

Essential Grammar for NELI Narrative Assessments

Present tense

There are two forms of present tense verbs.

1. **Present Simple** - Used when talking about things that happen regularly/habitually and don't change
 - He eats his lunch at his desk
 - I make a cup of tea every morning
 - I wash my hands before lunch
2. **Present Continuous** – used when talking about actions that are happening at the present moment but might/will soon finish
 - He is eating his lunch at his desk (now)
 - I am making a cup of tea (now)
 - I am washing my hands because they are dirty (now)

Regular past tense

The simple past tense is used mainly to describe finished events in the past. Regular past tense verbs are made by adding 'ed' to the infinitive.

Verb	Regular simple past
live	lived
visit	visited
play	played
watch	watched

Irregular past tense

Verb	Irregular simple past
see	saw
come	came
do	did
speak	spoke

There is no rule to these irregular verbs and they just need to be learned by heart.

The verb "to be"

Present tense	Past simple tense
I am	I was
He/she/it is	He/she/it was
We are	We were
You are	You were
They are	They were

Auxiliary Verbs

Auxiliary Verbs are helper verbs. They go before the main verb in the sentence to help the sentence make sense, for example:

- will / would / should / could
- may / can / shall / must / might
- am / is / are / do / does / has / have

Possessive Adjective

These are words that modify a noun to show possession (**who** or **what** owns it.)

Subject	Possessive adjective	Examples:
I	my	My car is very old
you	your	How old is your sister?
he	his	He's washing his hair
she	her	She's washing her hair
it	It's	The alien is washing it's hair
we	our	That's our house
they	their	They are washing their hair

Irregular plurals:

These have to be learned: e.g. mouse – mice / child – children / man – men / sheep – sheep.

Descriptive Language:

Describing words are used to modify both noun and verb phrases. Describing words are concepts, e.g. size (big / little / tall / high) prepositions (in / on / over / under) emotions (happy / sad / cross) colour words, quantity (some / all / many / lots) motion (quickly / slowly)

Story Elements:

Story elements include the main components of the story, e.g. who? – characters / where? – place / when? reference to time concepts / what? Verbs / what happened? / why? Includes solving a problem, explaining ideas.

Simple Sentences:

A simple sentence has a main clause, example a subject, verb and object. Main clauses make sense on their own e.g. *I like bananas*

Compound Sentences:

A compound sentence is made up of two main clauses. E.g. *I like bananas **and** I like grapes.*

The 2 main clauses are joined by the connective 'and'

Connectives: are joining words that join two clauses together, e.g. and, but, or, then, and then

The two clauses **can make sense on their own**,

Complex Sentences:

Subordinate Clauses: A subordinate clause contains a subject and a verb but it needs to be attached to the main clause as **it cannot make sense on it's own**.

e.g. *the girl fell off the horse **because** she was not holding on properly*

Increasingly complex sentences use embedding phrases and a wider range of connectives.

Embedded phrases

An embedded phrase is a phrase (clause) used in the middle of another phrase to give more information about a sentence.

Example:

- The crocodile, with its big teeth, pounced towards its prey
- The girl, with the basket on her head, is called Handa
- The fox, with the gingerbread man on his nose, was very sly

The passive voice

The passive voice is used in more formal writing. The meaning is the same but the focus is different. In the 'active voice' the focus is on who did the action, for example, 'Sam kicked the ball'. In the 'passive voice', the focus is on the person or object that received the action, for example 'The ball was kicked by Sam'.

The passive voice is useful because the person who 'did' the action can remain anonymous. For example

- My bike was stolen – the focus is on the fact the bike was stolen. I do not know who did it.
- A mistake was made – I focus on the fact a mistake was made but I do not blame anyone.