



Present Perfect Simple vs Continuous: How Do They Differ?

S06E16 | For teachers to adapt to their learners

Purpose

Both forms can connect past activity with the present, but they often highlight different things. The simple commonly foregrounds a result, achievement or completed amount, while the continuous commonly foregrounds an activity, duration or visible ongoing effect.

Try this in your next lesson

I've read three chapters. What is important, the amount or the activity?

Our suggested routine

After the discussion, learners write two true sentences of each type about their own week.

- ☐ I've read three chapters. What is important, the amount or the activity?
- ☐ I've been reading all afternoon. What is important, the amount or the activity?
- ☐ She's cleaned the kitchen. Is the result important?
- ☐ She's been cleaning the kitchen. Are we focusing on the process or recent activity?

Answers and teacher guidance

1: completed amount. 2: activity and duration. 3: the result is foregrounded. 4: the recent activity is foregrounded; it may have stopped or may continue. With verbs such as work and live, both perfect forms can be possible depending on context.

After the attempt

What worked? What needs another model or a smaller step? Note one change for next time.

Read the full explanation and examples:
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