



Reading Skill: Identifying the sequence of events

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Some questions test your ability to figure out the time order of the events that happened. There are three steps to answering such questions:

- 1** Read the question carefully and locate the related parts in the text.
- 2** Highlight all the time order words, including adverbs of sequence and time markers that give you information about time. Try to understand the sequence of the events.
- 3** Study the options carefully and answer the question according to the correct time order.

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Below are some common time order words.

e.g.

not long ago

at the beginning

after a while

as soon as

afterwards

in the end

until

meanwhile

Give it a try!

e.g. What is the correct order of the following events?

- (1) The wolf pretended to be kind to the sheep.
- (2) The sheep was saved and she had learnt a lesson.
- (3) The sheep was cheated by the wolf and was in danger.
- (4) A wolf saw a sheep and he wanted to eat her.

- A. (4) → (3) → (2) → (1) B. (4) → (1) → (3) → (2)
- C. (1) → (4) → (3) → (2) D. (1) → (2) → (4) → (3)

At the beginning of the fable, it is mentioned that the wolf saw the sheep when he was hunting and he considered her as his perfect meal. Therefore, **(4) is the first event**. Then the wolf asked the sheep to come to the grassland under the cliff and tried to eat her. **This is (3)**. However, the sheep thought, **'Not long ago, the wolf was still very kind to me!'** It means before the wolf tried to eat her, he pretended to be kind to her. In other words, **(1) comes before (3)**. **In the end**, the elephant saved the sheep, who finally understood she shouldn't believe in others' words easily. **(2) is therefore the last event**.