

Langues vivantes

Nouvelles pour apprendre l'Anglais

B1★C1



Exercices corrigés

Des nouvelles ludiques pour découvrir :

- Du vocabulaire thématique
- Des expressions du quotidien
- Des notions de grammaire
- Des points culturels



Éric Guntz



Nouvelles

et activités

LEÇON 1

SHALL WE DANCE?



B1 level

“Would you like tea or coffee, Sir?”

Cédric was startled¹, suddenly pulled out of his thoughts.

“Tea, please. No sugar,” he answered, trying to clear his mind.

“Thank you very much,” he added² politely as the staff member gave him the cup.

Cédric had been so lost in his own³ thoughts that he didn’t even notice⁴ that the lecture on Modern English Literature had finished, and the speaker had left the room.

To be honest, this was Cédric’s favorite time of day—those short tea breaks between lectures⁵ or workshops⁶. The London University Summer refresher course for French teachers of English had been going on for two weeks, and Cédric was getting bored. “I’m only 24,” he whispered⁷ to himself as the break ended. “Why did I even sign up⁸ for this course? I’ve only been teaching English for three years.”

The hours passed slowly, and the last grammar workshop on Modern Trends⁹ in English finally ended. Cédric hated the workshops even more than the lectures because they made them work in groups. He didn’t like group work and thought it was a waste of time.

It was now after 5:00 pm. As Cédric walked up¹⁰ the stairs to his room on the second floor, he thought about what to do in the evening. Maybe the pub? But then what? A restaurant? Or a movie at Leicester Square?

He stopped in front of his room—201—and looked for his key in his pocket.

“Excusez-moi. C’est vous qui occupez la chambre 201?”

Cédric jumped a little and turned to see who was speaking to him in French. About ten meters away, a young woman in a cleaning uniform stood¹¹ with a broom¹². She wasn’t one of his French colleagues from the course, and she was much prettier than any of them.

“Oui, c’est moi”, he replied¹³, but wished he had asked, “Why?” to keep the conversation going. He felt silly¹⁴ for not saying more.

Luckily, the young woman smiled and continued, *“Non, en fait, je vous demande parce que je me demandais à quoi vous ressemblez. Je fais toutes les chambres du deuxième étage et la vôtre est toujours la mieux rangée et la plus propre. Voilà ! Maintenant, je peux mettre un visage sur le client le plus soigneux de tout l’étage...”*

Cédric wasn't sure if the comment about his face was a compliment, but her warm smile made him feel better. He decided to ask a question.

"Vous êtes française et vous travaillez ici ?" he asked, trying to keep the conversation safe¹⁵.

"Oui, mais pour deux mois seulement. C'est surtout pour perfectionner mon anglais. Ensuite, je rentre en France."

"Super !" he said quickly, feeling awkward¹⁶. Why did he say *"Super !"*? Why not *"Fantastique !"* or something else?

He managed to ask, *"Et vous habitez où, en France ?"*

"Paris, du côté de la Place Clichy", she replied.

"Ah ! Place Clichy ! J'aime bien ce quartier, c'est très animé, même le soir et la nuit."

Suddenly, Cédric had an idea. His usually nervous thoughts¹⁷ became clear, and with some courage, he asked, *"Ça vous dirait d'aller boire un verre ce soir si vous êtes libre et pas trop fatiguée ?"*

He immediately regretted adding that last part. If she thought he was the tidiest¹⁸ guest¹⁹, why would she be too tired for a drink? He expected²⁰ her to say no.

But to his surprise, she said yes with a bigger smile. *"Ben oui, ça serait sympa. Je finis dans une heure. Si on dit 19 h en bas, c'est bon pour vous ?"*

"C'est parfait. Bon courage, alors, et à tout à l'heure !" Cédric replied.

Cédric finally entered his room, his mind racing²¹. What should he wear? Where should they go? And why did she say yes?

He had been out with girls before, but this felt different. What if he didn't know what to say? Should he suggest something after the pub? What do beautiful French girls like to do?

Despite²² his worries²³, Cédric was downstairs by²⁴ 7:00 pm. He waited for about five minutes, trying to look relaxed when she arrived. She was wearing jeans and a white top that suited²⁵ her slim²⁶ figure²⁷.

Cédric liked her casual outfit²⁸; he wasn't a fan of overly²⁹ dressed-up women. She had just the right amount of makeup to highlight³⁰ her features³¹.

"On y va ?" she asked with the same smile that had charmed him earlier.

"C'est parti. Au fait, tu t'appelles comment ?"

"Séverine. Et toi ?"

Cédric was happy she started using "tu," the informal "you" in French. It felt more comfortable now that they were going out together.

The conversation flowed³² easily throughout the evening. Cédric asked her about herself, which worked well because people love to talk about their own lives.

Séverine had an interesting story. She used to be a ballet dancer at the French Opéra Garnier until a knee injury³³ ended her career. She came to England to improve³⁴ her English, hoping it would help her in her next job. Cédric admired her beauty and grace. She was different from anyone he had ever met, with her delicate features, long blond hair, and deep blue eyes. Her slim figure and graceful movements showed her years of training. After the pub, they walked back to the residence. Cédric noticed she was shivering³⁵ a little, so he put his jacket over her shoulders. She didn't say anything, but her smile showed she appreciated it.

The next day, they met again for dinner at an Italian restaurant. Afterward, they took a walk around the city and then decided to see a movie. They didn't care much about the film, but they just wanted to spend more time together. Cédric didn't love the black-and-white movie they chose, but he was happy when Séverine rested³⁶ her head on his shoulder.

On the way back to their rooms, they heard music from a nearby³⁷ bar. Séverine, feeling playful, grabbed³⁸ Cédric's hand and said, "*On danse ?*"

Cédric wasn't a good dancer, especially next to a professional ballerina, and he felt nervous. But he tried a few dance steps, determined not to look silly.

Séverine noticed his discomfort and gently let go³⁹ of his hand. She twirled⁴⁰ gracefully by herself, her movements smooth⁴¹ and elegant. Cédric watched her with admiration.

The music filled⁴² the air, and even though Cédric's dancing was clumsy⁴³, he started to relax. He mirrored her steps, laughing with her. It felt like they were in their own little world.

When the song ended, they looked at each other—Cédric with new confidence⁴⁴, and Séverine with warmth⁴⁵ that made his heart race. He felt a connection between them, something special.

As they continued walking back, Cédric couldn't stop thinking about her. But he also remembered that his course was ending soon. He didn't want to leave her behind.

At the entrance to the residence, he hesitated, not wanting to say goodnight. But Séverine smiled and whispered, "*Bonne nuit, Cédric !*"

Her words felt like a promise, and Cédric held onto⁴⁶ that feeling as she walked away⁴⁷.

The next morning, after a restless⁴⁸ night, Cédric made a decision. He couldn't let this chance slip away⁴⁹.

Four days later, he was back at the ferry counter, his heart pounding⁵⁰ in anticipation.

"Please give me a ticket from Calais to Dover on the next passage available." He didn't know what the future held, but he was sure of one thing—he wasn't ready to let this story end.

Summary in English

Cédric, a young 24-year-old teacher, attends a training course in London but feels bored during the lectures. One day, he meets Séverine, a young French woman working as a cleaner to improve her English. Intrigued, Cédric invites her for a drink, and she accepts. They spend an enjoyable evening together, sharing their stories, and Séverine reveals she used to be a dancer at the Opéra Garnier until an injury ended her career. Their bond grows over the next few days, and Cédric begins to consider extending their connection beyond his time in London.

Résumé en français

Cédric, un jeune professeur de 24 ans, assiste à un stage à Londres mais s'ennuie pendant les conférences. Un jour, il rencontre Séverine, une jeune femme française travaillant comme femme de ménage pour améliorer son anglais. Charmé, Cédric l'invite à prendre un verre, et elle accepte. Ils passent une soirée agréable, partagent leurs histoires, et Séverine révèle qu'elle était danseuse à l'Opéra Garnier avant de devoir arrêter à cause d'une blessure. Leur complicité grandit au fil des jours, et Cédric commence à envisager de prolonger leur histoire, même après la fin de son séjour à Londres.



Consolidation lexicale

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 • to startle: <i>sursauter</i> | 26 • <i>mince</i> |
| 2 • to add: <i>ajouter</i> | 27 • (ici) <i>silhouette</i> |
| 3 • <i>propres, à lui</i> | 28 • <i>vêtements</i> |
| 4 • to notice: <i>remarquer</i> | 29 • <i>excessivement, trop</i> |
| 5 • <i>conférences</i> | 30 • to highlight: <i>souligner, accentuer</i> |
| 6 • <i>ateliers</i> | 31 • <i>traits</i> |
| 7 • to whisper: <i>murmurer</i> | 32 • to flow: <i>couler, se déverser</i> |
| 8 • to sign up: <i>s'inscrire</i> | 33 • <i>blessure</i> |
| 9 • <i>Tendances</i> | 34 • to improve: <i>améliorer</i> |
| 10 • to walk up: <i>monter</i> | 35 • to shiver: <i>trembler, frissonner</i> |
| 11 • to stand: <i>se tenir debout</i> | 36 • to rest: (ici) <i>poser</i> |
| 12 • <i>balai</i> | 37 • <i>proche</i> |
| 13 • to reply: <i>répondre</i> | 38 • to grab: <i>attraper</i> |
| 14 • <i>idiot, stupide</i> | 39 • to let go: <i>lâcher (prise)</i> |
| 15 • <i>sûre</i> | 40 • to twirl: <i>virevolter, tourner</i> |
| 16 • <i>maladroit, gauche</i> | 41 • (ici) <i>fluides</i> |
| 17 • <i>pensées</i> | 42 • to fill: <i>remplir</i> |
| 18 • <i>le plus soigneux</i> | 43 • <i>maladroit</i> |
| 19 • <i>client</i> | 44 • <i>confiance</i> |
| 20 • to expect: <i>s'attendre à</i> | 45 • <i>chaleur</i> |
| 21 • to race: <i>faire la course, foncer</i> | 46 • to hold onto: <i>s'accrocher à</i> |
| 22 • <i>malgré</i> | 47 • to walk away: <i>s'éloigner</i> |
| 23 • <i>inquiétudes</i> | 48 • <i>agitée</i> |
| 24 • (ici) <i>à, pour</i> | 49 • to slip away: <i>s'échapper</i> |
| 25 • to suit: <i>convenir, être à la bonne taille</i> | 50 • to pound: <i>marteler</i> |



Consolidation grammaticale

Present Simple vs. Present Continuous

► Rappel

En anglais, on utilise **le présent simple** et **le présent continu** pour parler du présent, mais ils ont des usages différents.

1 Le présent simple (*Present Simple*)

• On l'utilise pour

- Les habitudes et les routines : *Cédric drinks tea every afternoon.*
- Les faits et vérités générales : *Séverine works at the hotel for two months.*
- Les goûts, les opinions, les sentiments : *Cédric likes tea without sugar.*

• Formation

Verbe à la base verbale (+ -s à la 3^e personne du singulier)

- **He/she/it** → ajoute **-s** → *She works / He drinks / It lasts*
- Verbes d'état (*think, like, love, want, need, know...*) ne prennent **pas** le présent continu.

2 Le présent continu (*Present Continuous*)

• On l'utilise pour

- Une action **en cours** maintenant : *Cédric is waiting for Séverine in the lobby.*
- Une situation **temporaire** : *Séverine is working at the hotel this summer.*
- Un futur proche planifié : *They are meeting at 7 pm tonight.*

• Formation

Be (am/is/are) + verbe en -ing

- *I am walking / She is drinking / They are talking*

Attention ! Certains verbes comme **think, want, like, know, need** sont rarement utilisés au présent continu. On dit **I think** et pas **I am thinking** (sauf pour parler d'une réflexion en cours).



Exercices

► Vocabulaire

Lis chaque phrase et choisis le mot correct dans la liste pour compléter chaque phrase.

Word bank: *to whisper – to reply – to dance – to smile – jacket – to shiver – to grab – to walk – to notice – to laugh*

1. Cédric didn't when the lecture ended because he was lost in thought.
2. Séverine gave him a warm that made him feel more confident.
3. He decided to her hand as they left the bar.
4. She began to when Cédric tried a few clumsy steps.
5. He heard her something softly as they stood outside the residence.
6. Cédric wanted to something romantic, but he stayed quiet.
7. It was cold outside, and Séverine started to a little.
8. He offered her his to keep her warm.
9. "On danse?" she asked, inviting him to with her.
10. After the movie, they slowly back to the residence together.

► Grammaire

1. Mets le verbe entre parenthèses à la forme correcte : présent simple ou présent continu.

1. Cédric (not enjoy) the grammar workshops.
2. At the moment, Séverine (clean) the second floor.
3. Cédric often (drink) tea during the breaks.
4. She (not like) working late in the evening.
5. Right now, they (walk) back from the bar.
6. Séverine usually (start) work early.
7. Listen! Someone (play) music outside.
8. Cédric (think) about what to wear tonight.
9. Tonight, they (have) dinner at an Italian restaurant.
10. Séverine (wear) jeans and a white top this evening.



2. Choisis la bonne réponse (A ou B) pour compléter chaque phrase.

- [illegible]

Corrigé

► Vocabulaire

1. Cédric didn't **notice** when the lecture ended because he was lost in thought.
2. Séverine gave him a warm **smile** that made him feel more confident.
3. He decided to **grab** her hand as they left the bar.
4. She began to **laugh** when Cédric tried a few clumsy steps.
5. He heard her **whisper** something softly as they stood outside the residence.
6. Cédric wanted to **reply** something romantic, but he stayed quiet.
7. It was cold outside, and Séverine started to **shiver** a little.
8. He offered her his **jacket** to keep her warm.
9. "On danse?" she asked, inviting him to **dance** with her.
10. After the movie, they **walked** slowly back to the residence together.

► Grammaire

1.
 1. Cédric **doesn't enjoy** the grammar workshops.
 2. At the moment, Séverine **is cleaning** the second floor.
 3. Cédric often **drinks** tea during the breaks.
 4. She **doesn't like** working late in the evening.
 5. Right now, they **are walking** back from the bar.
 6. Séverine usually **starts** work early.
 7. Listen! Someone **is playing** music outside.
 8. Cédric **is thinking** about what to wear tonight.
 9. Tonight, they **are having** dinner at an Italian restaurant.
 10. Séverine **is wearing** jeans and a white top this evening.
2.
 1. a
 2. b
 3. a
 4. b
 5. a
 6. b
 7. b
 8. b
 9. b
 10. b



B2 level

“**W**ould you like tea or coffee, Sir?” Cédric was startled¹, pulled suddenly from his deep thoughts.

“Tea, please. No sugar,” he replied, trying to shake off² his drowsiness³. “Thank you very much,” he added politely after receiving the cup from the residence employee.

Cédric had been so lost in his thoughts that he hadn’t noticed that the lecture on Modern English Literature had ended and the speaker had quietly left.

To be honest, this was Cédric’s favorite time of the day—those brief, typically British tea breaks between lectures. The London University Summer refresher⁴ course for French teachers of English had been going on for two weeks, and Cédric was starting to feel increasingly bored. “I’m only 24,” he muttered⁵. “Why did I even enroll⁶ in this course? I’ve only been teaching English for three years.”

The day dragged on⁷, and finally, the last workshop on grammar finished. Cédric was relieved⁸, as he disliked workshops even more than lectures, especially the group work, which he found a waste of time.

It was now past 5:00 pm. As Cédric climbed the stairs to his room, he wondered how to spend the evening. A pub seemed like the easiest choice, but what after that? Maybe a restaurant or a movie?

He stopped in front of his room door—201—and searched for his key.

“Excusez-moi. C’est vous qui occupez la chambre 201?”

Cédric jumped and turned toward the voice, surprised to be addressed in French. About ten meters away stood a young woman in a cleaning uniform, holding a broom⁹. Cédric was sure she wasn’t one of his colleagues from the seminar. First, because of her uniform, and second—she was much prettier than the other women in the course.

“Oui, c’est moi,” he answered, instantly regretting not adding something to continue the conversation.

Luckily, the young woman smiled and continued, *“Non, en fait, je vous demande parce que je me demandais à quoi vous ressemblez. Je fais toutes les chambres du deuxième étage et la vôtre est toujours la mieux rangée et la plus propre. Voilà ! Maintenant, je peux mettre un visage sur le client le plus soigneux de tout l’étage...”*

Cédric wasn’t sure if the reference to his face was a compliment, but her warm smile reassured him. Emboldened¹⁰, he asked, “Vous êtes française et vous travaillez ici?”

"Oui, mais pour deux mois seulement. C'est surtout pour perfectionner mon anglais. Ensuite, je rentre en France."

"Super!" he blurted out¹¹, immediately regretting the word choice. Why not say '*Fantastique !*' or '*Merveilleux !*'?

He managed to ask, *"Et vous habitez où, en France ?"*

"Paris, du côté de la Place Clichy," she replied.

"Ah ! Place Clichy ! J'aime bien ce quartier, c'est très animé, même le soir et la nuit."

Suddenly, Cédric's thoughts aligned¹² perfectly, and he found himself asking, *"Ça vous dirait d'aller boire un verre ce soir si vous êtes libre et pas trop fatiguée?"*

He regretted that last part—why should she be too tired to have a drink after complimenting him? He braced¹³ for a polite refusal.

To his surprise, she accepted, smiling even more. *"Ben oui, ça serait sympa. Je finis dans une heure. Si on dit 19h en bas, c'est bon pour vous ?"*

"C'est parfait. Bon courage, alors, et à tout à l'heure !"

Cédric entered his room, his thoughts racing¹⁴. What should he wear? Where should they go? And above all, why hadn't she turned down¹⁵ his invitation?

Though he had been out with girls before, this felt different. What if he wasn't up to¹⁶ the task¹⁷? What if he ran out¹⁸ of things to say? Should he suggest going somewhere else after the pub? How do beautiful French girls like to spend their evenings?

Despite his worries, Cédric made it¹⁹ downstairs by 7:00 pm. He had been waiting for about five minutes—trying to look²⁰ eager²¹ but not too eager—when she arrived. She wore jeans and a white top that highlighted²² her delicate, slender²³ figure²⁴. Cédric appreciated her casual²⁵ style; he wasn't fond of overly²⁶ sophisticated women.

"On y va ?" she asked, smiling.

"C'est parti. Au fait, tu t'appelles comment ?"

"Séverine. Et toi ?"

Cédric was thrilled²⁷ she had naturally switched to the informal 'tu' in French. It felt more fitting²⁸ now that they were heading out²⁹ together.

To his relief³⁰, the conversation flowed easily. Despite his initial worries, Cédric felt comfortable with her. He realized asking her to talk about herself was a good strategy—people loved sharing their stories.

Séverine's story was fascinating. She had been a ballet dancer at the French Opéra Garnier until a knee injury³¹ ended her career. The injury left her

depressed, but she eventually³² decided to move on. She came to England to improve her English, knowing it would help in her future career.

Cédric couldn't help but admire her poise³³ and beauty. She was unlike anyone he had met—her delicate features³⁴, long blond hair, and deep blue eyes captivated him. Her graceful figure hinted³⁵ at years of training, and even her smallest movements seemed elegant.

After leaving the pub, they walked back to the residence. Cédric noticed Séverine shivering³⁶ in the evening chill³⁷, so he draped his jacket over her shoulders. She didn't say anything, but her smile spoke volumes³⁸ as they continued walking.

The next day, they met for dinner at an Italian restaurant on Carnaby Street. Afterward, they took a leisurely³⁹ stroll⁴⁰ and then went to a movie. They weren't really interested in the film; they just wanted to spend more time together. Cédric wasn't thrilled with the movie, but he felt content when Séverine rested her head on his shoulder.

As they walked back again, they heard music from a nearby bar. Séverine playfully⁴¹ took his hand and asked, "*On danse ?*"

Cédric hesitated. Dancing wasn't his strong point, especially not with a professional dancer. Despite his nerves, he risked a few tentative dance steps.

Séverine, sensing his discomfort, smiled and released⁴² his hand, twirling⁴³ gracefully on her own. Cédric watched in admiration as she continued dancing. The music swirled⁴⁴ around them, and Cédric found himself relaxing, laughing with her. It felt as if the world outside had melted⁴⁵ away, leaving just the two of them.

When the song ended, they paused, catching their breath. They looked at each other—Cédric with newfound confidence, and Séverine with warmth that made his heart race. He felt a connection, something beyond⁴⁶ words, something he wasn't ready to let go of.

They walked back in comfortable silence. Cédric found himself glancing⁴⁷ at Séverine, memorizing every detail of her face. She seemed lost in thought, her fingers occasionally brushing against his as they walked side by side.

Unfortunately, reality soon returned as Cédric remembered his course was ending. The thought of leaving her behind weighed⁴⁸ heavily on him, especially since Séverine would stay in London for another two weeks. He had just started to know her, and the idea of parting felt unbearable⁴⁹.

As they reached the residence, Cédric hesitated, not wanting to say goodnight. But Séverine leaned in and whispered, "*Bonne nuit, Cédric !*" Her voice was soft, almost like a promise, and Cédric clung⁵⁰ to it as he watched her disappear down the hallway.

The next morning, after a restless night, Cédric made a decision. He couldn't let this beautiful adventure slip away. He had only been back in France for a few days when he found himself at the ferry counter again.

"Please give me a ticket from Calais to Dover on the next passage available." He didn't know what would happen next, but one thing was certain: he wasn't ready to let this story end just yet.



Consolidation lexicale

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1 • to startle: <i>sursauter</i> | 25 • <i>décontractée</i> |
| 2 • to shake off: <i>se débarrasser</i> | 26 • <i>excessivement, trop</i> |
| 3 • <i>somnolence</i> | 27 • <i>ravi, enchanté</i> |
| 4 • <i>remise à niveau</i> | 28 • <i>(ici) convenable, approprié</i> |
| 5 • to mutter: <i>marmonner,</i>
<i>grommeler</i> | 29 • to head out: <i>(ici) sortir</i> |
| 6 • to enroll: <i>s'inscrire</i> | 30 • <i>soulagement</i> |
| 7 • to drag on: <i>trainer en longueur,</i>
<i>s'éterniser</i> | 31 • <i>blessure</i> |
| 8 • <i>soulagé</i> | 32 • <i>finale</i> |
| 9 • <i>balai</i> | 33 • <i>(ici) posture, maintien</i> |
| 10 • <i>enhardi</i> | 34 • <i>traits</i> |
| 11 • to blurt out: <i>laisser échapper,</i>
<i>lâcher</i> | 35 • to hint: <i>faire allusion, laisser</i>
<i>entendre, insinuer</i> |
| 12 • to align: <i>s'aligner</i> | 36 • to shiver: <i>trembler</i> |
| 13 • to brace: <i>(ici) se préparer</i> | 37 • <i>(ici) froid</i> |
| 14 • to race: <i>faire la course, foncer</i> | 38 • to grab: <i>attraper</i> |
| 15 • to turn down: <i>refuser, rejeter</i> | 39 • <i>tranquille, paisible</i> |
| 16 • to be up to: <i>être à la hauteur</i> | 40 • <i>ballade, promenade</i> |
| 17 • <i>tâche</i> | 41 • <i>d'une façon enjouée</i> |
| 18 • to run out: <i>manquer, être à court</i> | 42 • to release: <i>(ici) relâcher</i> |
| 19 • to make it: <i>(ici) réussir, parvenir</i> | 43 • to twirl: <i>tournoyer</i> |
| 20 • to look: <i>(ici) paraître</i> | 44 • to swirl: <i>tourbillonner, virevolter</i> |
| 21 • <i>impatient</i> | 45 • to melt: <i>fondre</i> |
| 22 • to highlight: <i>souligner, accentuer</i> | 46 • <i>au-delà</i> |
| 23 • <i>élancée</i> | 47 • to glance: <i>jeter un coup d'œil</i> |
| 24 • <i>(ici) silhouette</i> | 48 • to weigh: <i>peser</i> |
| | 49 • <i>insupportable</i> |
| | 50 • to cling: <i>s'accrocher, s'agripper</i> |



Consolidation grammaticale

Les temps du passé (révision)

Rappel

En anglais, on utilise trois temps principaux pour parler du passé :

- 1 **Past Simple (prétérit)** → Action terminée dans le passé, souvent avec une date ou un marqueur de temps précis.

- **Formation**

Sujet + verbe en -ed (ou forme irrégulière)

→ Exemples

- *Yesterday, they went to a bar.*
Hier, ils sont allés dans un bar.
- *She worked in London for two months.*
Elle a travaillé à Londres pendant deux mois.

- 2 **Present Perfect** → Action passée, avec un lien avec le présent (résultat ou expérience).

- **Formation**

Sujet + have/has + participe passé

→ Exemples

- *He has never visited London before.*
Il n'a jamais visité Londres auparavant.
- *She has just finished work.*
Elle vient de finir son travail.

- 3 **Past Perfect** → Action passée antérieure à une autre action passée.

- **Formation**

Sujet + had + participe passé

→ Exemples

- *By the time he arrived, she had already left.*
Quand il est arrivé, elle était déjà partie.
- *He had never danced before that night.*
Il n'avait jamais dansé avant cette nuit-là.

Astuce

- Si l'action est terminée et datée → **Past Simple**
- Si l'action a un lien avec le présent → **Present Perfect**
- Si une action précède une autre action passée → **Past Perfect**

→ Exemple combiné

- *Cédric had never danced before he met Séverine, but since then, he has tried several times.* (Cédric n'avait jamais dansé avant de rencontrer Séverine, mais depuis, il a essayé plusieurs fois.)



Exercices

► Vocabulaire

Match each word or phrase in **bold** with its correct definition. Write the correct letter next to each number.

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. to blurt out • | • a. to prepare yourself mentally for something difficult or unpleasant |
| 2. to brace (oneself) • | • b. a quick look |
| 3. tentative • | • c. to speak suddenly, without thinking |
| 4. to swirl • | • d. calm, confident behavior and graceful movement |
| 5. poise • | • e. turning or spinning in circles |
| 6. to be up to (something) • | • f. having a thin and elegant body shape |
| 7. leisurely • | • g. to hold tightly or refuse to let go |
| 8. slender • | • h. done in a relaxed and unhurried way |
| 9. to glance • | • i. not certain, hesitant |
| 10. to cling • | • j. to be capable of doing something difficult or demanding |

► Grammaire

1. Fill in the blanks with the correct tense: *Past Simple, Present Perfect or Past Perfect.*

- Séverine (not return) to France since she started working in London.
- Before that evening, Cédric (never dance) with anyone in public.
- They (share) a lot about their lives during that long walk.
- She (hurt) her foot two weeks earlier and still wore a bandage.
- Cédric (already write) to his parents to tell them about his trip.
- When he (see) her outside, he (not expect) to feel so nervous.
- I think he (change) a lot since the beginning of the summer.



8. After they (leave) the bar, they walked in silence for a few minutes.
9. She (never tell) anyone that she was a dancer.
10. The night they met, Cédric (just arrive) in London.

2. Choose the correct tense for each sentence: *Past Simple (A)*, *Present Perfect (B)*, or *Past Perfect (C)*.

1. Cédric English classes for two weeks before he met her.
a. studied b. has studied c. had studied
2. They their first conversation near the coffee machine.
a. had b. have had c. had had
3. She that he was different from the others.
a. has felt b. felt c. had felt
4. They to that same bar several times since.
a. went b. have been c. had gone
5. Cédric a little more confident lately.
a. felt b. has felt c. had felt
6. She to be back in London for the autumn.
a. has planned b. had planned c. planned
7. He her about the final test just before dinner.
a. told b. has told c. had told
8. By the time she smiled, he his question.
a. asked b. has asked c. had asked
9. They each other only a few days earlier.
a. met b. had met c. have met
10. I think she more open since that evening.
a. was b. has been c. had been



Expression

What are the main reasons for Cédric's dissatisfaction with the course, and how does his encounter with Séverine change his perspective?

Corrigé

► Vocabulaire

1. to blurt out → c
2. to brace (oneself) → a
3. tentative → i
4. to swirl → e
5. poise → d
6. to be up to (something) → j
7. leisurely → h
8. slender → f
9. to glance → b
10. to cling → g

► Grammaire

1. 1. Séverine **has not returned** to France since she started working in London.
2. Before that evening, Cédric **had never danced** with anyone in public.
3. They **shared** a lot about their lives during that long walk.
4. She **had hurt** her foot two weeks earlier and still wore a bandage.
5. Cédric **has already written** to his parents to tell them about his trip.
6. When he **saw** her outside, he **had not expected** to feel so nervous.
7. I think he **has changed** a lot since the beginning of the summer.
8. After they **had left** the bar, they walked in silence for a few minutes.
9. She **had never told** anyone that she was a dancer.
10. The night they met, Cédric **had just arrived** in London.

- | | | |
|---------|------|-------|
| 2. 1. c | 5. b | 9. b |
| 2. a | 6. c | 10. b |
| 3. b | 7. a | |
| 4. b | 8. c | |

► Expression

At first, Cédric is dissatisfied with the summer refresher course. The lectures are dull, and the workshops feel pointless, making him question his decision to enroll. His days in London follow a repetitive routine, leaving him uninspired. However, everything changes when he meets Séverine, a French woman working at the residence. Her warmth and confidence captivate him, and as they spend time together, Cédric begins to see London in a new light.

Their connection grows through simple moments—a drink at the pub, a walk through the city, a dance outside a bar. Séverine's story, marked by resilience after an injury ended her ballet career, inspires him. She teaches him to embrace spontaneity and take risks. For the first time in weeks, he feels alive.

As his course nears its end, Cédric realizes he is not ready to leave her behind. The certainty he lacked before now drives him to act. Days after returning to France, he makes a bold decision. At the ferry counter, he buys a ticket back to London, choosing to follow the possibilities that lie ahead rather than settle for regret.

 C1 level

“**W**ould you like tea or coffee, Sir?”

Cédric was startled¹, abruptly pulled from the drifting tide² of his thoughts.

“Tea, please. No sugar,” he replied, trying to shake off the haze³ in his mind. “Thank you very much,” he added politely after the residence employee handed him the cup.

Cédric had been so deeply absorbed in his reflections that he hadn’t even noticed that the lecture on Modern English Literature from the 1970s to the Present had ended, and the speaker had quietly left the room.

This was Cédric’s favorite time of the day—those brief, quintessentially⁴ British mid-morning and afternoon tea breaks between two lectures or workshops. The London University Summer refresher course for French teachers of English—officially titled as such—had been going on for two weeks, and he was starting to feel increasingly bored. “I’m only 24,” he muttered⁵ to himself as the break quickly neared its end. “Why did I even enroll in this course? What made me think I needed a refresher when I’ve been teaching English for just three years?”

Hour after hour dragged by, and the grammar workshop on Modern Trends in the Use of the Definite Article—thankfully the last one of the day—finally concluded. Cédric despised⁶ the workshops even more than the lectures because the instructors had the unfortunate idea—in his opinion—of making them work in groups. Cédric loathed⁷ group work. He found it a complete waste of time, unable to zone out⁸ as he did during most of the lectures.

It was now past 5:00 pm. As Cédric climbed the stairs to his second-floor room, he wondered how to spend the evening. The pub seemed like an obvious first choice—an easy way to kill an hour or two. But then what? A restaurant, perhaps? Or maybe catching a movie at Leicester Square?

He stopped in front of his room door—201—and searched his pocket for the key.

“Excusez-moi. C’est vous qui occupez la chambre 201?”

Cédric jumped slightly and turned toward the voice, surprised and a little intrigued to be addressed in French. About thirty feet away stood a young woman he hadn’t noticed before. She wore a simple cleaning uniform, a small broom clutched⁹ in one hand. Cédric was immediately sure she wasn’t one of his French colleagues attending the English teacher training seminar. First, because of her attire¹⁰, and second—and far more relevant¹¹ to him—because she was far more attractive than any of the female attendees¹² in the course.

"Oui, c'est moi," he answered, instantly regretting that he hadn't added a simple "Why?" to keep the conversation going. But—stupid as he felt—he didn't.

Luckily for Cédric, the young woman continued with a smile, "*Non, en fait, je vous demande parce que je me demandais à quoi vous ressembliez. Je fais toutes les chambres du deuxième étage et la vôtre est toujours la mieux rangée et la plus propre. Voilà ! Maintenant, je peux mettre un visage sur le client le plus soigneux de tout l'étage...*"

Cédric wasn't entirely sure if the reference to his face was something to be pleased about, but the warm smile on her lips reassured him. Emboldened¹³, he decided to respond with a question.

"*Vous êtes française et vous travaillez ici ?*" he asked, steering¹⁴ the conversation toward safer territory.

"*Oui, mais pour deux mois seulement. C'est surtout pour perfectionner mon anglais. Ensuite, je rentre en France.*"

"Super!" he blurted out¹⁵, immediately cringing¹⁶ internally. 'Super?' Really? Why not 'Fantastique!' or even 'Merveilleux!' while he was at it?

He managed to ask, "*Et vous habitez où, en France ?*"

"*Paris, du côté de la Place Clichy,*" she replied.

"*Ah ! Place Clichy ! J'aime bien ce quartier, c'est très animé, même le soir et la nuit.*"

Without warning, something unprecedented happened in Cédric's mind. His thoughts, usually tangled¹⁷ and hesitant in such situations, somehow aligned almost perfectly, and with a sudden burst¹⁸ of audacity, he found himself asking, "*Ça vous dirait d'aller boire un verre ce soir si vous êtes libre et pas trop fatiguée ?*"

He promptly regretted that last bit. Hadn't she just praised him as the most meticulous guest on the floor? Why, then, should she be too tired to have a drink? He braced¹⁹ himself for a polite refusal.

To his astonishment, she accepted, her smile broadening. "*Ben oui, ça serait sympa. Je finis dans une heure. Si on dit 19h en bas, c'est bon pour vous ?*"

"*C'est parfait. Bon courage, alors, et à tout à l'heure !*"

Cédric finally entered his room, his thoughts racing faster than ever. What should he wear? Where should they go? And above all, why hadn't she turned down²⁰ his invitation?

Though he had been out with a few girls before, this situation felt different. What if he wasn't up to the task? What if he ran out of things to talk about? Should he suggest going somewhere else after the pub? How do beautiful French girls like to spend their evenings?