

New School Year Mini-Story Lesson

Hello. Welcome to the mini-story lesson for the conversation “New School Year.” Let’s start the story.

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Penelope’s summer was off to a rough start. She had been saving money for five years. She wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.

On the first day of summer, Penelope went to the beach. She went in the ocean and she saw a shark. The shark asked her for two dollars because he wanted to buy a hamburger. So Penelope opened her wallet and she took out two dollars. Then the shark stole Penelope’s wallet and he swam away.

Penelope screamed, “Ugh! That shark just stole all my money. Now I have to start my savings from scratch.”

So Penelope made up her mind to find a job. She was really into photography so she found a job taking pictures for a rock and roll magazine.

Day to day Penelope looked for motorcycles that were for sale. She saved two thousand dollars and she bought a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye.

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Okay. So that’s the end of our story so now let’s start at the beginning and I will ask you questions as I read the story and you can answer them out loud. If you feel that you need a little more time, please pause your player and take as much time as you need, answer the question, and then play the lesson again after that. Continue the lesson.

Okay. So let’s start now.

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Penelope’s summer was off to a rough start.

Was Penelope’s summer off to a rough start?

Yes, Penelope’s summer was off to a rough start.

What was off to a rough start?

Well, Penelope’s summer was off to a rough start.



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Was Penelope's winter or Penelope's summer off to a rough start?

Penelope's summer was off to a rough start.

Was Penelope's winter off to a rough start?

No, it wasn't Penelope's winter that was off to a rough start.

Was Penelope's summer off to a rough start?

Yes, yes, that's correct. Penelope's summer was off to a rough start.

Did Penelope have a difficult start to her summer?

Yes, yes, she did. Penelope's summer was off to a rough start which is the same as saying her summer had a difficult beginning.

Did Penelope's summer begin well?

No, Penelope's summer was off to a rough start which means that it did not begin well.

Did Penelope's summer begin badly?

Yes, yes, you could say that because her summer was off to a rough start, which means that it started badly or difficultly.

Was Penelope's summer off to a rough start?

Yes, it was Penelope's summer was off to a rough start.

She had been saving money for five years.

Had she been saving money for five years?

Yes, she had. She had been saving money for five years.

What had she been doing for five years?



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Well, she had been saving money for five years.

Had she been saving money or eating grapes for five years?

No, she hadn't been eating grapes. She had been saving money for five years.

Who had been saving money for five years? Had Penelope been saving money for five years?

Yes, yes, Penelope had been saving money for five years.

How long had she been saving money?

Well, she had been saving money for five years.

Had she been saving money for two years or five years?

She had been saving money for five years.

Had she been saving money for two years?

No, she hadn't been saving money for two years.

Had she been saving money for five years?

Yes, that's correct. She had been saving money for five years.

She wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.

Did she want to buy a bright pink motorcycle?

Yes, yes, she did. She wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.

What did she want to do?

She wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.

Did she want to fly to Italy or did she want to buy a bright pink motorcycle?

She wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.



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Did she want to fly to Italy?

No, she didn't want to fly to Italy.

Did she want to buy a bright pink motorcycle?

Yes, that's what she wanted to do. She wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.

Who wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle? Did Penelope want to buy a bright pink motorcycle?

Yes, yes, Penelope wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.

What did she want to buy?

She wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.

What did she want to buy, a red fish or a bright pink motorcycle?

She wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.

Did she want to buy a red fish?

No, she didn't want to buy a red fish.

Did she want to buy a bright pink motorcycle?

Yes, yes, she did. She wanted to buy a bright pink motorcycle.

On the first day of summer, Penelope went to the beach.

So, did Penelope go to the beach on the first day of summer?

Well, yes, she did. On the first day of summer, Penelope went to the beach.

What did Penelope do on the first day of summer?

That's right, Penelope went to the beach.



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Did she watch television or did she go to the beach?

She went to the beach.

Did Penelope watch television?

No, Penelope didn't watch television.

Did she go to the beach?

Yes, yes, she did. That's right, she went to the beach.

Who went to the beach on the first day of summer?

Penelope. Penelope went to the beach.

Did Penelope or Peter go to the beach?

Penelope went to the beach.

Did Peter go to the beach?

Peter? No, Peter didn't go to the beach.

Did Penelope go to the beach?

Yes, that's correct. Penelope went to the beach.

When did Penelope go to the beach?

Well, Penelope went to the beach on the first day of summer.

Did Penelope go to the beach on the first day of summer or the first day of spring?

On the first day of summer. Penelope went to the beach on the first day of summer.

Did Penelope go to the beach on the first day of spring?

No, she didn't go to the beach on the first day of spring.



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Did Penelope go to the beach on the first day of summer?

Yes, yes, she did. Penelope went to the beach on the first day of summer.

She went in the ocean

So, did she go in the ocean?

Yes, yes, she did. She went in the ocean.

What did she do?

She went in the ocean.

Did she eat a hamburger or go in the ocean?

She went in the ocean.

Did she go in the ocean?

Yes, yes, she did. She went in the ocean.

Who went in the ocean? Did Penelope go in the ocean?

Yes she did. Penelope went in the ocean.

Where did she go? Did she go in the house?

No, she didn't go in the house.

Did she go in the ocean?

Well, yes, that's what she did. She went in the ocean.

and she saw a shark.

Did she see a shark?



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Yes, she did. She saw a shark.

What did she see?

She saw a shark.

Did she see a whale or a shark?

A shark. She saw a shark.

Did she see a whale?

No, it wasn't a whale.

Did she see a shark?

Yes, yes, she did. She saw a shark.

Who saw a shark? Did Penelope see a shark?

That's true. Penelope saw a shark.

Did she see a shark?

Yes, yes, that's correct. She saw a shark.

The shark asked her for two dollars

Did the shark ask her for two dollars?

Yes, yes, the shark asked her for two dollars.

What did the shark do?

That's right. The shark asked her for two dollars.

Did the shark give her a sandwich or ask her for two dollars?

The shark asked her for two dollars.



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Did the shark give her a sandwich?

No, the shark did not give her a sandwich.

Did the shark ask her for two dollars?

Yes, that is correct. The shark asked her for two dollars.

What did the shark ask? Did he ask her to wash his car?

No, he didn't ask her to wash his car. Sharks don't have cars.

Did the shark ask her for two dollars?

Yes, yes, the shark asked her for two dollars.

because he wanted to buy a hamburger.

Did he want to buy a hamburger?

Yes, he did. He wanted to buy a hamburger.

What did he want to do?

He wanted to buy a hamburger.

Did he want to ride his bicycle or buy a hamburger?

He wanted to buy a hamburger.

Okay, so who wanted to buy a hamburger? Did the shark want to buy a hamburger?

Yes, that's correct. The shark wanted to buy a hamburger.

What did the shark want to buy?

He wanted to buy a hamburger.



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Did he want to buy a bicycle or a hamburger?

He wanted to buy a hamburger.

Did he want to buy a hamburger?

Yes, yes, he did. He wanted to buy a hamburger.

So Penelope opened her wallet

Did Penelope open her wallet?

Yes, she did. Penelope opened her wallet.

What did Penelope do?

Penelope opened her wallet.

Did Penelope open her wallet or eat an apple?

She opened her wallet.

Did Penelope eat an apple?

No, no, Penelope did not eat an apple.

Did Penelope open her wallet?

Yes, yes, that's correct. Penelope opened her wallet.

Okay, so who opened her wallet? Did Penelope's mom open her wallet?

No, it wasn't Penelope's mom.

Did Penelope open her wallet?

Yes, she did. Penelope opened her wallet.

Okay, so what did Penelope open?



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That's right, Penelope opened her wallet.

Did she open her wallet or her jacket?

She opened her wallet.

Did Penelope open her wallet?

Yes, she did. Penelope opened her wallet.

and she took out two dollars.

Did she take out two dollars?

Yes, yes, she did. She took out two dollars.

What did she do?

She took out two dollars.

Did she ride a motorcycle or take out two dollars?

That's right, she took out two dollars.

Did she ride a motorcycle?

No, she didn't ride a motorcycle. She took out two dollars.

Did she take out two dollars?

Yes, she did. She took out two dollars.

Who took out two dollars? Did Penelope take out two dollars?

Yes, yes, she did. Penelope took out two dollars.

What did she take out?



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She took out two dollars, good.

Did she take out two dollars or five dollars?

She took out two dollars.

Did she take out two dollars?

Yes, yes, she did. She took out two dollars.

Then the shark stole Penelope's wallet

Did the shark steal Penelope's wallet?

Yes, yes, the shark stole Penelope's wallet.

What did the shark do?

The shark stole Penelope's wallet, right.

Did the shark bake Penelope a cake or steal Penelope's wallet?

He stole her wallet.

Did the shark bake Penelope a cake?

No, the shark did not bake Penelope a cake.

Did the shark steal Penelope's wallet?

Yes, yes, that's exactly correct. The shark stole Penelope's wallet.

Who stole Penelope's wallet? Did Peter steal Penelope's wallet?

No, no, it was not Peter.

Did the shark steal Penelope's wallet?

Yes, yes, that's correct. The shark stole Penelope's wallet.



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Okay, so what did the shark steal?

Penelope's wallet, right. The shark stole Penelope's wallet.

Did the shark steal Penelope's jacket or wallet?

He stole her wallet.

Did the shark steal Penelope's cake?

Cake? No, not cake.

Did the shark steal Penelope's wallet?

That's correct. The shark stole Penelope's wallet.

and he swam away.

Did he swim away?

Yes, he did. He swam away.

What did he do?

He swam away, right.

Did he eat a hamburger or swim away?

He swam away.

Did he drive away?

No, he didn't drive away.

Did he swim away?

Yes, he did. He swam away.



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Penelope screamed, “Ugh! That shark just stole all my money.”

Did Penelope scream, “Ugh! That shark just stole all my money.”?

Yes, that’s correct. That’s what Penelope screamed.

What did the shark do? Did the shark steal all her money?

Yes, yes, the shark stole all her money.

Who stole all her money? Did Brad Pitt steal all her money?

No, it wasn’t Brad Pitt.

Did the shark steal all her money?

Yes, yes, that’s what Penelope said. “That shark stole all my money.”

What did the shark steal?

The shark stole all her money.

Did the shark steal a guitar or all her money?

All her money. The shark stole all her money, good.

Did the shark steal all her money?

Yes, yes, he did. The shark stole all her money.

Now I have to start my savings from scratch.”

Does she have to start her savings from scratch?

Yes, yes, she does. She said “Now I have to start my savings from scratch.”

What does she have to do?



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Start her savings from scratch. She has to start her savings from scratch.

Does she have to play guitar or start her savings from scratch?

Start her savings from scratch, that's correct. She has to start her savings from scratch.

Does she have to start school?

No, no, she doesn't have to start school.

Does she have to start her savings from scratch?

Yes, yes, that's correct. She has to start her savings from scratch.

Does she have to begin to save money again?

Yes, yes, that's correct. She said "Now I have to start my savings from scratch" which means that she now has to begin to save money again. She has no money so she has to start to save again.

So Penelope made up her mind to find a job.

Did Penelope make up her mind to find a job?

Yes, yes, she did. She made up her mind to find a job.

What did Penelope do?

She made up her mind to find a job.

Did Penelope make up her mind to find a job or eat a hamburger?

She made up her mind to find a job.

Did Penelope eat a hamburger?

No, no, Penelope did not eat a hamburger.

Did Penelope make up her mind to find a job?



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Yes, yes, she did. Penelope made up her mind to find a job.

Did Penelope decide to find a job?

Well, yes, she did. Penelope made up her mind to find a job which means that she decided to find a job.

Did Penelope make up her mind to find a job?

Yes, yes, she did. Penelope made up her mind to find a job. She decided to find a job.

She was really into photography

Was she really into photography?

Yes, she was. She was really into photography.

Who was really into photography? Was Penelope's mom really into photography?

No, not Penelope's mom.

Was Penelope really into photography?

Yes, she was. She was really into photography.

Did she really enjoy photography?

Yes, yes, she was really into photography which is the same as saying she really enjoyed photography. She loved photography. She really liked to take pictures.

Was she really into photography?

Yes, she was. She was really into photography.

so she found a job taking pictures for a rock and roll magazine.

Did she find a job taking pictures for a rock and roll magazine?

Yes, she did. She found a job taking pictures for a rock and roll magazine.



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Okay, so what did she do?

That's correct. She found a job taking pictures for a rock and roll magazine.

Did she call her brother Johnny or find a job taking pictures for a rock and roll magazine?

She found a job taking pictures for a rock and roll magazine.

Did she drive her car?

No, she did not drive her car.

Did she find a job taking pictures for a newspaper?

No, it wasn't a newspaper.

Did she find a job taking pictures for a rock and roll magazine?

Yes, she did. That's where she was going to take pictures, for a rock and roll magazine.

Day to day Penelope looked for motorcycles that were for sale.

Did Penelope look for motorcycles that were for sale day to day?

Yes, she did. That's what she did. Day to day Penelope looked for motorcycles that were for sale.

What did Penelope do day to day?

She looked for motorcycles that were for sale, right.

Did Penelope look for motorcycles that were for sale or read a book?

She looked for motorcycles that were for sale.

Did Penelope read a book?

No, Penelope did not read a book.



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How often did Penelope look for motorcycles that were for sale? Did she look for motorcycles that were for sale day to day?

Yes, that's correct. Day to day Penelope looked for motorcycles that were for sale.

Did Penelope look for motorcycles that were for sale every day?

Well, yes, she did. She did it day to day which is the same as saying she did it every day. Every day she looked for motorcycles that were for sale, or day to day she looked for motorcycles that were for sale. Day to day can also mean most days instead of every single day.

She saved two thousand dollars

Did she save two thousand dollars?

Yes, yes, she saved two thousand dollars.

What did she do?

That's right, she saved two thousand dollars.

Did she buy an airplane or save two thousand dollars?

She saved two thousand dollars.

Did she buy a boat?

A boat, no, not a boat. She didn't buy a boat.

Did she save two thousand dollars?

Yes, that's what she did. She saved two thousand dollars.

How much did she save?

Two thousand dollars, right. She saved two thousand dollars.

Did she save five thousand dollars?



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No, no, not five thousand dollars, not that much money.

Did she save two thousand dollars?

Yes, she did. That's how much money she saved, two thousand dollars. She saved two thousand dollars.

and she bought a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye.

Did she buy a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye?

Yes, yes, she did.

What did she do? Did she play tennis or buy a bright pink motorcycle?

She bought a bright pink motorcycle.

Okay, so who bought a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye? Jane?

No, it wasn't Jane.

Did Penelope buy a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye?

Yes, she did. It was Penelope.

What did she buy? Did she buy a house?

No, Penelope did not buy a house.

Did she buy a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye?

Yes, yes, she did. She bought a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye.

Did she buy a bright pink motorcycle that had got her attention?

Yeah, yes, she did. She bought a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye which is the same as saying she bought a bright pink motorcycle that had got her attention. If something draws your eye, it gets your attention.

Did she buy a bright pink motorcycle that she had seen before?



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Well, yes, when you say that something has drawn your eye, that means that you have seen it. It made you look at it, so she had bought a bright pink motorcycle that she had seen before.

Did she buy a bright pink motorcycle that she liked?

Yes, yes, we could say that. In this case when it said it had drawn her eye, it's the same thing as saying that it had got her attention, she had seen it before, and that she had liked it.

What color was the motorcycle?

That's right, bright pink. The motorcycle was bright pink.

Was the motorcycle light purple or bright pink?

It wasn't light purple, it was bright pink. A bright pink motorcycle.

Did she buy a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye?

Yes, she did. She bought a bright pink motorcycle that had really drawn her eye.

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Okay, so we have now finished the story which means that we are at the end of the mini-story lesson for the conversation "New School Year". Now it's time for you to tell the story on your own using the idioms that we covered. The idioms were "off to a rough start," "start from scratch," "made up her mind," "into photography," "day to day," and "drawn her eye." So now try to tell the story on your own. Remember, you can listen to this lesson as many times as you need to in order to become familiar with all the idioms and the story. Okay, good luck and we'll see you next time.