



UNIT 2

Le preterite & le present perfect / US politics

1 - Verbs and prepositions.

Complete the following sentences with the suitable preposition. Answers are provided in the Key at the end of the unit.

1. In court, the thief apologised _____ the judge _____ his crime.
2. Special circumstances accounted _____ his offence, he explained.
3. His previous good behaviour should be taken _____ account, his lawyer added.
4. But the judge was not accustomed _____ being lenient and sentenced him _____ jail.
5. "How did the defendant feel _____ the sentence ?"
6. "He was amazed _____ it and very angry _____ the judge."
7. "As a matter of fact, I rather agree _____ him _____ it."
8. He is depending on you _____ write his letter of recommendation and hopes to be admitted to the prestigious university he applied to.
9. My cousin has applied _____ Microsoft _____ a job.
10. The new legislation is aimed _____ all taxpayers but it is the top 5% who will benefit most _____ the new measures.
11. "How much money did he borrow _____ the bank ?"
12. I am only going to ask you _____ a few questions. Don't worry I will not ask you _____ money.

2.a – Grammar : Le preterit & le present perfect.

• **Le preterit** exprime une action achevée, précise. Il y a une coupure très nette entre l'action qu'il décrit et le moment présent. *Le preterit est le temps de la narration.*

• **Le present perfect** peut exprimer une action également achevée au moment présent mais qui conserve un lien avec le présent. Il peut également faire le bilan d'une action au moment présent. **Il se traduit d'ailleurs souvent par un présent.**

Comparez :

☞ I **bought** this car two years ago => action terminée se traduisant par : j'ai acheté cette voiture il y a deux ans.

☞ I **have had** this car for two years => bilan indiquant la durée de l'action (au moyen de FOR) se traduisant par : j'ai cette voiture depuis deux ans, **c'est-à-dire par un présent.**

☞ Il convient parfois de procéder à des ajustements lorsque l'on passe du preterit au present perfect ou vice-versa.

Comparez : ☞ He **died** (« action ») ten years ago => il est mort il y a dix ans.

☞ He **has been dead** (« état ») for ten years => il est mort depuis dix ans.

☞ Le preterit et le present perfect peuvent se traduire tous les deux par un passé composé mais **attention** avec le preterit, l'accent est mis sur l'événement passé alors qu'**avec le present perfect on insiste sur le lien avec le présent.**

Comparez : ☞ I **read** this book ages ago = j'ai lu ce livre il y a très longtemps

☞ I **have read** this book = j'ai lu ce livre (et je peux t'en parler, **lien avec le présent**)

☞ Le preterit et le present perfect acceptent tous les deux la forme en ING mais en choisissant l'une ou l'autre forme (simple ou continue), l'énonciateur ne dit pas la chose.

Comparez : « We've been waiting for you for two hours » (sous-entendu : « et on en a assez »)
« We've waited for you for two hours » (regard neutre)

☞ aux adverbes ou expressions utilisés avec le present perfect et le preterit.

I **saw** her in New-York last week/ a long time ago (expression situant l'action dans le **passé**)

I **have never** been there yet (adverbe exprimant bilan avec le **présent**)

☞ aux usages respectifs de FOR & SINCE

I have lived in Paris for ten years => FOR + Durée

I have lived in Paris since I was a child => SINCE + Date ou moment précis.

FOR peut s'utiliser avec le present perfect comme avec le preterit.

I have lived in Paris for ten years => and I still do / lien avec le présent.
 I lived in Paris for ten years and then I moved to London => actions passées.

- Le preterit et le present perfect se transforment en past perfect au style indirect.
 'I've done it', she said => She said she had done it.
 'I did it on Sunday', she said => She said she had done it on Sunday

Le past perfect s'utilise également pour exprimer l'antériorité dans un contexte passé.
 EX. They didn't know (« passé ») what had happened the day before (« passé antérieur »)

2.b – Exercises : Choisissez la réponse qui convient.

- It was the third time she _____ him.
 a/ called c/ had called
 b/ has called d/ calls
- According to the figures released in 2004, 16,000 suicides _____ by firearms.
 a/ have been committed c/ were committed
 b/ have committed d/ had been committed
- Gun crime _____ steadily throughout the 1990s and early 2000s.
 a/ fell c/ has fallen
 b/ felt d/ had fallen
- _____ the ban , there has been a 40% drop in business.
 a/ For c/ Since
 b/ Although d/ Even though
- He _____ for two years but for the last three years he _____ German and economics.
 a/ has studied/ studies c/ studied / has been studying
 b/ studied / studies d/ has studied / has studied
- Mary and John _____ to the parties at the Student Union every Friday.
 a/ used to go c/ are used to go
 b/ use to go d/ were used to go
- In those days, it _____ relatively easy to keep oneself informed
 a/ was c/ had been
 b/ has been d/ is
- There _____ 15 deaths so far.
 a/ were c/ are
 b/ have been d/ will be
- Over the past few years, that sports hall _____ a fortune to run.
 a/ costed c/ costs
 b/ has cost d/ had costed
- She started as an Assistant Manager and _____ promoted to General Manager.
 a/ has recently been c/ was recently been
 b/ had recently been d/ is recently

3-a - Key Issues : US POLITICS.

§1 The United States is a democracy with two chambers: the **House of Representatives** on the one hand, and the **Senate** on the other hand. Interestingly enough, this twofold organization is reproduced in each state. Indeed the United States is also a **Federal Republic** with the same institutions at the federal level (Washington) and at the local level (in each state): the president / the governor (who stands for the executive power), Congress / the local Congress (which stands for the legislative power), the Supreme Court/ the local courts (the judicial power). For instance, each state is responsible for its own police, school system and taxes. Also much present in the American political life, is the **American Constitution**. This fundamental document is often referred to, especially when it comes to freedom of thought, freedom of religion and freedom of the press that are guaranteed by the **First Amendment**, or the controversy on the absence of gun control, supposedly due to the **Second Amendment**.

§2 In the United States, elections are held **every two years**, in **November**; **Tuesday** is election day in the U.S. When the president is elected –along with all the representatives, one third of the senators and local officials such as governors-, the elections are called **the presidential elections**.