

PRESENT PERFECT VS. PRESENT PERFECT PROGRESSIVE

I. READING - Read the passage below paying close attention to the perfect tenses.

A fact is something true. Fiction is something that is not true. And we all know the difference between the two. Or do we?

For centuries, science-fiction writers **have been telling** stories about fact and fiction. They **have been writing** "odd" and "unbelievable" fiction about the future. But are their stories always really fiction? By the early 1930s, science-fiction writers **had predicted** the invention of robots. Everyone **laughed** at this "fiction." But now, robots are a part of life; science fiction **has become** science fact. By the 1940s, several science-fiction writers **had told** stories about humans walking on the moon. By 1969, this science fiction **had become** science fact as well.

Sometimes science "fact" **has changed** to science fiction, too! Since ancient times, **scientists have been looking** for facts. They **have been studying** everything in the world around us. And they **have been searching** for facts in the sky above us. Scientific study **has been helping** us learn important facts about ourselves and our world.

But scientists **have also made** some mistakes. For thousands of years, they **believed** an important fact: the earth **was** the center of the universe. They **had studied** the earth for centuries. They **had drawn** charts and graphs of the universe with the earth at the center.

We now know that this science "fact" is really science fiction. Astronomers study the universe. They **have shown** that the earth is not the center of the universe. So what are the facts today? And what is fiction? It isn't always easy to know.

A. COMPREHENSION CHECK - Read the sentences & circle T if the statement is true and F if the statement is false.

1. Science-fiction writers never predicted facts about the future.
2. Humans walked on the moon in 1969.
3. Scientists sometimes believe a "fact" when it is really fiction.
4. Astronomers study plants.
5. Scientists of today know the earth is not the center of the universe.

B. GRAMMAR PRACTICE I - STAR GAZING. Read the first sentence. Then decide if the second sentence is true or false. Circle T or F.

- 1) Cornelius Clark has been watching the stars for hours.
T F He's still watching the stars.
- 2) He's been studying astronomy for several months.
T F He's not studying astronomy these days.
- 3) Cornelius has read several books about the stars.
T F Cornelius finished reading these books.
- 4) Cornelius' professor has written a book about the zodiac.
T F The professor is still writing the book.
- 5) Cornelius has been reading this book.
T F He is still reading this book.
- 6) He has been learning a lot about the zodiac.
T F He finished learning about the zodiac.
- 7) Cornelius learned this: The sun has been passing through twelve groups of stars for millions of years.
T F The sun doesn't pass through these group of stars any more.
- 8) People have named these stars zodiac.
T F People are stilling naming the stars.

C. GRAMMAR PRACTICE II - *MORE ABOUT THE ZODIAC*. Circle the correct form of the verb in parentheses.

All through history, humans (1. have had / have been having) the zodiac as a guide. For example, sailors of the past (2. have used / have been using) the zodiac as a guide on the sea. The zodiac (3. has also been / has also been being) important to astronomers for centuries. In the past, astronomers (4. have relied / have been relying) on the zodiac. The zodiac (5. has helped / has been helping) astronomers of the past discover the secrets of the universe.

For the past two years, computer scientists (6. have been designing / have designed) a new computer program to guide sailboats. When they complete this program, sailors will not need the stars anymore. Throughout the centuries, sailors (7. have liked / have been liking) to use the stars of the zodiac as a guide. Up to now, most sailors (8. have not seemed / have not been seeming) very excited about this new technology.

B. GRAMMAR PRACTICE III - *ASTROLOGY & ASTROLOGERS*. Complete the sentences using the present perfect for the present perfect progressive of the verbs in parentheses.

Astrology is the study of the stars and their influence on people. People _____ (1. know) about the zodiac for centuries. They _____ (2. use) the zodiac to design astrology. The zodiac has twelve parts, or "signs" one for each month. Your birthday tells you your sign. People with different signs have different personalities and different futures. One famous astrologer, Jay Swoboda, _____ (3. write) several popular books about astrology. For the past three years, he _____ (4. write) a new book about astrology for the twenty-first century. Many people _____ (5. read) Mr. Swoboda's other books. They liked them very much. Now they are waiting for his new book. They _____ (6. decide) to use it as their guide to the future.

Read the following *newspaper advice column* paying close attention to the simple past, present perfect, and present perfect progressive verbs in **BOLD**

DEAR JOHN,

My son and his girlfriend **have been making** wedding plans. At first I **was delighted**, but last week I **heard** something that **changed** my feelings. It seems that our future daughter-in-law **has decided** to keep using her maiden name after the wedding. Her reasons: She doesn't want to "lose her identity." Her parents **named** her 21 years ago, and she's **been** "Donna So-and-So" (I won't use her real name) since then. She sees no reason to change now. Secondly, she's **been performing** with the Rockland Symphony Orchestra for eight years, and she's **already become** known professionally by her maiden name.

John, when I **got** married, I **didn't think** of keeping my maiden name. I **felt** so proud when I **became** "Mrs Smith" (not my real name). We **named** our son after my father, but our surname **showed** that we three **were** a family.

I've **read** several articles about this trend, and now I can understand her decision to use her maiden name professionally. But I've **been worried** about her using it socially. Why isn't she proud to show she's married to my son? **Has** she really **made** a commitment to this marriage? And what last name will their children use?

My husband and I **have been trying** to hide our hurt feelings, but it's getting harder. I want to tell her and my son what I think, but my husband says it's none of our business.

My son **hasn't said** anything, so we don't know how he feels. **Have** I **made** the right choice by keeping quiet?

HASN'T SAID A WORD YET

DEAR HASN'T,

Yes, you **have**. Since your son **hasn't indicated** his own feelings, you must assume he approves. Your husband is right: It's none of your business. The couple has the right to make this decision for themselves.

Don't take your daughter-in-law's decision personally. She **hasn't rejected** your family by keeping her own last name. The recent trend **has been** for women to keep their birth names after marriage-both socially and professionally. According to studies, families **haven't suffered** because of this trend-love, not a surname, is the glue that keeps a family together.

As for the children's last names, couples **have been finding** their own solutions. Many parents **have been using** hyphenated surnames composed of the mother's and father's last name. (Readers: **Has** anyone **figured out** what to do when Roger Smythe-Sanders marries Julia Bernstein-Burke?) One couple I know **chose** the father's last name when their son **was born**. They **gave** the mother's last name to their daughter.

Social customs with regard to naming **have been changing** quickly, and right now almost anything goes. You and your husband **showed** a lot of self-control when you **decided** not to voice your opinion. Let the couple figure this one out themselves, and try to smile approvingly no matter what happens.

A READER'S RESPONSE TO THE ABOVE-REFERENCED ADVICE COLUMN. Complete this letter with the correct form of the verb in parentheses. Use either the simple past, present perfect, or the present perfect progressive.

Dear John,

Yesterday I _____ (1. read) with interest the letter from "Hasn't". As an onomastician (a person who studies names), I _____ (2. think) about the issue of name changes for many years. I agree with your answer that keeping a birth name (I don't like the term *maiden name*) is a very personal issue. However, it isn't a new one. I _____ (3. be) with us since our country _____ (4. begin).

Recently, many people _____ (5. change) their names in order to make a statement about their ethnic identity. African Americans, for example, _____ (6. lose) their original names when they _____ (7. come) to this country as slaves. Since the 1960s, however, many _____ (8. adopt) African names in order to reflect their ethnic roots. In order to research his books, writer Alex Haley _____ (9. trace) his ancestors back to their home in Africa. His story, *Roots*, _____ (10. appear) on television in 1977. Since then, *Kinte*, the name of the hero, _____ (11. become) a popular African American surname.

In the nineteenth century, man immigrants to the United States _____ (12. change) their names in order to seem more "American". Often, immigration officials _____ (13. make) that decision for them and _____ (14. assign) names that the officials _____ (15. can) pronounce. They _____ (16. create) the name "Pace" from "Pankratova" and _____ (17. turn) the name "Baratz" into "Barnes".

In this century, more and more families _____ (18. reclaim) their family's history by returning to their original names. One famous recent example: David Wallenchinsky, son of Irving Wallace, _____ (19. publish) under the family's original name for several years.

Sometimes the reasons for changing a name are simple. My friend, Boris Groans, _____ (20. always / hate) his name, and who can blame him? He _____ (21. think) about changing it to "Travis Gray" for some time now, but _____ (22. not make up) his mind yet. Apparently there's still a strong attachment to even a despised name.

Finally, there are pen names. From ancient times right up to the present, authors _____ (23. disguise) their identities with pseudonyms. One that comes to mind immediately is "Hasn't Said a Word Yet." The author of this letter clearly _____ (24. have) a good reason when she _____ (25. decide) not to use her real name.

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