
   B. grew up
   C. grew
   D. raised up

4. ●● Complete the sentences with the words in the box: *grew up · memories · playground · reminisce · toys · remind*. a Grandad Arthur _____ in a terraced house in south Bristol. b At break time the children ran out into the _____ . c Can you _____ me to buy a present for Lily? d My grandparents love to _____ about the past at Sunday lunch. e I have very happy _____ of my primary school. f Lily keeps all her _____ in a big wooden box.

5. ●● Complete with an adjective in *-ful* or *-less* formed from the word in brackets. a Be _____ ! The road is very busy. (care) b This map is _____ : it's twenty years old. (use) c Thanks for your advice — it was really _____ . (help) d I'm _____ at singing. Please don't ask me! (hope) e Don't worry, that snake is _____ . (harm) f The view from the hill was _____ . (beauty) g I broke my arm and it was very _____ . (pain)

6. ●● Odd one out. Which word does not belong? Say why. a nursery · primary school · playground · university · b careful · painless · useful · hopeful · c remember · remind · reminisce · repair · d teddy bear · doll · building blocks · blanket

7. ●● Choose the correct adjective. a The first day at nursery was *frightened / frightening* for Lily. b Arthur was *bored / boring* during the long car journeys to the seaside. c Giulia was *embarrassed / embarrassing* when Marta showed everybody her old photos. d The end of the story was really *surprised / surprising*. e Callum was *tired / tiring* after running to the flat and back.

Grammar

8. ● Complete with the past perfect of the verbs in brackets. a When we got to the cinema, the film _____ already _____ (start). b Giulia was sad because she _____ (lose) her photos of Bristol. c I _____ never _____ (see) Concorde before that day. d By the time Mum came home, Josh _____ (cook) dinner. e Lily was tired because she _____ (not / sleep) well. f _____ you _____ (finish) your homework when your friends called?

9. ●● Past simple or past perfect? Complete with the verbs in brackets. a When Sam _____ (arrive) at the party, everybody _____ (go) home: it was empty. b Callum _____ (not / recognise) Aoife's house because she _____ (paint) the door red. c I _____ (visit) Dublin last October. d After she _____ (read) the letter, she _____ (start) to cry. e The teacher _____ (be) angry because we _____ (forget) our books again.

10. ● By the time we got to the station, the last bus _____ .

A. has left
B. was leaving
C. leaves
D. had left

11. ●● Join the two sentences. Use the word in brackets and the past perfect. a Arthur met Joan. He worked in Bath for two years before that. (when) b Lily went to bed. She said goodnight to Biscuit first. (after) c Giulia arrived at the station. Her train left two minutes before. (by the time) d Marta cried. She lost her pencil case on the bus. (because) e I saw the sea for the first time. I was eight. I never saw it before. (never... before)

12. ●● Narrative tenses. Complete the story with the past simple, past continuous or past perfect of the verbs in brackets. *It was a beautiful afternoon. The sun (1)* _____ *(shine) and the children (2)* _____ *(play) in the park. Suddenly Max (3)* _____ *(shout): he (4)* _____ *(see) something in the grass. It was a wallet. Somebody (5)* _____ *(drop) it on the path. Ella (6)* _____ *(open) it and (7)* _____ *(find) a name and an address inside. Ten minutes later they (8)* _____ *(knock) on the door of a very happy old lady.*

13. ● When I was a child, I _____ a cat called Pippo.

A. would have
B. used to have
C. use to have
D. was used to have

14. ● Write sentences with the correct form of *used to*. a Arthur / share a bed with his brother (+) b Joan's house / have central heating (–) c you / walk to primary school? (?) d Lily / be afraid of the dark (+) e my parents / let me stay up late (–) f where / your family / go on holiday? (?)

15. ●● *used to* or *would*? Complete. Where both are possible, write both. a When I was little, I _____ have a dog called Rex. b Every summer we _____ go to my grandparents' house by the lake. c My grandad _____ be a bus driver. d On Sunday mornings Dad _____ make pancakes for everybody. e Marta _____ like heights, but now she climbs. (–) f We _____ live in a flat in the centre of Turin.

16. ●● Find and correct the mistake in each sentence (✗). a ✗ *I use to play tennis every Saturday.* (a habit now) b ✗ *Did you used to like school?* c ✗ *When I was young, I would have very long hair.* d ✗ *I had gone to Paris in 2019.* e ✗ *When we arrived, the concert has already started.* f ✗ *Ella had went home when I phoned.*

17. ●● Put the words in the correct order. a used / didn't / Josh / vegetables / to / like · b had / the / when / started / arrived / I / already / lesson · c would / grandma / tell / every / stories / us / night / my · d you / did / where / live / use / to / ?

18. ●●● Translate into English. a Da bambino andavo a scuola a piedi ogni giorno. b Quando siamo arrivati alla stazione, il treno era già partito. c Mia nonna mi ha cresciuto: ogni sera mi raccontava una storia.

Reading and Listening

19. ● Read "Grandad Arthur, Bristolian" again. True (T), false (F) or doesn't say (DS)? a Arthur grew up in a village near Bath. b He was the youngest child in his family. c His father had made him a wooden lorry. d He liked school from the first day. e He saw Concorde when he was thirteen. f Arthur and Joan got married in Bath.

20. ●● Answer the questions in full sentences. a Why did Arthur and his friends play in the street? b How did Arthur know that his tea was ready? c Why does Arthur still read every day? d What did Arthur decide on the day he saw Concorde? e What two things about his childhood does he not miss?

21. ● Listening 1. Why was Callum soaking wet when he got to the platform?

    A. Because he had fallen into the river.
    B. Because he had left his raincoat in his bag.
    C. Because it had started to rain while he was running.
    D. Because Aoife had thrown water at him.

22. ●● Listening 2. a Who is Bruno, and why is he special? b What did Giulia use to do with her vegetables at nursery? c What had happened to Marta before she arrived at primary school on the first day? d What has changed about Marta since she was little? e Find two sentences with *would* for repeated past actions in the script.

23. ●● *Oliver Twist* and the Culture page. a Find words in the retelling that mean: 1 a thin soup made of oats and water · 2 surprise, wonder · 3 an official of the parish. b Which tense does the retelling use in *they had eaten nothing else*, and why? c Which law made school compulsory in England for children aged five to ten? d What was Dickens's job when he was twelve?

Writing and Speaking

24. ●● Write six sentences about your childhood: three with *used to* / *didn't use to*, two with *would*, and one with the past perfect (*I had never… before*).

25. ●● Write a story (100–150 words). It must begin with this sentence: *When I opened my eyes, I knew that something was wrong.* Use the narrative tenses, at least two time linkers and some direct speech.

26. ●●● Speaking. Work in pairs. Student A tells an anecdote about a day when something went wrong (a journey, a party, a school trip) in about one minute; Student B reacts at least three times and asks two questions. Then swap roles.

Towards B1

27. ●● Multiple-choice cloze. Choose the correct word (A, B, C or D) for each gap. *My grandmother (1) ___ up in a small village in the mountains. When she was a child, she (2) ___ to walk five kilometres to school every day. In winter she (3) ___ leave home in the dark. Her parents (4) ___ never been to school, so they were very proud of her. Last summer she took me to see her old school. By the time we got there, it (5) ___ closed for the day, but the building (6) ___ me of the photos in her album.* 1 A brought B grew C raised D made · 2 A used B would C was used D use · 3 A used B was C would D had · 4 A have B were C did D had · 5 A has B had C is D did · 6 A remembered B reminded C recalled D remained

28. ●● Open cloze. Write ONE word in each gap. *When I was little, my family (1) ___ to spend every August at the seaside. I loved it. Every morning my brother and I (2) ___ build sandcastles, and my dad would (3) ___ us stories in the afternoon. One year, when we arrived, we found that a storm (4) ___ destroyed our favourite beach café. I (5) ___ never seen my dad so sad. He (6) ___ loved that café since he was a boy!*

29. ●●● Sentence transformation. Complete the second sentence so that it means the same as the first. Use between two and four words. a I don't live in Milan now, but I did when I was young. → I _____ in Milan when I was young. b First Lily ate her breakfast, then she went to school. → Lily went to school after _____ her breakfast. c It was my first time on a plane. → I _____ on a plane before. d My aunt took care of me when I was a child. → My aunt _____ up. e Was swimming a habit of yours when you were younger? → _____ go swimming when you were younger?

30. ●● Short message. You have found an old photo of you and a friend at primary school. Write a message to your friend (35–45 words): say what you have found, remind your friend of one thing you used to do together, and suggest meeting to look at more old photos.

31. ●●● Story. Write a story (about 100 words) that ends with this sentence: *It was the best day of my childhood.*

PER APPROFONDIRE

- SWA
- EGU
- RED
- CGE

Glossario del capitolo

Anecdote
aneddoto — a short, true, often funny story about something that happened

Be / get used to + -ing
essere / abituarsi a — I'm used to getting up early.

Bring up
crescere, allevare — take care of and educate a child: *My aunt brought me up.*

By the time
quando (ormai), entro il momento in cui — By the time we arrived, the film had started.

Careful / careless
attento / distratto, sbadato — paying / not paying attention

Child labour
lavoro minorile — work done by children, often in bad conditions

Childhood
infanzia — the time when you are a child

Compulsory
obbligatorio — required by law or by a rule: *School is compulsory until 16.*

Graded reader
lettura graduata — a book written or retold for learners at a certain level

Memory (pl. memories)
ricordo — something that you remember from the past

Narrative tenses
tempi del racconto — past continuous, past simple and past perfect used together in a story

Nursery
asilo, scuola materna — a place where very young children are looked after before school

Past perfect
trapassato prossimo — had + past participle: *The train had left.*

Reception
primo anno della scuola primaria inglese — the class for children aged 4–5 in England

Remind (somebody of / about / to)
ricordare a qualcuno, far venire in mente — This song reminds me of Bristol.

Reminisce
rievocare il passato — talk with pleasure about things in the past

Used to
abitudine o stato passato (imperfetto) — I used to play in the street.

Useful / useless
utile / inutile — a useful app; This old map is useless.

Workhouse
ospizio dei poveri, casa di lavoro — a Victorian institution where poor people lived and worked

Would (past habits)
imperfetto abituale — repeated past actions: *We would play until dark.*

Soluzioni

1. 1 c · 2 f · 3 e · 4 a · 5 b · 6 d

2. C — *remind somebody of something* = make somebody remember it

3. A — *bring up* = raise a child (*grow up* has no object)

4. a grew up · b playground · c remind · d reminisce · e memories · f toys

5. a careful · b useless · c helpful · d hopeless · e harmless · f beautiful · g painful

6. a *university* (not a place for young children) · b *painless* (the only adjective with *-less*) · c *repair* (not about memory) · d *blanket* (not a toy)

7. a frightening · b bored · c embarrassed · d surprising · e tired

8. a had (already) started · b had lost · c had (never) seen · d had cooked · e hadn't slept · f Had (you) finished

9. a arrived · had gone · b didn't recognise · had painted · c visited (one finished event: no past perfect) · d had read / read · started (with *after* both are possible) · e was · had forgotten

10. D — *by the time* + an earlier action: past perfect

11. a When Arthur met Joan, he had worked in Bath for two years. · b Lily went to bed after she had said goodnight to Biscuit. (or: After Lily had said goodnight to Biscuit, she went to bed.) · c By the time Giulia arrived at the station, her train had left. · d Marta cried because she had lost her pencil case on the bus. · e When I saw the sea for the first time, I was eight: I had never seen it before.

12. 1 was shining · 2 were playing · 3 shouted · 4 had seen (or saw) · 5 had dropped · 6 opened · 7 found · 8 were knocking (or knocked)

13. B — a past state: *used to* (not *would*)

14. a Arthur used to share a bed with his brother. · b Joan's house didn't use to have central heating. · c Did you use to walk to primary school? · d Lily used to be afraid of the dark. · e My parents didn't use to let me stay up late. · f Where did your family use to go on holiday?

15. a used to (state) · b used to / would · c used to (state) · d used to / would · e didn't use to · f used to (state: *live*)

16. a I usually play / I play tennis every Saturday. · b Did you use to like school? · c ...I used to have very long hair. · d I went to Paris in 2019. · e ...the concert had already started. · f Ella had gone home when I phoned.

17. a Josh didn't use to like vegetables. · b When I arrived, the lesson had already started. (or: The lesson had already started when I arrived.) · c My grandma would tell us stories every night. (or: Every night my grandma would tell us stories.) · d Where did you use to live?

18. a When I was a child, I used to walk (or: I would walk / I walked) to school every day. · b When we got to (arrived at) the station, the train had already left. · c My grandmother brought me up: every evening she used to tell (or: she would tell) me a story.

19. a F (that was Joan; Arthur grew up in south Bristol) · b T · c T · d F (he cried on his first morning) · e T · f DS

20. a Because there weren't many cars, so the street was their playground. · b His mum would open the window and shout "Arthur! Tea!" · c Because his teacher, Miss Lewis, used to read the class a story every afternoon and he fell in love with books. · d He decided that he wanted to work with machines. · e His cold bedroom and his brother Ray's feet (Ray used to kick him in bed).

21. C — *it had started to rain while he was running* (his raincoat was in his bag, but he did not know it)

22. a Bruno is Giulia's old teddy bear (with one eye): she used to take him everywhere, and her dad would invent a story about him every night. · b She would hide them in her pockets. · c She had lost her new pencil case on the bus. · d She didn't use to like heights; now she climbs twice a week. · e *Every night my dad would invent a new story about him.* · *I would hide the vegetables in my pockets.* (also: *Mum would find them in the evening.*)

23. a 1 gruel · 2 astonishment · 3 beadle · b The past perfect: the three months of gruel came before the evening of the story. · c The Elementary Education Act of 1880. · d He worked in a factory, sticking labels on pots of shoe polish (blacking).

24. Model answer: *I used to have a red bike. I didn't use to like pasta. I used to be afraid of dogs. Every summer we would go to my uncle's farm, and I would feed the chickens every morning. When I went to Rome at nine, I had never been on a train before.*

25. Model answer: *When I opened my eyes, I knew that something was wrong. The house was silent, and the sun was shining through the curtains. I looked at my clock: it was half past nine! I had slept through my alarm, and the bus had already gone. I jumped out of bed, got dressed in two minutes and ran downstairs. "Mum! Why didn't you wake me up?" I shouted. But the kitchen was empty. Then I saw a note on the table: "Happy birthday! No school today — we're going to the mountains. We're waiting in the car!" I laughed. In all the excitement, I had completely forgotten that it was my birthday — and that it was a holiday.* (≈ 120 words) Assessment: story structure, narrative tenses, linkers, direct speech, accuracy.

26. Model answer (A): *Did I ever tell you about my school trip to Florence? We were walking to the Uffizi when our teacher suddenly stopped: she had left the tickets on the bus! So we waited outside for an hour…* (B): *Oh no! And then? What did you do while you were waiting?* Check: a catchy start, narrative tenses, a clear ending; reactions from Tabella 2.8.

27. 1 B grew · 2 A used · 3 C would · 4 D had · 5 B had (*it had closed*) · 6 B reminded

28. 1 used · 2 would · 3 tell (or read) · 4 had · 5 had · 6 had

29. a used to live · b she had eaten (also she ate / having eaten) · c had never been (also had never flown) · d brought me · e Did you use to

30. Model answer: *Hi Luca! Guess what I found in a box: a photo of us in Year 3! Do you remember how we used to play football in the playground every break? We were terrible! Shall we meet on Saturday? I've got more photos to show you!* (≈ 42 words)

31. Model answer: *I was seven, and it was snowing for the first time in years. My brother and I were looking out of the window when Dad came into the room with two old sledges. He had kept them in the garage since he was a boy! We ran to the hill behind our house. All the children from our street were already there, and we spent the whole afternoon going down the hill, falling in the snow and laughing. When it got dark, Mum made hot chocolate for everybody. It was the best day of my childhood.* (≈ 100 words) Check: the given sentence at the end, narrative tenses, at least one past perfect.