Verb tense and clear timelines

Repair a Past-Tense Field Journal

Name _____ Date _____

Quick review Identify the time of each event. Keep the tense consistent when events share a time, but change tense when the timeline actually changes.

Example Yesterday we carried the boxes. Today we carry the books. The change from carried to carry is correct because the time changes.

Every action in this journal entry happened during yesterday's completed pond visit. Use that timeline to make only necessary verb changes and explain your decisions.

Yesterday at the Pond

[1] Yesterday, our group walked to the pond. Nia spots a dragonfly above the reeds. We watched it settle on a stem. I sketched the insect and label its wings. The breeze was cool, and a frog jumps from the bank. Before we left, we packed our notebooks.

1. What timeline should the journal use? Name a time clue and one verb that already fits it.

2. Rewrite Nia's sentence with the correct verb tense.

3. Repair the sentence about the sketch and labels. Keep the verb that is already correct.

4. Repair the sentence about the breeze and frog without changing was.

5. An editor wants to change We watched it settle to We will watch it settle. Should you accept the change? Explain.

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Responses and feedback: Repair a Past-Tense Field Journal

These are sample responses and reasoning. Accept other answers that fit the task and are supported by the text or language rule.

1. It should use the past timeline. Yesterday is the time clue, and walked already fits it.

Reasoning: First, identify yesterday as completed past time. Next, find a past-tense verb such as walked, watched, sketched, was, left, or packed. Any one of these verbs correctly supports the answer.

2. Nia spotted a dragonfly above the reeds.

Reasoning: First, connect Nia's sighting to yesterday's visit. Next, change present-tense spots to past-tense spotted. No time change is intended, so keeping spots would interrupt the past account.

3. I sketched the insect and labeled its wings.

Reasoning: First, recognize sketched as a past action that fits yesterday. Next, change label to labeled because the labeling happened during the same visit. Keeping sketched avoids an unnecessary edit.

4. The breeze was cool, and a frog jumped from the bank.

Reasoning: First, keep was because it describes the past weather. Next, change jumps to jumped to place the frog's action during the completed visit. The sentence gives no reason to move into present time.

5. No. Watched already fits yesterday's completed visit; will watch would describe a future activity instead.

Reasoning: First, compare the proposed future verb with the journal's past time clue. Next, keep watched because the observation already happened. Editing for consistency means preserving correct verbs, not changing every verb.