

1) The Simple Present Tense

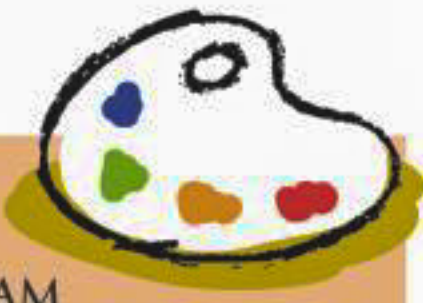
The simple present tense is used to discuss permanent situations and the frequency of events.

i) Repeated Actions

Use the Simple Present to express the idea that an action is repeated or usual. The action can be a habit, a hobby, a daily event, a scheduled event or something that often happens. It can also be something a person often forgets or usually does not do.

Examples:

- I play cricket.
- Does he like tennis?
- The bus leaves every morning at 10 AM.
- The train does not leave at 9 AM.
- He always forgets his keys.
- He never forgets his wallet.
- Every twelve months, the Earth circles the Sun.



ii) Facts or Generalizations

The Simple Present can also indicate the speaker believes that a fact was true before, is true now, and will be true in the future. It is not important if the speaker is correct about the fact. It is also used to make generalizations about people or things.

Examples:

- Dogs like bones.
- Birds do not like bones.
- Do humans like milk?
- Sydney is in Australia.
- Doors are made of glass.
- Windows are not made of wood.



iii) Scheduled Events in the Near Future

Speakers occasionally use Simple Present to talk about scheduled events in the near future. This is most commonly done when talking about public transportation, but it can be used with other scheduled events as well.

Examples:

- The bus arrives tonight at 8 PM.
- The bus does not arrive at 8 AM, it arrives at 8 PM.
- When do we board the bus?
- The movie starts at 9 o'clock.
- When does class begin tomorrow?

iv) Now (Non-Continuous Verbs)

Speakers sometimes use the Simple Present to express the idea that an action is happening or is not happening now. This can only be done with Non-Continuous Verbs and certain Mixed Verbs.

Examples:

- I am here now.
- She is not here now.
- He needs help right now.
- He has his license in his hand.
- Do you have your license with you?



2) The Present Continuous Tense

Form - [am/is/are + present participle]

Examples:

- You are watching TV.
- Are you watching TV?
- You are not watching TV.

i) Ongoing Action

Use the Present Continuous with Normal Verbs to express the idea that something is happening now, at this very moment. It can also be used to show that something is not happening now.

Examples:

- You are learning tenses now.
- You are not playing now.
- Are you sleeping?
- I am sitting.
- They are reading their books.
- They are not watching the movie.
- What are you doing?
- Why aren't you doing your work?



ii) Longer Actions in Progress Now

In English, "now" can mean right now, today, this month, this year, this century, and so on. Sometimes, we use the Present Continuous to say that we are in the process of doing a longer action which is in progress; however, we might not be doing it at this exact second.

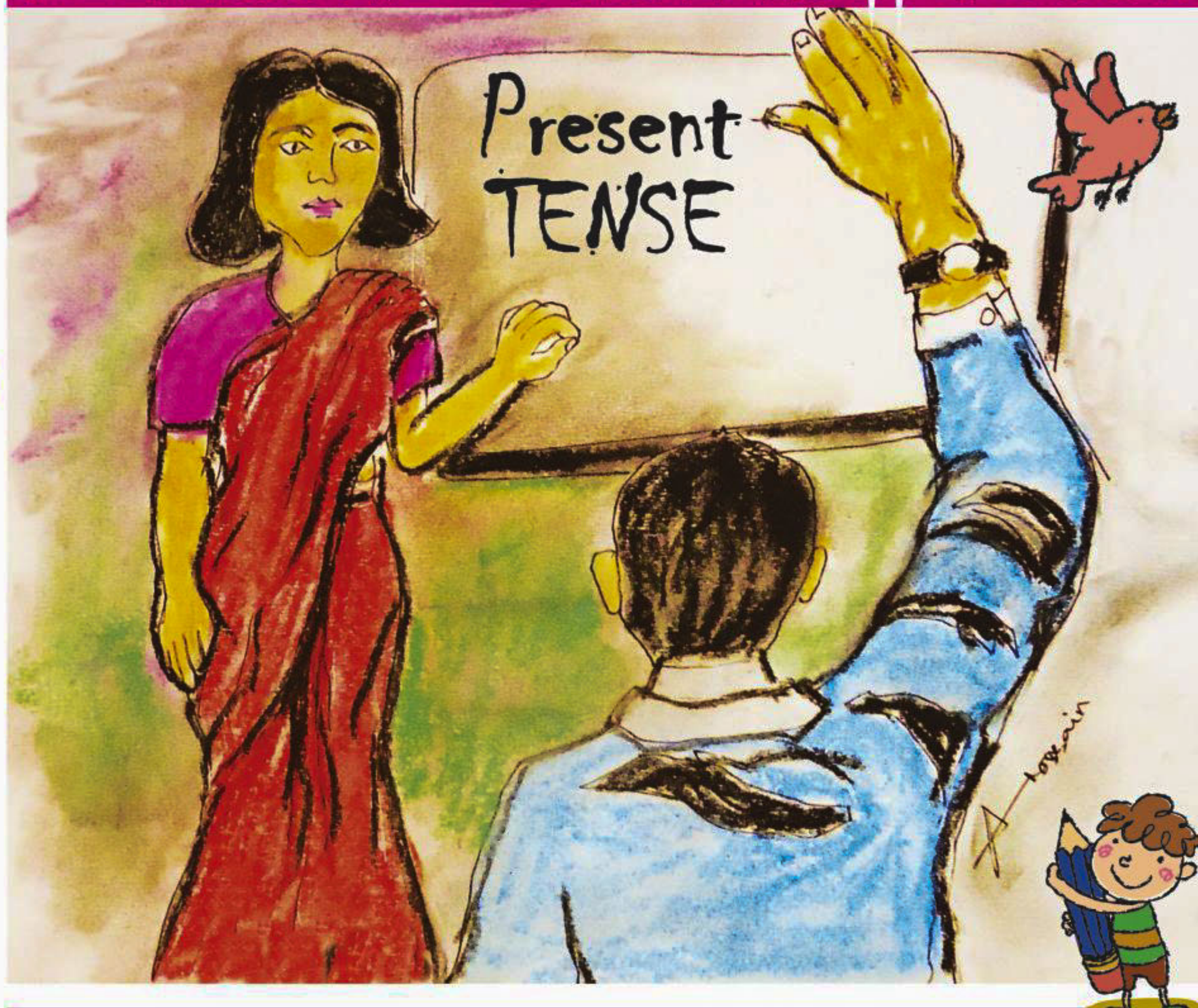
Examples: (All of these sentences can be said while watching movie with your friend)

- I am studying to become an engineer.
- I am not studying to become a doctor.
- I am reading the book 'Emma'.
- I am not reading any reports right now.
- Are you working on any special projects?
- Aren't you teaching at the college now?



Find the answers in next MONDAY issue

ALL YOU NEED TO KNOW ABOUT



iii) Near Future

Sometimes, speakers use the Present Continuous to indicate that something will or will not happen in the near future.

Examples:

- I am meeting some relatives after work.
- I am not going to the movie this weekend.
- Is he visiting his parents tonight?
- Isn't he coming with us tonight?

iv) Repetition with "Always"

The Present Continuous with words such as "always" or "constantly" expresses the idea that something irritating or shocking often happens. Notice that the meaning is like Simple Present, but with negative emotion. Remember to put the words "always" or "constantly" between "be" and "verb+ing."

Examples:

- She is always coming to work late.
- He is constantly talking.
- I don't like them because they are always complaining

3) The Present Perfect Tense

FORM - [has/have + past participle]

Examples:

- You have seen that movie many times.
- Have you seen that movie many times?
- You have not seen that movie many times.

i) Unspecified Time Before Now

We use the Present Perfect to say that an action happened at an unspecified time before now. The exact time is not important. You CANNOT use the Present Perfect with specific time expressions such as yesterday, one year ago, last week, when I was a child, one day, etc. We CAN use the Present Perfect with unspecified expressions such as: ever, never, once, many times, several times, before, so far, already, yet, etc.

Examples:

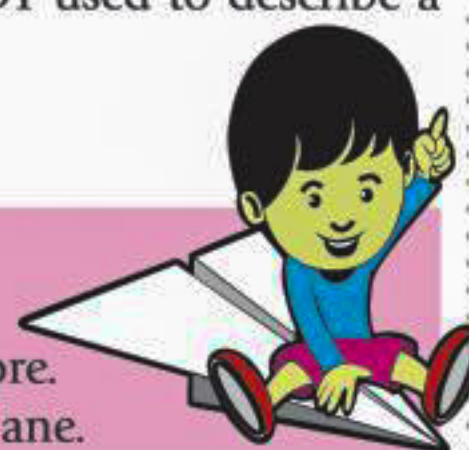
- I have seen that play twenty times.
- I think I have met him once before.
- There have been many earthquakes in Japan.
- People have traveled to the North pole.
- People have not traveled to Mars.
- Have you read the book yet?
- Nobody has ever climbed that mountain.

ii) Experience

You can use the Present Perfect to describe your experience. It is like saying, "I have the experience of..." You can also use this tense to say that you have never had a certain experience. The Present Perfect is NOT used to describe a specific event.

Examples:

- I have been to Alaska.
- I have never been to Japan.
- I think I have seen that movie before.
- He has never traveled by an aeroplane.



iii) Change Over Time

We often use the Present Perfect to talk about change that has happened over a period of time.

Examples:

- You have grown since the last time I saw you.
- The government has become more interested in poverty removal.
- Mandarin has become one of the most popular language courses at the university since the Asian studies program was established.
- My English has really improved since I moved to America.

ii) Accomplishments

We often use the Present Perfect to list the accomplishments of individuals and humanity. Remember, though, that you cannot mention a specific time.

Examples:

- Man has walked on the Moon.
- John has learned how to read.
- Doctors have cured many deadly diseases.
- Scientists have split the atom.



iv) An Uncompleted Action You Are Expecting

We often use the Present Perfect to say that an action which we expected has not happened. Using the Present Perfect suggests that we are still waiting for the action to happen.

Examples:

- Tina has not finished her assignment yet.
- Jerry hasn't mastered French, but he can communicate.
- The package has still not arrived.
- The rain hasn't stopped.

v) Multiple Actions at Different Times

We also use the Present Perfect to talk about several different actions which have occurred in the past at different times. Present Perfect suggests the process is not complete and more actions are possible.

Examples:

- The army has attacked that city five times.
- I have had four quizzes and five tests so far this semester.
- We have faced many problems while working on this project.
- She has talked to several specialists about her problem, but nobody knows why she is sick.

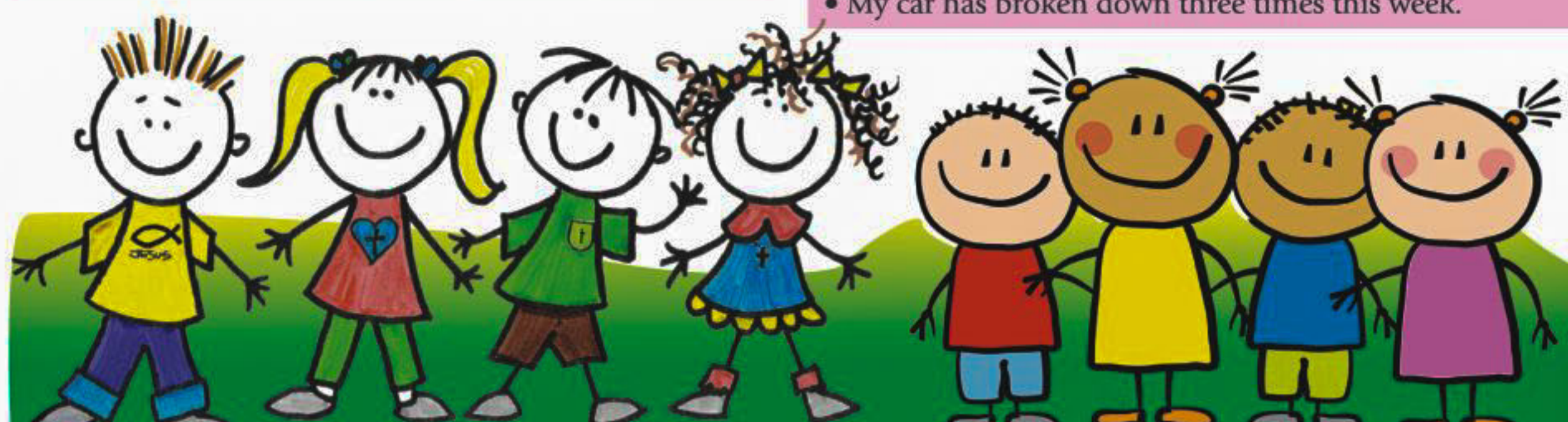
vi) Time Expressions with Present Perfect

When we use the Present Perfect it means that something has happened at some point in our lives before now. Remember, the exact time the action happened is not important.

Sometimes, we want to limit the time we are looking in for an experience. We can do this with expressions such as: in the last week, in the last year, this week, this month, so far, up to now, etc.

Examples:

- Have you been to New York in the last two years?
- I have seen that movie three times in the last fortnight.
- They have had three tests in the last week.
- My car has broken down three times this week.



IMPORTANT

"Last year" and "in the last year" are very different in meaning.
"Last year" means the year before now, and it is considered a specific time which requires Simple past tense.
"In the last year" means from 365 days ago until now. It is not considered a specific time, so it requires Present Perfect Tense.

Examples:

- I went to New York last year.
- I have been to New York in the last year.

4) The Present Perfect Continuous Tense

FORM - [has/have + been + present participle]

Examples:

- You have been waiting here for two hours.
- Have you been waiting here for two hours?
- You have not been waiting here for two hours.

i) Duration from the Past Until Now

We use the Present Perfect Continuous to show that something started in the past and has continued up until now. "For five minutes," "for two weeks," and "since Tuesday" are all durations which can be used with the Present Perfect Continuous.

Examples:

- They have been arguing for the last hour.
- John has been working with that company for five years.
- What have you been doing for the last one week?
- We have been waiting here for over two hours!

ii) Recently, Lately

You can also use the Present Perfect Continuous without a duration such as "for two weeks." Without the duration, the tense has a more general meaning of "lately." We often use the words "lately" or "recently" to emphasize this meaning.

Examples:

- Recently, I have been feeling really depressed.
- She has been watching too much theatre lately.
- Have you been exercising lately?

TEST ON PRESENT TENSES

EXERCISE A: Put in the present continuous form of the verb in brackets.

1. Please be quiet. I _____ (try) to read my book.
2. I _____ (not/use) the computer at the moment so you can use it.
3. Mary is ill so Sue _____ (teach) her lessons today.
4. Excuse me, I _____ (look) for a hotel. Is there one near here?
5. _____ (you/wait) for someone?

EXERCISE B: Put the verb into the correct form, present continuous or present simple.

1. I _____ (not/belong) to this particular government committee.
2. Hurry! The bus _____ (come). I _____ (not/want) to miss it.
3. Gregory is a vegetarian. He _____ (not/eat) meat.
4. I _____ (look) for the manager. I can't find him anywhere.
5. We are successful because we _____ (take) the time to talk to our customers.

EXERCISE C: Put the verb in brackets into the present simple or the present continuous.

1. She always _____ (remember) my birthday.
2. Mr Brown _____ (work) in a supermarket.
3. I _____ (work) in this factory until I find a better job.
4. Look! It _____ (snow).
5. Can you hear those girls? What _____ (they/talk) about?

ANSWER KEY TO THE LAST EIS PAGE ACTIVITIES (DATED OCTOBER 10, 2016)

- KEY : 1
1. I have just had a great idea.
 2. Columbus was one of the first people to cross the Atlantic.
 3. The British drink too much tea.
 4. The Thames flows into the North Sea.
 5. Judith earns € 2000 a month.
 6. Dancing is a more interesting activity than reading.
 7. As captain of the ship I have complete authority.
 8. The people we met on holiday in the north of England came from the USA.
 9. What's on TV today?
 10. He was doing eighty miles an hour on the motorway.
- KEY : 2
1. --- modern life is stressful.
 2. What's the capital of your country?
 3. A doctor earns more than a teacher.
 4. Do you know who invented the computer?
 5. Have you seen the newspaper? I can't find it anywhere.
 6. Is this the first time you've stayed at the Hilton?
 7. Is the Nile or the Amazon the longest river on earth?
 8. Several million visitors a year are attracted to the ski slopes of the Alps.
 9. I'll meet you outside the post office. I'll be there in a quarter of an hour.
 10. --- young people tend to think that --- life was more difficult in the past.