

**DIRECTIONS:** Fill in the blanks with the tenses we've studied so far. In some cases, more than one tense may be possible.

SIMPLE PRESENT

PRESENT CONTINUOUS

PRESENT PERFECT

PRESENT PERFECT CONTINUOUS

SIMPLE PAST

PAST CONTINUOUS

FUTURE IN THE PAST [was/were going to or would]

PAST PERFECT

PAST PERFECT CONTINUOUS

## MY TWO CAREERS

## I.

One summer when I (1) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) a teenager, I (2) \_\_\_\_\_ (get) a job with a circus. As part of my job, I

(3) \_\_\_\_\_ (stick) up posters all over the city,

(4) \_\_\_\_\_ (set) up chairs in the tent, and

(5) \_\_\_\_\_ (sell) tickets. I (6) \_\_\_\_\_

(learn) a lot about circus life that summer, and I

(7) \_\_\_\_\_ (love) circuses ever since then.

Unfortunately, the circus that I (8) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) for

(9) \_\_\_\_\_ (not be) a very successful one. Things

(10) \_\_\_\_\_ (forever go) wrong. One night, for example, we

(11) \_\_\_\_\_ (begin) the performance very late. I (12) \_\_\_\_\_ (already

shut) down the box office, and everyone (13) \_\_\_\_\_ (sit) in the tent. The audience

(14) \_\_\_\_\_ (already eat) all of the hot dogs and ice cream cones, and they

(15) \_\_\_\_\_ (grow) restless. I (16) \_\_\_\_\_ (think) that the crowd

(17) \_\_\_\_\_ (throw) tomatoes or something at the ringmaster because they

(18) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) so irritated. Finally, the show (19) \_\_\_\_\_ (begin).

The ringmaster (20) \_\_\_\_\_ (lead) the parade of animals and performers into the tent. He (21) \_\_\_\_\_ (look) quite nervous because the gypsy

fortune-teller who always (22) \_\_\_\_\_ (travel)

with the circus (23) \_\_\_\_\_ (see) terrible things

in her crystal ball all day long. She (24) \_\_\_\_\_

(warn) him for weeks not to put on this performance, and he

(25) \_\_\_\_\_ (threaten) to fire her unless she



(26)\_\_\_\_\_ (give) him some better predictions.

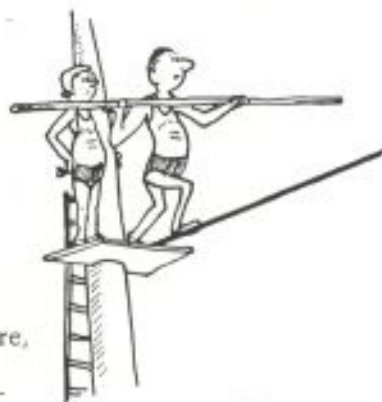
Anyway, I (27)\_\_\_\_\_ (watch) the whole show that night. Everything (28)\_\_\_\_\_ (go) fine at first. Three elephants (29)\_\_\_\_\_ (do) tricks in the center ring. In another ring, the lion tamer (30)\_\_\_\_\_ (get) one of his lions to jump through a ring of fire. The lion (31)\_\_\_\_\_ (be) very cranky all day, but she (32)\_\_\_\_\_ (do) pretty well that night. In the other ring, twelve clowns (33)\_\_\_\_\_ (try) to stuff themselves into a small car while the stunt coordinator (34)\_\_\_\_\_ (yell) directions at them. At the same time, above the center ring, two tightrope walkers (35)\_\_\_\_\_ (already climb) their ladders and (36)\_\_\_\_\_ (just step) out onto the tightrope.

## II.

Then it (37)\_\_\_\_\_ (happen). One of the tightrope walkers, who (38)\_\_\_\_\_ (catch) a cold a few days before, suddenly (39)\_\_\_\_\_ (sneeze). He (40)\_\_\_\_\_ (lose) his balance and (41)\_\_\_\_\_ (crash) into the safety net. His partner (42)\_\_\_\_\_ (look) down for just a second, and then he (43)\_\_\_\_\_ (lose) his balance, too. He (44)\_\_\_\_\_ (catch) the tightrope with his right hand as he (45)\_\_\_\_\_ (fall), and he (46)\_\_\_\_\_ (hang) there for several seconds, trying to figure out what to do next. He (47)\_\_\_\_\_ (sweat) with fear because he (48)\_\_\_\_\_ (see) that the safety net (49)\_\_\_\_\_ (collapse) just after his partner (50)\_\_\_\_\_ (fall) into it. The audience, horrified, (51)\_\_\_\_\_ (hold) its breath.

The tightrope walker (52)\_\_\_\_\_ (cling) to the rope for as long as possible, and then he (53)\_\_\_\_\_ (let) go. I (54)\_\_\_\_\_ (be) sure that I (55)\_\_\_\_\_ (faint). The whole audience (56)\_\_\_\_\_ (know) that the poor guy (57)\_\_\_\_\_ (probably break) his neck in the fall.

However, instead of crashing to his death, he (58)\_\_\_\_\_ (fall) onto one of the elephants, (59)\_\_\_\_\_ (slide) off the elephant's back, and (60)\_\_\_\_\_ (land) softly on the floor of the tent. He (61)\_\_\_\_\_ (be) fine, but the elephant, shocked by this unexpected creature on her back, (62)\_\_\_\_\_ (flee) to the next ring, where the clowns (63)\_\_\_\_\_ (just squeeze) into the car and (64)\_\_\_\_\_ (now try) to wiggle out. The elephant (65)\_\_\_\_\_ (run) past the clowns toward the ringmaster, who (66)\_\_\_\_\_ (split) his pants while he (67)\_\_\_\_\_ (try) to climb over



a low wall to get away. Then the elephant (68) \_\_\_\_\_ (head) for the ring with the lions, where the lion tamer (69) \_\_\_\_\_ (run) back and forth, trying to capture his lions and put them back in their cages. I (70) \_\_\_\_\_ (wonder) what (71) \_\_\_\_\_ (happen) next when the lions, nervous and confused, (72) \_\_\_\_\_ (spring) out of the ring, into the audience. Terrified people (73) \_\_\_\_\_ (flee) in all directions. Others (74) \_\_\_\_\_ (hide) under their seats. Nobody (75) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) hurt, but several days later, the owners of the circus (76) \_\_\_\_\_ (choose) to go out of business because this kind of thing (77) \_\_\_\_\_ (forever happen).

### III.

My short career with the circus (78) \_\_\_\_\_ (begin) and (79) \_\_\_\_\_ (end) over two decades ago. I (80) \_\_\_\_\_ (wait on) tables for a few years after finishing high school, and then I (81) \_\_\_\_\_ (go) to college. I (82) \_\_\_\_\_ (work) in a bank ever since I (83) \_\_\_\_\_ (graduate) from college. It (84) \_\_\_\_\_ (be) a very boring line of work. I (85) \_\_\_\_\_ (sit) at a desk all day and seldom (86) \_\_\_\_\_ (have) an opportunity to meet any interesting people. I (87) \_\_\_\_\_ (answer) questions and (88) \_\_\_\_\_ (give) financial advice whenever anyone (89) \_\_\_\_\_ (come) in and (90) \_\_\_\_\_ (ask) for a loan. Last year, one of the bank tellers (91) \_\_\_\_\_ (steal) \$20,000 from the bank, and this year, three people (92) \_\_\_\_\_ (try) to rob the bank, but aside from that, nothing exciting ever (93) \_\_\_\_\_ (happen). Right now, for example, I (94) \_\_\_\_\_ (sit) at my desk and (95) \_\_\_\_\_ (hope) that the phone won't ring. I (96) \_\_\_\_\_ (daydream) about doing something exciting: going on a safari through the jungle, taking a spaceship into outer space, or doing scientific experiments in a laboratory. You see, I (97) \_\_\_\_\_ (begin) to get very restless. I (98) \_\_\_\_\_ (wear) a business suit every business day for the past twenty years. I (99) \_\_\_\_\_ (answer) the same questions thousands of times. I (100) \_\_\_\_\_ (not do) anything exciting since I was a teenager. A good salary (101) \_\_\_\_\_ (not be) enough. I (102) \_\_\_\_\_ (see) circus posters all over town this week, and I (103) \_\_\_\_\_ (already decide) to put in my application and trade in my business suit for a clown suit!

