

Tenses in OET Writing

Let's explore how tenses feature in OET letters.

Which tenses are featured below? Answers at the end of the document

- He has been experiencing blackouts.
- Mrs Smith will need education regarding self-testing blood sugar levels.
- He was initially admitted on the 4th May.
- Ms Johnson's blood pressure is 140/90mmHg.
- She has made good progress.
- Previously, she had complained of worsening headaches.
- Previously, she had been experiencing dizziness.
- She was taking her medication intermittently.
- She is taking medication for her arthritis.

Tenses and Paragraph Function

Paragraph Type	What is typically included	Typical tenses	Example
Introduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things which are true now • Things which are happening now • Things which happened recently 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present simple • present continuous • present perfect 	<p><i>I <u>am writing</u> to refer Mrs Smith, who <u>has been experiencing</u> signs and symptoms suggestive of neurological trauma for two days. She <u>requires</u> urgent assessment and management.</i></p>
Timeline 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Starting in the past, moving towards present, possibly finishing in the present • Starting in the past, going backwards in the past, move towards the present 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • past simple • present perfect • present perfect continuous • past perfect • continuous • present simple 	<p>During Mr Gardener's routine check up on the 2nd June, multiple new moles <u>were noted</u> on his back. He reported that he <u>had been experiencing</u> an itching sensation in this area for the previous two months. Since then the lesions <u>have grown</u> and begun to bleed upon itching. Today the moles <u>look</u> irregular and dark.</p>
Timeline 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Now & things related to now • Things related to earlier today 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present simple • present continuous • present perfect • present perfect continuous • past simple 	<p>Be careful. we can use the past in the today paragraph: Earlier today Mrs Johnson <u>presented</u> with a heavily bruised arm.</p> <p>Today Mrs Brown <u>is experiencing</u> symptoms suggestive of a relapse of severe depression. Her demeanour <u>is</u> withdrawn and her family report that she <u>has been talking</u> to herself over the past few days.</p>

Background - medical / medicine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things which happened in the past • Things which are true now • Things which are true from the past to now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • past simple • present simple • present continuous • present perfect • present perfect continuous 	<p>Ms Finkelstein <u>underwent</u> an angioplasty procedure three years ago.</p> <p>Ms Greene <u>has had</u> arthritis since 1996.</p> <p>Mr Silva <u>has</u> diabetes and hypercholesterolaemia.</p>
Background - social	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Things which happened in the past • Things which are true now 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • past simple • present simple 	<p>Mr Horne's wife <u>died</u> recently.</p> <p>Mr Horne <u>lives</u> alone in a three-storey house.</p>
Request	<p>Things which need to be done now and in the future</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • present simple • present continuous • future simple 	<p>Mrs Johnson <u>requires</u> assessment, including a possible MRI scan.</p> <p>Mr Styles <u>is meeting</u> a physiotherapist on the 10th.</p> <p>Ms Hartson <u>will require</u> monitoring regarding her medication compliance.</p>

Today

Today is a difficult 'time period' to work with. We often use it in current condition/timeline 2 paragraphs.

Example: GP referral to a dermatologist - (psoriasis - build-up of symptoms over 6 months - 3 appointments)

Symptoms today:

Past simple: Upon / On examination, widespread rash was observed.

Present simple: Mrs Smith has an itchy, painful rash on her back.

Completed actions today:

Past simple: After examining her, I advised her to apply topical cream on the affected areas.

Present Perfect: I have advised Mrs Smith to use a topical cream and to speak to a dietitian.

Leading up to today:

Present Perfect Continuous: She has been experiencing headaches and bowel disturbances since her last appointment.

Present Perfect Simple: She has had two episodes of syncope in the past two weeks

Exercise

Write the timeline for this situation. It's up to you how you structure it. Just focus on getting the tense right!

Mrs Grable: 95 years old

GP clinic:

- **18th January:** low fever, repetitive cough, runny nose - cold
- GP: recommend rest, paracetamol, hydration

Emergency home visit:

- **20th January:** fever increased, cough stronger, chest pain, fatigue, haemoptysis
- **vital signs:** 39.1 degrees / BP: 120/80 / PR: 110 / RR: 42
- **provisional diagnosis:** pneumonia

Urgently refer to A&E

Introduction:

I am writing to urgently refer Mrs Grable, who is showing signs and symptoms suggestive of pneumonia. She requires your assessment and management

Reviews

Student	Teacher
<p>On 18th January, Mrs Grable visited his GP clinic with symptoms of a cold. It was recommended rest, analgesia and hydration. However, in the past two days, her symptoms worsened. Today, on examination, she presented fever, normal blood pressure, tachycardia and tachypnea, resulting in a provisional diagnosis of pneumonia.</p>	<p>On 18th January, Mrs Grable visited my clinic with symptoms of a cold. Rest, analgesia and hydration were recommended. However, in the past two days, her symptoms have worsened. Today, on examination, she presented fever, normal blood pressure, tachycardia and tachypnoea, resulting in a provisional diagnosis of pneumonia. - numbers?</p>

<p>I am writing to you referring urgently Mrs Grable, who has signs and symptoms suggestive of pneumonia. She requires your assessment and management.</p> <p>On 18th January, Mrs Grable presented to our clinic with signs and symptoms suggestive of a respiratory tract infection uncomplicated, for which she was advised to rest, stay hydrated and take paracetamol.</p> <p>Today, during an emergency home visit, Mrs Grable complained of tiredness, chest pain, persistent cough, along with haemoptysis. These symptoms have worsened in the last 48 hours. Her vital signs are blood pressure 120/80, a pulse rate of 110, and 42 respiratory rates, additionally, her temperature was 39,1 degrees.</p>	<p>I am writing to urgently refer Mrs Grable, who has signs and symptoms suggestive of pneumonia. She requires your assessment and management.</p> <p>On 18th January, Mrs Grable presented to our clinic with signs and symptoms suggestive of an uncomplicated respiratory tract infection, for which she was advised to rest, stay hydrated and take paracetamol.</p> <p>Today, during an emergency home visit, Mrs Grable complained of tiredness, chest pain and persistent cough, along with haemoptysis. These symptoms have worsened in the last 48 hours. Her vital signs are BP 120/80, a pulse rate of 110, and 42 respiratory rates. Additionally, her temperature was 39,1 degrees.</p>
<p>In a home visit earlier today, Mrs Grable complained of chest pain, a cough, a fever, along with haemoptysis. Her vital signs were all elevated apart from her blood pressure. As a result of that, she has been diagnosed with pneumonia.</p> <p>Two days earlier, Mrs Grable had presented complaining of a fever, a repetitive cough, and runny nose, for which she was prescribed paracetamol and advised to hydrate well.</p>	<p>In a home visit earlier today, Mrs Grable complained of chest pain, a cough and a fever, along with haemoptysis. Her vital signs were all elevated apart from her blood pressure. As a result of that, she has been diagnosed with pneumonia. - numbers?</p> <p>Two days earlier, Mrs Grable had presented complaining of a fever, a repetitive cough, and runny nose, for which she was prescribed paracetamol and advised to hydrate well.</p>
<p>On 18th January, Mrs. Grable was presented with a low fever, as well as repetitive cough, and a runny nose. She was recommended to be hydrated, and was prescribed paracetamol. Additionally, she was advised a well rest.</p> <p>Mrs. Grable's fever has increased steeply in the past two days. On 20th January during the emergency home visit, she also reported a stronger cough, chest pain, fatigue, and hemoptysis. Following her examination, Her body temperature was 39.1 degrees, her blood temperature was 120/80, and her respiratory rate was 42. As a result of her signs and symptoms, my provisional diagnosis is pneumonia.</p>	<p>On 18th January, Mrs. Grable presented with a low fever, as well as a repetitive cough, and a runny nose. Hydration was recommended and she was prescribed paracetamol. Additionally, she was advised to rest.</p> <p>Mrs. Grable's fever has increased steeply in the past two days. During an emergency home visit today she also reported a stronger cough, chest pain, fatigue, and hemoptysis. Following her examination, her body temperature was 39.1 degrees, her blood temperature was 120/80, and her respiratory rate was 42. As a result of</p>

	her signs and symptoms, my provisional diagnosis is pneumonia.
<p>Today, Mrs. Grable complained of high fever, and a persistent cough accompanied with fatigue and haemoptysis during her emergency home visit. Her vital signs were T:39.1, PR:110, RR:42.</p> <p>2 days ago, Mrs Grable initially presented to our clinic with mild symptoms of cold, due to which she was recommended rest and hydration, in addition to taking paracetamol.</p>	
<p>On today's emergency home visit, Mrs Grable complained of fatigue, chest pain, and coughing up blood. Her condition has worsened since her last visit two days earlier. Upon examination, she was febrile with a temperature of 39.1, a pulse rate of 110 beats per minute, and a respiratory rate of 42 breaths per minute. Her blood pressure was normal.</p> <p>Initially, Mrs Grable was admitted to our clinic two days ago. She had been experiencing a low-grade fever, repetitive cough, and a runny nose suggestive of cold. Accordingly, hydration, having rest, and paracetamol had been recommended.</p>	<p>In today's emergency home visit, Mrs Grable complained of fatigue, chest pain, and coughing up blood. Her condition has worsened since her last visit two days ago. Upon examination, she was febrile with a temperature of 39.1, a pulse rate of 110 beats per minute, and a respiratory rate of 42 breaths per minute. Her blood pressure was normal.</p> <p>Initially, Mrs Grable was admitted to our clinic two days ago. She had been experiencing a low-grade fever, repetitive cough, and a runny nose suggestive of cold. Accordingly, hydration, having rest, and paracetamol were recommended.</p>
<p>On 18th January ,Mrs. Grable visited our clinic with high fever, cough, and runny nose. she was visited by GP,who prescribed her paracetamol , and recommended her enough hydration, and rest.</p> <p>On 20nd January ,emergency visit at home has been done by me.Mrs Garble has been experiencing higher grade of fever, her cough has become worse, and it accompanied by chest pain, and hemoptysis.she also is complaining of fatigue.on physical examination,T: 39.1 degrees c,BP 120/80,PR: 110,and RR:42 is detected.</p>	<p>A few problems with tense - watch the video and re-write. Consider the time phrases</p>

Mrs Grable initially presented to my clinic with a mild fever, recurrent cough, and runny nose on 18th January 2022, for which she was treated with paracetamol, hydration, and taking a rest.

On today's emergency home visit, Mrs Garble experiencing worsened symptoms of the aforementioned complaints, including a high grade of fever, chest pain, tiredness, as well as persistent cough accompanying haemoptysis, suggesting pnemonia, for which she has urgently been referred to the emergency department.

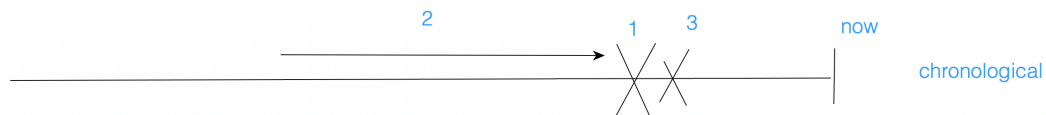
In today's emergency home visit, Mrs Grable **was experiencing** worsened symptoms of the aforementioned complaints, including a high grade fever, chest pain **and** tiredness, as well as a persistent cough, accompanying haemoptysis, which suggested pneumonia, for which she has urgently been referred to the emergency department. - **be careful with extending sentences.**

Past Perfect in this example:

1 2

Initially, Mrs Grable was admitted to our clinic two days ago. She had been experiencing a low-grade fever, repetitive cough, and a runny nose suggestive of cold. Accordingly, hydration, having rest, and paracetamol were recommended. story

3



Mrs Grable had a fever, a cough and a runny nose. She went to the clinic. Hydration, rest and paracetamol were recommended. chronological

Answers

- He has been experiencing blackouts. **present perfect continuous**
- Mrs Smith will need education regarding self-testing blood sugar levels. **future simple**
- He was initially admitted on the 4th May. **past simple**
- Ms Johnson's blood pressure is 140/90mmHg. **present simple**
- She has made good progress. **present perfect simple**
- Previously, she had complained of worsening headaches. **past perfect simple**
- Previously, she had been experiencing dizziness. **past perfect continuous**
- She was taking her medication intermittently. - **past continuous**
- She is taking medication for her arthritis. - **present continuous**