

Using Verb Tense

Use this worksheet to practice what is discussed in

- **Information Sheet 3: Using Verb Tense.**

Task

- Step 1. Read the paragraph below.
 - Step 2. Underline all verbs that are declined.
 - Step 3. Answer the questions on the next page.
- The sentences have been numbered for convenience.

Paragraph adapted from: <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0206778>

Taking a deeper look: Quantifying the differences in fish assemblages between shallow and mesophotic temperate rocky reefs

Williams, J., Jordan, A., Harasti, D. Davies, Pl, Ingleton, T. 2019. *PLOS One*.

1) The spatial distribution of a species assemblage is strongly determined by habitat and physical conditions [1,2], and in the marine environment, depth is an important factor [3–5]. 2) On the inner continental shelf, the decreased light conditions with increasing water depth result in a change from macroalgal to sessile invertebrate dominated habitat composition [6,7]. 3) In temperate waters, this change occurs at depths of around 20–30 m, although variations occur reflecting localised conditions [8–10]. 4) To date, much of the research on rocky reefs on the inner shelf has focussed on reefs in depths less than 20m, reflecting the widespread use of scuba when conducting surveys. 5) There are few standardised tools to quantitatively survey fish at greater depths. 6) This is despite the significant range of pressures on deeper rocky reefs across the continental shelf, such as commercial and recreational fishing that target reef-associated species [11–13]. 7) In recent decades, there has been anecdotal evidence that recreational fishers have an increased technical capacity such as side-scan or multibeam sonar and electric reels and are, therefore, able to target deeper reefs. 8) Thus, with increasing recreational fishing activity at these depths, it is important we gain a better understanding of the abundance and diversity of fishes at depths >30m.

Questions

- 1) Which verbs did you find and what tense was used?
- 2) Current practice in most academic writing appears to accept the present tense unless there is a good reason for not doing so. In the text above, can you identify the reasons for not using the present tense in some sentences?

Answers

Question 1)

Sentence number	Verb	Tense
1.	a) <i>is determined</i> b) <i>is</i>	a) present, b) present
2.	<i>result</i>	present
3.	a) <i>occurs</i> b) <i>occur</i>	a) present, b) present
4.	<i>has focussed</i>	Present perfect
5.	<i>are</i>	present
6.	a) <i>is</i> b) <i>target</i>	a) present, b) present
7.	a) <i>has been</i> b) <i>have</i> c) <i>are</i>	a) present perfect, b) present, c) present
8.	a) <i>is</i> b) <i>gain</i>	a) present, b) present

Question 2

Potential reasons for not using the present tense

Sentence 4: the use of the phrase “*To date*” requires present perfect.

Sentence 7: the use of the phrase “*In recent decades*” – in particular the use of the word “*recent*” – requires present perfect. If the authors had written “*In past decades*”, they could have also used the simple past “... *there was anecdotal evidence that recreational fishers had ...*” because the time period is complete.