

"Snowman" by Sia: Present Continuous Focus

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Primary MUSIC+ Component: Skills+

Secondary Components: Motivation+, Understanding+, Interaction+, Creativity+

Song Used: "Snowman" by Sia

Description

This immersive session transmutes a festive visual narrative into a dynamic laboratory for grammatical precision. By bypassing the future-tense lyrics and focusing strictly on the visual "now," learners are guided to master the Present Continuous through the "Freeze Frame" technique. From decoding the urgency of a melting timeline to broadcasting live commentary on a daring rescue, students bridge the gap between static observation and fluid linguistic expression, turning a simple holiday video into a complex exercise in real-time narration.

Details

- **Language level:** A2 (High) / B1 (Low)
- **Learner type:** Teens and Adults
- **Skills:** Visual Description, Story Sequencing, Speaking (Narration), Grammar Accuracy (Present Continuous)
- **Topic:** Winter, Climate, Friendship, Rescue, Action Verbs
- **Materials:** [google slides](#), [Student Worksheet](#), [Assessment Pack](#)
- **Duration:** 50-60 minutes

Objectives

- Distinguish between present actions and future promises by contrasting video visuals with song lyrics.
- Construct accurate Present Continuous sentences to describe specific "frozen" moments in a narrative.
- Sequence visual events to map a coherent story timeline.
- Narrate a live action scene using appropriate pacing and grammatical structure in a role-play context.

Step-by-step Instructions

Step 1 – The Danger Scale – Motivation+ (7 min)



What is happening?

A. It is sleeping.
B. It is melting.
C. It is freezing.

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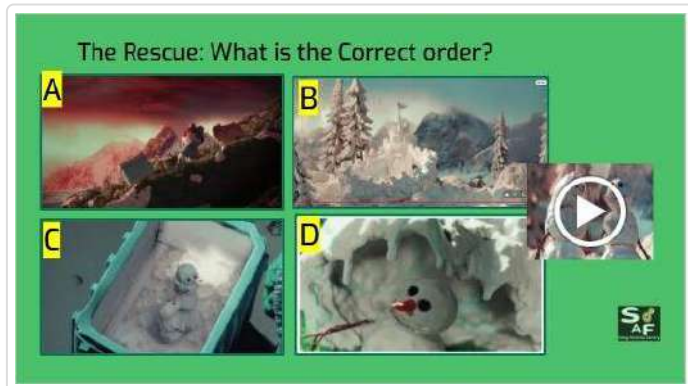
First, prime students with the vocabulary of "melting" and "heat" before introducing a snowy context.

Display Slide 1. Ask the class: "Look at the screen. What is the problem in these pictures? What is the ice cream doing right now?"

Students should choose the correct sentence from the options provided on the screen.

Elicit key vocabulary such as *melting*, *sweating*, *dripping*, and *disappearing* from their responses.

Step 2 – The Rescue Mission – Understanding+ (10 min)



Next, prepare students for a video that tells a clear story without words, requiring them to map the narrative before analyzing grammar.

Display Slide 2, "The Silent Story," showing four mixed-up screenshots from the video. These include:

- A. They are building a snow castle on a mountain. (End)
- B. The snowmen are sweating and frowning. (Beginning)
- C. The girl is pulling a wagon through green grass. (Middle)
- D. She is putting ice in a cooler. (Middle)

Instruct the class: "This video tells a story about a rescue. Watch the video. Put these four scenes in the correct order: 1, 2, 3, 4."

Play the music video.

Students will then sequence the story on their worksheet, aiming for the correct order: D → C → A → B.

Step 3 – The Freeze Frame Hunt – Skills+ (15 min)

Now, shift focus to grammar by pausing the video to "trap" the action, forcing the use of the Present Continuous tense.

Display Slide 3, "The Freeze Frame," which shows a still image of the girl pulling the wagon up a green hill.

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Highlight the grammar focus: "Present Continuous: Action NOW = am / is / are + verb-ing."

Ask the question: "What is she doing?"

Explain to students: "We are going to freeze the video. You must write exactly what is happening in that second. Not 'she pulls,' but 'she IS pulling.'"

Play the video and pause at specific timestamps (as indicated in the Asset Kit).

Students will then complete the "Action Log" on their worksheet, describing the actions in Present Continuous.

Step 4 – The Grammar Trap (Lyric vs. Video) – Understanding+ & Skills+ (5 min)

Display Slide 4, titled "The Grammar Trap," which presents a text comparison on screen. The screen shows:

- Lyrics: "I am never leaving." (Future Promise)
- Video: "She is leaving the house." (Action Now) Guide students: "Look at the 'Grammar Trap' box on your worksheet. Read the lyrics. Sia says 'I am never leaving' to mean a promise for the future. But look at the video. She is walking out the door right now." Emphasize: "Today, we focus on the VIDEO action." Students will read the lyrics in the box on their worksheet. Then, they will circle "FUTURE" next to the text and "NOW" next to the video icon to physically confirm the rule.

Step 5 – The False Witness – Interaction+ (10 min)

For this activity, groups will test each other's memory of the actions using a "Two Truths and a Lie" mechanic.

Display Slide 5, "The False Witness," featuring a detective icon.

Explain the task: "Watch the clip closely. Create a Quiz: Write 3 sentences about what is happening right now. The Twist: 2 sentences must be TRUE. 1 sentence must be FALSE."

Provide an example:

- A) The girl is wearing a hat. (True)
- B) The snowmen are holding hands. (True)
- C) The dog is sleeping. (False)

Instruct the groups: "You are all witnesses. Watch the 'Rescue Scene' (1:30–2:00). In your groups, write three sentences describing the action. Two must be true, one must be a lie. Use the Present Continuous!"

Play the 30-second clip for everyone to watch.

Allow groups 3 minutes to write their "False Witness" list.

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Then, challenge Group A to read their sentences to Group B, who must identify the lie (e.g., "The dog isn't sleeping! It is running!").

Step 6 – The Live Commentary – Creativity+ (13 min)



Finally, students will combine their observations into a cohesive narrative script.

Display Slide 6, "The Voiceover," with a microphone icon.

Explain the task: "You are a TV Reporter. Scene: The Great Escape. Script: 'Breaking News! The sun is coming out. The snowmen are...'"

Instruct the class: "You are reporting live. Write 4 sentences to describe the escape scene. Then, narrate it while I play the video silently."

Students will write their scripts, focusing on using the target grammar (Present Continuous).

Invite volunteers to read their scripts aloud over the silent video, bringing their creative narratives to life.

Snowman Worksheet Answer Key Part A: The Story Sequence (Correct Order)
[3] She pulls the wagon on the green grass. [4] The snowmen build a castle in the cold. [1] The sun shines and the snowmen start sweating. [2] She puts the snowmen inside a cooler. Part B: The Freeze Frame Log 1:10 (The Box): She is packing ice. 1:55 (The Hill): It is helping the girl. 2:10 (The Box): They are waving their hands. 2:30 (The Castle): They are dancing. Part C: The False Witness (Examples) (Student answers will vary. Here are examples based on the "Rescue Scene" clip) (True): The girl is wearing a red hat. (True): The dog is running next to the wagon. (False): The snowmen are eating ice cream. (False - they are melting!) Part D: THE GRAMMAR TRAP THE LYRIC: "I'm never leaving" → [FUTURE PROMISE] (Reason: She is promising loyalty/never to abandon him in the future.) THE VIDEO: (The girl is walking out the door) → [HAPPENING NOW] (Reason: She is physically performing the action of leaving the house right now.) Part E: The Breaking News Script (Suggested answers using Present Continuous) Reporter: "We are live at the scene! The weather is getting hot. Right now, the girl is running (from the sun). She is carrying the cooler. The snowmen are hiding (inside the box). They are looking for a cold place. Back to you in the studio!"

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