

The imparfait

CHAPITRE 6

In English To say what used to happen habitually in the past, you use either the simple past tense or the words **used to** or **would + a verb**.

I **drank** milk all the time when I was a kid.

My brother and I **used to** play marbles when we were little.

During the week, she **would** get up at 7:00.

A Check the appropriate column to indicate whether the sentence refers to an action in the past or in the present.

1. We always walk to school together.
2. We used to spend every summer at the lake.
3. We would stay in a cabin in the woods.
4. I love looking at the stars in the sky.
5. My parents used to have a lot of fun.
6. Sometimes I just swim in the stream.
7. There was a river where we would fish.

Past	Present
	✓

In French To tell what things were like or what used to happen repeatedly in the past, you use the **imparfait**. To form the **imparfait**, drop the **-ons** ending from the present-tense **nous** form and add the following endings.

	parler	finir	vendre
je	parlais	finissais	vendais
tu	parlais	finissais	vendais
il/elle/on	parlait	finissait	vendait
nous	parlions	finissions	vendions
vous	parliez	finissiez	vendiez
ils/elles	parlaient	finissaient	vendaient

Verbs like **manger** and **commencer** that have a spelling change in the present-tense **nous** form have the same spelling change before **imparfait** endings that begin with **-a**.

nous mangeons → je **mangeais**, BUT nous **mangions**, vous **mangiez**

nous commençons → tu **commençais**, BUT nous **commencions**, vous **commenciez**

All verbs are regular in the **imparfait** except **être**, which uses **ét-** as the imperfect stem.

j'**étais**, tu **étais**, il/elle/on **était**, nous **étions**, vous **étiez**, ils/elles **étaient**

THE IMPARFAIT

CHAPITRE 6

B Check the appropriate column to indicate whether the sentence refers to an action in the past or in the present.

1. Je travaillais le samedi.
2. Nous faisons souvent du ski en hiver.
3. Tu promènes ton chien tous les jours?
4. Caroline avait soif.
5. Il fait froid.
6. Vous étiez très fatigués.
7. On allait au cinéma le vendredi.

Past	Present
✓	

C Complete each sentence with the correct **imparfait** verb ending.

1. Je lis **ais** des bandes dessinées.
2. Nous all _____ au supermarché le dimanche.
3. Bruno et Sylvie habit _____ à la campagne.
4. Tu promen _____ ton chien après l'école?
5. Quand j'ét _____ petit, je mange _____ des escargots.
6. Ma sœur sort _____ la poubelle le vendredi.
7. Mes frères et moi, nous voul _____ toujours nager dans le lac.

D Complete the following paragraph with the **imparfait** of the verbs in parentheses.

Quand j' _____ (avoir) six ans, ma famille et moi, nous _____ (habiter) à la campagne. Nous n' _____ (avoir) pas beaucoup d'argent mais nous _____ (être) heureux. J' _____ (aimer) grimper aux arbres et ma petite sœur _____ (jouer) toujours avec les animaux. Mes parents _____ (travailler) au marché le samedi. Ils _____ (vendre) des légumes et des œufs.

E Compare the verbs in the sentences below. Explain why their stems are different.

Je commençais à parler.

Nous commençons à parler.

The passé composé and the imparfait

CHAPITRE 6

In English There are several ways to talk about the past in English. The following verb forms are usually used to describe completed events that occurred in the past.

We **played** tennis. We **did play** tennis. We **have played** tennis.

To describe actions that were ongoing in the past or to tell what used to happen, you can use **was** or **were** along with the **-ing** form of a verb, or you can use the helping verb **used to**.

We **were playing** tennis. We **used to play** tennis.

A Check the appropriate column to indicate whether the sentence describes a completed event in the past or something that was an ongoing activity or condition in the past.

1. Brian went to the store, didn't he?
2. We used to have so much fun!
3. Did you hear the phone ring?
4. Joanie was watching TV last night.
5. It was cold and rainy.
6. I finally made my decision.
7. It used to rain every afternoon.

Completed event	Ongoing event or condition
✓	

In French To talk about the past, you can use the **passé composé** and the **imparfait**.

Use the **passé composé** to describe completed events in the past or tell what someone did in a set period of time.

Une fois, j'**ai fait** un château de sable incroyable!

Nous **avons pris** le petit-déjeuner à 7h.

Use the **imparfait** to tell how things were or what used to happen repeatedly.

Quand j'**étais** jeune, nous **allions** à la plage chaque été.

Ils **jouaient** aux billes tous les jours.

You can also use the **imparfait** to describe people and things in the past.

Il **faisait** très beau. Il y **avait** beaucoup de fleurs.

Anaïs **était** toujours heureuse.

THE PASSÉ COMPOSÉ AND THE IMPARFAIT

CHAPITRE 6

B Check the appropriate column to indicate whether the sentence describes a completed event in the past or something that was an ongoing activity or condition in the past.

1. Il faisait toujours beau le matin.
2. Jean était jeune et sportif.
3. J'allais au café avec mes copains.
4. Je n'ai pas fait la vaisselle hier soir.
5. David a pris le bus.
6. Odile a eu une bonne note en maths.
7. Elles étaient occupées cette semaine.

Completed event	Ongoing event or condition
	✓

C Complete the following sentences with the **imparfait** or the **passé composé** of the verbs in parentheses.

1. Ce matin, il **est allé** _____ chez ses grands-parents. (aller)
2. Normalement, elle _____ de bonnes idées. (avoir)
3. Il _____ toujours chaud en été. (faire)
4. D'abord, nous _____ le train. (prendre)
5. De temps en temps, Patricia _____ en retard. (arriver)
6. Vous _____ souvent au cirque? (aller)
7. Nous jouions aux dames quand tu _____. (téléphoner)
8. Quand Henri _____ jeune, il _____ jouer au train électrique. (être, aimer)

D Depending on the context, the English past tense can be equivalent to the French **imparfait** or **passé composé**. Tell which tense you would use to translate these sentences. Explain your choice.

1. I wrote letters to my cousins yesterday.

2. When I was young, I wrote letters to my cousins every month.

The comparative with adjectives and nouns CHAPITRE 6

In English To say that an object or person has more, less, or the same amount of a characteristic as another object or person, you use the **comparative**. To make comparisons with adjectives, you can use the expressions **more... than**, **less... than**, and **as... as**.

My book is **more** interesting **than** yours.

Timmy is **less** impatient **than** Jeremy.

Our class is **as** difficult **as** theirs.

When the adjective has only one or two syllables, instead of using **more**, you add the suffix **-er**.

Frances is **taller than** Jim.

To make comparisons with nouns, you can use **more... than**, **fewer... than**, **less... than**, **as much... as**, or **as many... as**.

I have **more** books **than** you.

Timmy has **fewer** games **than** Jeremy.

Our class has **as much** homework **as** theirs.

A Underline the comparative phrases in the following sentences. Then indicate whether the sentences are using adjectives or nouns to make a comparison.

- | | | |
|--|-------------------|-------|
| 1. My suitcase is <u>heavier than</u> yours. | <u>adjectives</u> | nouns |
| 2. This poster is as colorful as that one. | adjectives | nouns |
| 3. John ate as much pizza as Rachid. | adjectives | nouns |
| 4. A boulevard is wider than a street. | adjectives | nouns |
| 5. There are fewer houses than here. | adjectives | nouns |
| 6. Are movies less interesting than books? | adjectives | nouns |

In French To make comparisons with adjectives, you can use **plus... que**, **moins... que**, or **aussi... que**. Remember to make the adjective agree with the noun in number and gender. With **c'est**, there is no agreement.

La ville est **plus** bruyante **que** la campagne.

Les cochons sont **moins** grands **que** les vaches.

La ville? C'est **aussi** intéressant **que** la campagne.

To make comparisons with nouns, use **plus de... que**, **moins de... que**, or **autant de... que**.

Il y a **plus d'**arbres **que** dans la ville.

Nous avons **moins de** vaches **que** vous.

J'ai **autant d'**amis **que** Marcelle.

THE COMPARATIVE WITH ADJECTIVES AND NOUNS

CHAPITRE 6

B Underline the comparative phrases in the following sentences. Then indicate whether the sentences are using adjectives or nouns to make a comparison.

- | | | |
|--|------------|-------|
| 1. Julie est <u>moins courageuse que</u> Chloé. | adjectives | nouns |
| 2. Il y a plus d'animaux qu'en ville. | adjectives | nouns |
| 3. L'histoire, c'est plus intéressant que les maths. | adjectives | nouns |
| 4. J'ai autant de livres que Michèle. | adjectives | nouns |
| 5. Les rues sont plus propres qu'à New York. | adjectives | nouns |
| 6. Ma vie est aussi stressante qu'à Paris. | adjectives | nouns |

C Write comparative sentences using the given clues.

- la prairie / = beau / la montagne
La prairie est aussi belle que la montagne. _____
- le village / + tranquille / la ville

- les chèvres / - gros / les chevaux

- l'eau ici / = propre / à la campagne

- les cochons / + sale / les canards

- les bicyclettes / = dangereux / les patins

D Complete the following comparatives according to your own experiences and opinions.

- Les poules sont _____ mignonnes _____ les lapins.
- À la ferme, il y a _____ moutons _____ d'ânes.
- On a _____ théâtres _____ de cinémas.
- Le musée d'art reçoit _____ visiteurs _____ le musée d'histoire.
- Les chats sont _____ marrants _____ les chiens.
- J'ai _____ CD _____ mes amis.
- Faire un pique-nique, c'est _____ ennuyeux _____ faire les magasins.

The superlative with adjectives

CHAPITRE 6

In English Superlatives are used to single out something as *the most* or *the least*. To form the superlatives of most adjectives of one or two syllables, use the definite article **the** before the adjective and the suffix **-est** at the end of the adjective. For longer adjectives, use the formula **the most** + *adjective*. The formula **the least** + *adjective* is used for all adjectives to indicate the least of a quality.

That's **the greatest** story I've ever heard.
 This is **the most entertaining** show!
 This chair is **the least comfortable** of them all.

A Underline the superlative phrases in the following sentences.

1. Frieda is the kindest person I know.
2. It is Paul who writes the most beautiful letters.
3. Of all my friends, Jack is the most talkative.
4. Barbara is the least timid among all of us.
5. Rowena is the smartest girl in the class.
6. The snake is the least appealing animal I can imagine.

In French Superlatives serve the same purpose as in English. If an adjective usually precedes the noun, use the following formula. Notice that both articles and adjectives agree in gender and number with the noun.

le/la/l'/les + **plus/moins** + *adjective* + **de...**

Paris est **la plus grande** ville de France.

If an adjective usually follows the noun, use two definite articles: one before the noun and another before **plus** or **moins**.

C'est **la** ville **la plus intéressante** de la région.

B Underline the superlative phrases in the following sentences.

1. François est le plus grand de mes amis.
2. Amélie est la fille la plus créative de notre famille.
3. Dorothee est l'élève la moins préparée de la classe.
4. Les Salines est la plus belle plage du monde.
5. Chez Yves est le magasin le plus élégant du pays.
6. Où se trouve le restaurant le plus cher du quartier?

C Unscramble the following words to form superlative sentences.

1. Le TGV / de / plus / train / le / France / rapide / est / le

Le TGV est le train le plus rapide de France. _____

2. La chimie / moins / facile / la / du / est / classe / la / lycée

3. C'est / moins / du / ville / la / la / intéressante / pays

4. Vous / la / plus / avez / jolie / de / la / maison / rue

5. C'est / plus / de / église / vieille / la / ville / la

6. J'ai / moins / acheté / magasin / cher / le / du / anorak / l'

D Rewrite the following sentences to single out the students at school as the most or the least.

1. Louise est très généreuse.

Louise est l'élève la plus généreuse de l'école. _____

2. Lise est très intelligente.

3. Jérôme n'est pas obéissant.

4. Jacques est très fort.

5. Anne-Marie est très gentille.

6. Olivia n'est pas sérieuse.

7. Jean-Paul n'est pas sportif.
