



# Time Lords & Tenses

Past  
Present  
And  
Future



# What are tenses?

- There are three main tenses:
- The past – where things have already happened. Last year, last week, yesterday, two minutes ago!
- The present – where things are happening at this very moment. Like this lesson!
- The future – where things have not yet happened. Next lesson, tomorrow, next week, next year.

# Staying Consistent

- It is very important, when writing, to stay consistent as far as tenses are concerned.
- Just as you cannot bump into a dinosaur on the way to the shops, so you should not mix the past and the present when you are writing.

# Which tense?

- Verbs decide the tense of your writing.
- Which tenses - the past, the present or the future - are these sentences written in?
- David walked home.
- David is walking home.
- David will be walking home tomorrow.
  
- The answers: Past, Present, Future.
- Which words told you the tense in each sentence?

# Try these:

- Susan was hungry and gobbled everything in the fridge, even the cheese with mould on.
  - Susan is so hungry! She is desperate for something to eat, anything to eat, even a stag beetle!
  - Susan will be hungry when she gets home after that long walk.
  - Past. Present. Future.
  - Which words told you?
- 

# Try these:

- I am sorry, I am eating my dinner at the moment.
  - We were eating dinner when the bomb exploded.
  - We will have your favourite meal when you get home.
  - Present. Past. Future.
  - Which words told you?
- 

# Confusing the present and the future.

- Lots of young writers start stories in the present tense but then slip into the past tense.
- It is very difficult to stay in the present tense when writing a story. The natural form is to write in the past tense.
- So, start your stories in the past tense and stay in the past throughout! Don't time travel, you are not Doctor Who!

# Sort out this mess:

This writer has got confused, muddling tenses. Rewrite the paragraph in the past tense throughout:

“It is James. He was sitting up in bed, bleary eyed, as if he had just woken up. Alex stares at him. He is wearing the same pyjamas as the boy he had just seen dragged into the library...but that couldn't have been him.”



# Untangled

“It was James. He was sitting up in bed, bleary eyed, as if he had just woken up. Alex stared at him. He was wearing the same pyjamas as the boy he had just seen dragged into the library...but that couldn't have been him.”

# Another mess to untangle:

He scrambles for the door. Now Skoda felt it for himself. The floor is tilting. Test tubes and beakers slid into each other then crashes to the floor, glass shattering. He swears and follows Beckett.

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