

FOURTEEN (One-Act Play)

Alice Gerstenberg

After completing this lesson, students will be able to:

- speak confidently and fluently in a wide range of contexts, For example, (conflict resolution, panel discussion, role-play, dialogue, etc.) to fulfil different purposes (exposition, argumentation etc.).
- engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade-level topics, texts, and issues
- read with accurate pronunciation, appropriate pitch and voice variation suitable for fictional and nonfictional texts
- ask and answer higher-order questions to guide/assess reading
- evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader.
- use pre-reading and while-reading strategies to analyse and explore different layers of meaning within texts including biases and opinions
- comment on implied meaning, e.g. writer's viewpoint, relationships between characters etc.
- evaluate stages of plot development in a fictional text. (exposition, setting, climax, character development, resolution)
- read, view and analyse a variety of reading grade-appropriate and high-interest books and texts from print and non-print sources: c. Narratives (e.g., fables, historical fiction, science fiction, legends)
- cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text
- identify and correctly use patterns of word changes that indicate different meanings or parts of speech (e.g., verb and modifiers)
- demonstrate knowledge and application of parts of speech in oral and written communication in varying degrees of complexity
- apply knowledge of parts of speech, tenses, sentence structure and other features of grammar and vocabulary to understand how language functions in different contexts, make effective choices for meaning or style while reading, listening and writing
- produce legible work that shows the correct spelling of the conventions of punctuation and capitalization
- produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience

Pre-Reading

- What is a One-Act Play?
- Have you ever read any One-Act Play?

Reading

CHARACTERS

MRS. HORACE PRINGLE: A woman of fashion.

ELAINE: Her debutante daughter.

DUNHAM: The butler or maid.

SCENE:

The dining-room of a New York residence. A long table running from left to right, with a chair at each end and six chairs on each side, is set elaborately for fourteen. DUNHAM, the butler, is hovering over the table to give it a few finishing touches as MRS. PRINGLE comes in. She is a woman of fashion, handsome, and wears a very lovely evening gown. She is rather excitable in temperament but withal capable and executive, vivacious and humorously charming. She enters in haste carrying a corsage bouquet of flowers and the empty box of paper from which she has unwrapped them.]

MRS. PRINGLE: Dunham, I've just had word from Mr. Harper that he was called away to the bedside of a friend who is very ill. He sent me these flowers -- it's a good thing he did. I don't approve of young men refusing dinner invitations at the very last minute.

DUNHAM: [Relieving her.] I'll take the box and paper, Mrs. Pringle.

MRS. PRINGLE: [Looking at the table anxiously and then at her watch.] It's too bad -- after you've set it all so beautifully -- and it's getting so late -- someone might be coming any moment. How's cook?

DUNHAM: Cook's in a temper, as always, madam.

MRS. PRINGLE: I'm glad to hear it. She's like an actress -- the better the temper, the better the performance. As long as she serves us a good dinner, I don't care how much she swears. The rest of you can just keep out of her way. Where's Gustave?

DUNHAM: I'm sorry to have to say it, madam, but there's such an awful blizzard out he's sweeping off the sidewalk.

MRS. PRINGLE: Oh! Dear me, yes! I should have ordered an awning! But who expected a storm like this?

[She glances out of the window. ELAINE, a young debutante in evening gown comes running in with a bunch of place-cards.]

ELAINE: Here are the place-cards, mother, and the diagram. Shall I put them around?

MRS. PRINGLE: Yes, dear. Elaine, I'm going up to look after your father. He's so helpless about his ties. [She starts to leave the room.] Remove one plate, Dunham.

DUNHAM: Remove one plate, madam? Oh! Madam! It is a certainty! You wouldn't sit down with thirteen.

MRS. PRINGLE: [Drawing back.] Thirteen! Why, you're right--thirteen! We can never sit down with thirteen. That's all due to Mr. Harper's negligence. Sick friend, nothing! He's just one of those careless men who never answer their invitations in time. His flowers, indeed, to make me forgive him -- now look at the trouble he's put me to -- thirteen! I wonder whom I could get to come in the last minute.

Quick -- Elaine -- help me think.

[She rushes to the telephone and looks madly through her list of acquaintances.]

ELAINE: There's always Uncle George.

MRS. PRINGLE: He never opens his head!

DUNHAM: Mr. Morgan, madam, he always tells a joke or two.

MRS. PRINGLE: Why, yes, Dunham -- that's clever of you! Hello Central -- Lakeview 5971 -- at once, please -- Elaine dear, your hair's much too tight -- pull it out -- pull it out -- come here. [In telephone.] Mr. Morgan's Well, this is Mrs. Pringle speaking -- from across the street. Yes. When Mr. Morgan comes in, please tell him to call me up right away. I want him to dine with us -- in about ten minutes -- you expect him? [She pull's ELAINE'S hair out to make it look fluffier. ELAINE makes faces of pain, but her mother pays no attention.] Have him call me right away. [She hands up the receiver.] Now if he shouldn't get it -- then what'll I do?

ELAINE: Well, mother, I don't have to be at the table. It's your party, anyway. Everybody's married and older than I am.

MRS. PRINGLE: [Pointing to the table diagram in ELAINE'S hand.] Didn't I put you next to Oliver Farnsworth? Millions! He's worth millions!

ELAINE: Well, he won't be giving me any.

MRS. PRINGLE: Can't he marry you? Aren't you going to try to make a good match for yourself? I fling every eligible man I can at your head. Can't you finish the rest yourself?

ELAINE: It's no use, mother, you're trying to marry me off to anyone as important as he is. He frightens me to death. I lose my tongue. I'm as afraid of him as I'd be afraid of the Prince of Wales!

While-reading

Circle any four unfamiliar words or expressions. Before you reach for their dictionaries, have a closer look at the words preceding and following the unknown terms. Using context clues, see if they can figure out their meaning.

MRS. PRINGLE: The Prince of Wales! Oh! What wouldn't I give to have the Prince of Wales in my house! New York has lost its heart to him. I was just telling Mr. Farnsworth yesterday that I'd give anything to have the Prince here. I would establish my social position for life! And I've such a reputation for being a wonderful hostess. [The telephone rings.] Dear me! -- the phone -- Hello -- Mrs. Sedgwick -- Yes -- this is Mrs. Pringle -- What? No -- Oh! Caught in a snow drift -- can't get another car? [She puts her hand over the telephone and speaks delightedly to ELAINE.] Good! The widow can't come -- that leaves us twelve -- remove two plates, Dunham. [DUNHAM removes two plates. and ELAINE changes the table-cards. **MRS. PRINGLE** continues into the telephone.] Oh! That's a shame! I'm heartbroken. Oh! My dear, how can we get along without you! But have you really tried? Oh, I'm reduced to tears. Good-bye, dear. [She hangs up the receiver, and takes it down again.] Well, I'm glad she dropped out -- Central -- give me Lakeview 5971 -- Dunham, with two less, you can save two cocktails and at least four glasses of champagne. [Into the telephone.] Has Mr. Morgan come in yet? Well, don't give him the message I telephoned before about crossing the street to Mrs. Pringle's for dinner. It's too late -- you understand? [She hangs up the receiver.] Well, anyway, I've invited Clem, returned my indebtedness and saved my champagne besides--

DUNHAM: The liquor is getting low, madam -- what with prohibition and entertaining so much--

ELAINE: [In dismay.] But, mother, if you only have twelve people, Father can't sit at the head of the table.

MRS. PRINGLE: But he has to sit at the head. It looks too undignified when the man of the house is pushed to the side--

ELAINE: There's no other way. There must be a woman at each end--

MRS. PRINGLE: [Distracted.] How absurd! I always forget. Of course, twelve is an impossible number -- [She goes around the table looking at the place cards.] I don't want to put any of these women at the head -- there's Mrs. Darby -- such a cat -- I wouldn't give her the honor and Mrs. -- [The telephone rings.] Answer it, Dunham.

DUNHAM: Hello -- Mrs. Pringle's residence -- a message? Yes, sir -- What, sir? -- Mr. Darby -- the doctor says your baby has the chicken-pox--

MRS. PRINGLE: Chicken-pox! Elaine!

ELAINE: Mother!

DUNHAM: Yes, sir. [He hangs up the receiver.] Mr. Darby sends his apologies -- but owing to the transmutability of the disease, Mr. and Mrs. Darby feel obliged to regret and also their house-guests, Mr. and Mrs. Fleetwood--

MRS. PRINGLE: That's four out.

While-reading

After students have read a paragraph, make them pause and ask what they think is going to happen next. Make predictions.

ELAINE: Then you're only eight! Quick, the plates, Dunham--

[She begins to *remove chairs* and gathers up silver and plates feverishly. MRS. PRINGLE getting more and more distraught, helps. With so much unaccustomed help, DUNHAM gets confused and goes through many unnecessary motions; removes plates, breaks them, drops silver, aimlessly trying to hurry, his fingers all thumbs.]

MRS. PRINGLE: Don't we know someone to invite the last minute--

ELAINE: The Hatwoods--

MRS. PRINGLE: They don't serve drinks when they entertain -- I can't afford to invite them to drink mine--

ELAINE: The Greens--

MRS. PRINGLE: She's not interesting enough.

ELAINE: Mr. Conley--

MRS. PRINGLE: He never makes a dinner call, even after all the times I have invited him.

ELAINE: Hester Longley--

MRS. PRINGLE: Not at the same table with you and Oliver Farnsworth. She's far too pretty, too clever--

ELAINE: Where's our book? [She runs her finger down the address book.] The Tuppers?

MRS. PRINGLE: The Tuppers! Good Heavens, Elaine, six in the family.

ELAINE: That would get us back to fourteen; then father could sit at the head of the table.

MRS. PRINGLE: Well, try them. I'll rush and tell your father to hold up the drawing room--
[Exit left.]

ELAINE: [on the telephone.] Ridgeway 9325 -- This is Elaine Pringle -- What Tupper am I speaking to? Oh, Ella, hello! -- I hope you haven't finished your dinner -- We had a party arranged here and the last moment everybody's been dropping out -- the blizzard -- Can't you flock your family around the corner and eat with us? Mother and I thought we knew you well enough to call you like this at the seventh hour. You would? Oh! fine! [To DUNHAM.] Six more plates, Dunham. [In the telephone.] What? -- Oh -- well -- but -- [She hesitates, stutters, looks distressed, muffles the telephone.] Dunham, get Mother quick. [In the telephone as DUNHAM hurries out of the room.] Yes -- yes -- of course [not enthusiastically], love it -- why certainly -- yes, my dear -- all right. [She hangs up the receiver and puts her hand to her head with an ejaculation of dismay.] Great Caesar, now what have I done?

MRS. PRINGLE: [Rushes in followed by DUNHAM.] What's the matter -- Elaine -- what is--

ELAINE: Now I've done it! I've just done it -- but I couldn't get out of it -- I just couldn't --

you weren't here -- I always lose my head and bungle things--

MRS. PRINGLE: But what -- don't keep us waiting like this -- what is it?

ELAINE: I invited Ella and the family and she accepted and then she said they had two house-guests -- and would it be all right and of course I said it would and now we're -- sixteen!

DUNHAM: [In dismay.] Sixteen! But, madam, the table's not that long!

MRS. PRINGLE: Elaine! That's just like you -- no tact -- no worldly wisdom -- if I'd been at the phone I'd have politely said that my table--

ELAINE: But you weren't at the phone -- you ought to attend to such messages yourself -- you know I always lose my head --

DUNHAM: But the dishes, madam -- and we only have fourteen squabs--

ELAINE: I won't eat any--

MRS. PRINGLE: But I must not be disgraced -- we'll have to make the best of it -- and insert another board -- [DUNHAM goes out. MRS. PRINGLE and ELAINE hurriedly remove part of the cloth.]

ELAINE: But mother, I needn't sit at the table.

MRS. PRINGLE: [Pointing to the chair authoritatively.] You're going to sit right next to Oliver Farnsworth! Now I don't wish to hear another word about it.

ELAINE: But can't we squeeze them in without all the work of adding another board? If I move the plates and chairs closer--

MRS. PRINGLE: Have you forgotten that Mr. Tupper weighs something like two hundred and fifty pounds? And Mrs. Conley has no waist line? It can't be done! --

DUNHAM: [Entering with table board.] Cook is in a rage, madam -- she says she has only prepared for fourteen.

MRS. PRINGLE: I can't help it -- she'll have to prepare for sixteen. Tell her to open cans of soup and vegetables and--

DUNHAM: But the ice-cream forms and the gelatine molds--

ELAINE: I'll pretend I don't like them.

MRS. PRINGLE: And I'll pretend I'm on a diet--

ELAINE: But I really wouldn't have to be at the table.

MRS. PRINGLE: Be still! [She starts as the telephone rings.] The telephone! [Her hand to her head.] Now what? Don't answer it! It's driving me mad-- [She goes herself as ELAINE and DUNHAM do not go.] Hello -- yes -- This is Mrs. Pringle -- Oh! yes -- Jessica! -- What! -- the blizzard -- your cold -- too dangerous! [She waves to DUNHAM not to put the board in the table. DUNHAM, ELAINE and MRS. PRINGLE are delighted and relieved but MRS.

PRINGLE pretends otherwise over the telephone.] Oh! Jessica -- you poor dear --yes, your husband's right, it would be foolhardy -- put on a mustard plaster -- hot toddy -- go to bed - - so sorry! [She hangs up the receiver.] There -- that's wonderful -- now we are just fourteen--

ELAINE: But the cards are all wrong. Only six are coming who were invited originally. You'll have to make another diagram. How do you want them seated?

MRS. PRINGLE: Give it to me. [She remains at the telephone table where there is a pad and a pencil and makes a new diagram.]

ELAINE: Here are some fresh cards. [She tears up the old cards, then goes back to help DUNHAM, who is having a maddening time with the table.]

MRS. PRINGLE: What a mess! I spent hours over that diagram! So much depends upon having guests seated harmoniously! There's the front door-bell, Dunham -- I told Annie to answer it for you -- but go, peek into the drawing-room and tell me who it is-- [As DUNHAM goes out, the telephone rings. MRS. PRINGLE eyes it suspiciously.] You murderous instrument! What have you to say? Now what? Hello! Who! Mr. Farnsworth! Mr. Oliver Farnsworth? No--you're his secretary? He's what? Instructed you to make his excuses! He had to leave for Boston at once on very important business -- Oh! [She hangs up the receiver without completing the conversation and hits the telephone in a temper, then rises and paces back and forth in a rage.] How dare he! How dare he! The last moment like this! No regard for a hostess's feelings! No regard for the efforts she goes to to provide an evening's enjoyment! And such a good dinner I planned -- and he promised he would come -- business! I don't believe it! He didn't want to exert himself -- was afraid of freezing in the blizzard -- as if he didn't have half a dozen limousines to carry him to the door -- selfishness -- downright rudeness -- and worth millions -- just a match for you, Elaine -- and I was bound you should meet him and sit next to him at the table [she tears up his card], and now I don't know when I can give you a chance like that again! I'm perfectly furious -- I'll never speak to him again! I won't be treated that way--

ELAINE: [Timidly.] Perhaps he really did have business and was called away--

MRS. PRINGLE: [Not hearing her.] And I one of the most important hostesses in this city -- people clamoring to receive my invitations -- all my affairs are a success. I insist that they shall be -- I can't bear a failure -- I won't have a failure -- he was my most important guest - - he's such a man's man -- so important financially -- every other man considers it an honor to meet him -- and now not coming! I'm furious! Furious! --it's all this damnable blizzard!

ELAINE: Now I will have to stay away from the table. His not coming makes us thirteen again.

MRS. PRINGLE: [In a temper.] Go to bed -- go up to the nursery! I'll send you milk and crackers!

ELAINE: But, mother, it's not my fault that he had business out of town.

MRS. PRINGLE: Yes, it is! If you'd perk up a bit and not be so timid and make something of yourself, he would hear about your attractions from other men and be curious to meet you himself -- Oh! What a family I have! No one to help me with my ambitions! Go to bed! I certainly won't sit down to thirteen -- go to bed -- get out of my sight--

[DUNHAM enters from left.]

DUNHAM: It was Mr. Morgan, madam--

MRS. PRINGLE: Mr. Morgan! But I telephoned his maid to tell him not to come.

DUNHAM: He couldn't have received the second message, madam, for I heard him explaining to Mr. Pringle how happy he was to receive your telephone invitation.

ELAINE: That makes you thirteen again -- unless you don't want me to go to bed--

MRS. PRINGLE: Of course I don't want you to go to bed. We're back to where we started -- fourteen, Dunham.

DUNHAM: I'll get the cocktails ready, madam. Annie told me there were several motors making their way through the snow. It's late now and cook's swearing about the dinner getting too dry-- [The telephone rings. ELAINE jumps.]

ELAINE: I won't answer it.

MRS. PRINGLE: I should say not -- hello -- what is it? [Sharply.] Yes -- yes? Mrs. Tupper! Yes! Mrs. Tupper! But now you must come -- we're prepared for you -- yes -- for eight of you -- Your daughter told my daughter about your house-guests and we are delighted to have them -- but now we're set for you -- but every plate is set -- but your daughter was quite right -- it wasn't an imposition at all -- but you must come now -- of course my daughter had authority to invite the guests of -- Oh -- eight isn't at all a big number -- there is room -- the table is all set -- but I beg of you -- but my dear, you are not imposing -- Oh! but how foolish of you to take that stand! Why my dear, my dear -- [She hangs up the receiver.] Now, what do you think of that? Mrs. Tupper is perfectly furious at Ella for telling you about the house-guests, and says Ella has no tact; that nothing would induce her to bring eight when we invited six -- so she's leaving Ella and Henry at home -- only six are coming. Remove two plates, Dunham -- we're twelve after all--

ELAINE: But if you leave it twelve, father can't sit at the end--

MRS. PRINGLE: [Exhausted, harassed, angry, tempestuous.] I shall go mad! I'll never entertain again--never--never--people ought to know whether they're coming or not--but they accept and regret and regret and accept--they drive me wild. [DUNHAM goes out.] This is my last dinner party--my very last--a fiasco--an utter fiasco! A haphazard crowd--hurried together--when I had planned everything so beautifully--now how shall I seat them--how shall I seat them? If I put Mr. Tupper here and Mrs. Conley there then Mrs. Tupper has to sit next to her husband and if I want Mr. Morgan there--Oh! It's impossible--I

might as well put their names in a hat and draw them out at random--never again! I'm through! Through with society--with parties--with friends--I wipe my slate clean--they'll miss my entertainments--they'll wish they had been more considerate--after this, I'm *going to live for myself!* I'm going to be selfish and hard--and unsociable--and drink my liquor myself instead of offering it gratis to the whole town!--I'm through--Through with men like Oliver Farnsworth!--I don't care how rich they are! How influential they are--how important they are! They're nothing without courtesy and consideration--business--off on train--nonsense--didn't want to come--didn't want to meet a sweet, pretty girl--didn't want to marry her--well, he's not good enough for you!--don't you marry him! Don't you dare marry him! I won't let you marry him! Do you hear? If you tried to elope or anything like that, I'd break it off--yes, I would--Oliver Farnsworth will never get recognition from me!--He is beneath my notice! I hate Oliver Farnsworth!

[DUNHAM enters with a note on a silver plate.]

DUNHAM: A note from Mr. Farnsworth, madam--

MRS. PRINGLE: A note from Mr. Farnsworth! [She takes and opens it.]

DUNHAM: Yes, madam, there are two strange gentlemen in the lower hall. They presented this letter. He said he was the secretary. All the other guests are upstairs in the drawing-room, madam, I counted twelve in all, including you and Mr. Pringle and Miss Elaine. But the two gentlemen downstairs, madam, are waiting for your answer -- the one gentlemen's face looked very familiar, madam, but I just can't place him -- although I'm sure I've seen his face somewhere--

MRS. PRINGLE: [She has been reading the note and is almost fainting with surprise and joy.] Seen his face -- somewhere -- Oh, my goodness! Elaine -- It's the Prince of Wales!

DUNHAM: The secretary said you cut off the telephone or central disconnected you. He was about to tell you that Mr. Farnsworth knew that the blizzard had prevented His Highness from keeping an engagement way up town--

MRS. PRINGLE: The Prince of Wales sitting in my lower hall -- waiting for me to ask him to dinner--

ELAINE: Then we'll be thirteen again--

DUNHAM: There's the secretary, Miss, he is his bodyguard--

MRS. PRINGLE: [Rising to the occasion.] Certainly, the secretary, Elaine. We shall be fourteen at dinner -- Serve the cocktails, Dunham -- the guests may sit anywhere they choose. I shall bring the Prince in with me!

ELAINE: [Following.] But mother, wasn't it nice of Oliver Farnsworth to send a Prince in his place?

MRS. PRINGLE: Didn't I always say that Oliver Farnsworth was the most considerate of men?

ELAINE: I think I shall like Mr. Farnsworth.

MRS. PRINGLE: Silly child! It is too late now to like Mr. Farnsworth. It's time now to like the Prince. [Starting out.] I always manage somehow to be the most successful of hostesses! Thank God for the blizzard!

CURTAIN

Alice Gerstenberg was born in Chicago, the only child of Julia and Erich Gerstenberg. Gerstenberg's grandfather was a founder and member of the Chicago Board of Trade in 1848, a position Gerstenberg's father inherited later, which meant that the Gerstenbergs enjoyed a higher standard of living than most middle-class families in Chicago at the time. Growing up, Gerstenberg had ample travel experiences and social indulgences including commercial theater. She attended a private school in Chicago and later graduated from Bryn Mawr, a women's college in Pennsylvania, in 1907. After college, she spent some time in New York watching the rehearsals of David Belasco before returning home to Chicago. *Fourteen* is a play by Alice Gerstenberg. This one-act social satire was first performed October 7, 1919 at the Maitland Playhouse, 332 Stockton Street, San Francisco, on a bill with three other one-act plays. Mrs. Pringle is preparing to host a dinner party to introduce her daughter, Elaine, to the city's most eligible bachelor, Oliver Farnsworth. Illness and a blizzard force some guests to cancel, and the three characters are compelled to try to salvage the evening and the dinner-table layout



Glossary

Given below are the difficult words from the unit. Look at their meanings and give synonyms of each in the given column. The first one is done for you. Also use these words in your own sentences.

words	Meanings	Synonyms
absurd	silly	ridiculous
awning	canopy: a covering supported by a frame	
board	a board or leaf added to extend the length of a dining table	
central	the telephone exchange (Mrs. Pringle calls the exchange to be put through a private number; telephone numbers at that time consisted of the district or area followed by the number)	

corsage	a small bouquet worn on the lapel of a dress
debutante	a young woman who is being introduced formally into society by appearing at a public event
fiasco	a total failure
gelatine	a sweet food
mustard plaster	a paste made from black mustard seeds
place cards	a small card with somebody's name on it
squab	small pigeon
temperament	nature, character
transmutability	ability to change
vivacious	lively, full of high spirits
withal	despite



Reading and Critical Thinking

a. Answer the following questions.

1. Who was Mrs. Pringle?
2. Who were the two gentlemen waiting in the lower hall?
3. Did Mrs. Pringle like Oliver Farnsworth?
4. What was the impact of Oliver Farnsworth secretary calling to cancel?
5. What value did Mrs. Pringle see in a marriage between Elaine and Mr. Farnsworth?
6. Which word sums up Mrs. Pringle's motivations in the story?
7. Why did Mrs. Pringle insist on having only 14 people at the dinner party?
8. How did Mrs. Pringle show reaction to the cook's anger?
9. Why was Mrs. Pringle happy to know that the cook was in a bad temper?
10. Why did Mrs. Pringle make new place cards and a new diagram?
11. Why was Mrs. Pringle so upset when she learned Mr. Farnsworth would be unable to attend the dinner?
12. What is the theme of the one-act play "Fourteen"?
13. Discuss the elements of the plot of the play.

b. Choose the best answer:

- i. Mrs. Pringle is a woman of _____.
a) old ideas b) *fashion* c) courage

- ii. Elaine didn't want to attend the party because she thinks everybody's _____ and older than she is.
a) married b) fashionable c) silly
- iii. Mrs. Pringle wanted _____ to attend the dinner because she wanted him to marry Elaine.
a) Dunham b) Mr. Farnsworth c) Prince of Wales



Oral Communication

Activity

- **One - Act Play:** - Students may perform this one act play in the class. They must follow intonation patterns during dialogue delivery.
- Work in small groups to review the play. Take time to offer suggestions and reasons for improvement.
- Do you think the dialogues provide necessary information about the characters and the situation? Exchange views about it.
- The play becomes more forceful because the two characters are speaking directly to one another. Opportunity should be provided to stage the play with the help of the teacher.



Vocabulary and Grammar

Tenses: - Verbs come in three tenses: past, present, and future. The past is used to describe things that have already happened (e. g. , earlier in the day, yesterday, last week, three years ago). The present tense is used to describe things that are happening right now, or things that are continuous.

a. Simple Present

The **simple present** is the most basic way to say something in the present tense. We use it to talk about more general things that we do often or regularly, or to state simple facts:

To use the simple present, we don't always need helping verbs. Simple present sentence follows the pattern **Subject + Present Verb**.

I work at the mall.

They eat waffles for breakfast every day!

Irha likes candy.

b. Present Continuous

The **present continuous** tense describes actions and/or events that are currently happening or going on now; in other words, things that are continuing to happen right now in "real time." To do that, we use a verb ending in *ing*. Sentences in the present continuous follow the **Subject + Verb to be + ing Verb pattern**:

Eshaal is listening to music.

I am eating a cheeseburger.

The dogs are barking loudly.

c. Present Perfect

We use the **present perfect** tense to share something that happened before, but is still relevant or important now. To use it, we always place the auxiliary *have* before the main verb, which shows that we "have done it," and it should be followed by the *past-tense* form of the main verb. It may seem confusing that even though we use a past verb, it's still the present tense—remember, we are showing that something already happened, but still matters now!

As you know, the *past* form of regular verbs ends in *ed*, but irregular verbs have different forms.

A sentence in the present perfect should follow **Subject + Have/Has + Past form of main verb**:

Ali has traveled to Rome, but she really wants to go Venice.

They have lived in that house for 10 years.

d. Present Perfect Continuous

The **present perfect continuous** expresses actions (or events) that we have been doing and are still doing. To use it, we need to use *have* and *been* combined with the continuous form of the verb (ending in *ing*) to show that we "have been" doing something. So, a sentence in the present perfect continuous follows the **Subject + have/has been + ing Verb form**:

Hassan has been listening to music online.

They have been living in that house since 2006.

He has been taking that exam for at least 2 hours.

a) Decide if the verb in brackets should be in the present simple or the present continuous.

- i. He — (live) with his parents at the moment.
- ii. Some areas of Italy — (become) drier.
- iii. People — (live) longer if they live healthy life.
- iv. This month they — (work) on a new project.

b) Put the verbs into the correct form (present perfect simple).

- i. He (write) five letters. _____
- ii. She (not/see) him for a long time. _____
- iii. (be / you) at school? _____
- iv. We (buy) a new lamp. _____

c) Put the verbs into the correct form (present perfect continuous).

- i. It has _____ snowing a lot this week. (be, been, being)
- ii. I'm tired because I _____ been working out. ('ve, has, am)
- iii. Julie _____ living in Italy since May. (has being, is been, has been)
- iv. Has it _____ raining since you arrived? (be, been , is)

d) Use the given phrasal verbs in sentences.

- run over _____
- run through _____
- run away _____
- run out _____
- send back _____
- set up _____

**Writing**

- Describe how realistic do you think the play is?
- Do you agree with the end of the play? Give reasons.
- Write a dialogue between any situation you like.
- Some humor can be derived from a play. Describe the humor in this play.
- You have read the play. Now make a connection between characters, events, motives and causes of conflicts in text across the culture.

MISPLACED MODIFIERS

When modifiers (adjectives and adverbs) are out of place, too far away from the word they modify, the sentence will be awkward or confusing. Misplaced modifiers may be single words, phrases, or clauses. Study the following examples:

1. The following words are often misplaced: almost, only, just, even, hardly, not, nearly, merely.

Most often, these words are placed in front of the words they modify.

Misplaced: My sister only has two children.

Correct: My sister has only two children.

2. Here is an example of a misplaced phrase:

Misplaced: The little girl screamed at the library at her mother.

Correct: At the library, the little girl screamed at her mother.

3. Here is an example of a misplaced clause:

Misplaced: I held the ticket tightly in my hand that my friend gave me.

Correct: I held the ticket that my friend gave me tightly in my hand.

- a. Circle the sentence that is clearer. Be sure you can explain your choice.

- i A. Maria only attended school half of the time.
B. Maria attended school only half of the time.
- ii A. Let me caution you to for every second keep you eyes on your own paper.
B. Let me caution you to keep your eyes on your own paper for every second.
- iii A. With a little practice, you will be able to run nearly as fast as Carl Lewis.
B. With a little practice, you will nearly be able to run as fast as Carl Lewis.
- iv A. From our seats high in the stadium, we watched the parachutists float to earth.
B. We watched the parachutists float to earth from our seats high in the stadium.

Teacher's Point

- Discuss the two characters of the play with students.
- Discuss in detail about present tense and its kinds. Help them practice the concepts.
- Opportunity should be provided to stage the play with the help of the teacher.