

Lecture Five

English Language - Upper intermediate

Unit 3

Narrative tenses

Past simple and present perfect

The past simple differs from all three uses of the present perfect

1. The past simple refers to finished past.

Shakespeare wrote plays. (He's dead)

I've written short stories. (I'm alive)

2. There is no present result.

I hurt my back. (But it's better now).

I've hurt my back. (and it hurts now).

3. It refers to definite past.

Last night

I saw + two weeks ago

On Monday

At 8.00

The present perfect deals with indefinite adverbials

Recently

I've seen him+ before

since January

I haven't seen him + yet

for months

Past simple: is used

1. To express a finished action in the past.

I went to Manchester last week.

John left two minutes ago.

2. To express actions which follow each other in a story.

I heard a voice coming from downstairs, so I put on my dressing-gown and went to investigate.

3. To express a past state or habit

When I was a child, we lived in a small house by the sea. Every day I walked for miles on the beach.

Note: solving the exercises in the workbook from page 18 to page 20