

Using Verbs Correctly

In the following passages from *Rip Van Winkle*, by Washington Irving, some of the verbs have been deliberately omitted. Supply the appropriate tense for each missing verb.

In that same village, and in one of these very houses, there lived, many years since, while the country was yet a province of Great Britain, a simple, good-natured fellow, of the name of Rip Van Winkle. He (1) [be] _____ a descendant of the Van Winkles who figured so gallantly in the chivalrous days of Peter Stuyvesant, and (2) [accompany] _____ him to the siege of Fort Christina. He (3) [inherit] _____, however, but little of the martial character of his ancestors. I have observed that he was a simple, good-natured man; he was, moreover, a kind neighbor and an obedient, henpecked husband.

Certain it is that he was a great favorite among all the goodwives of the village, who took his part in all family squabbles; and never (4) [fail] _____, whenever they talked those matters over in their evening gossipings, to lay all the blame on Dame Van Winkle. The children of the village, too, would shout with joy whenever he (5) [approach] _____. He assisted at their sports, made their playthings, (6) [teach] _____ them to fly kites and shoot marbles, and told them long stories of ghosts, witches, and Indians. Whenever he went dodging about the village, he was surrounded by a troop of them, hanging on his skirts, (7) [clamber] _____ on his back, and playing a thousand tricks on him; and not a dog (8) [bark] _____ at him throughout the neighborhood.

The great error in Rip's composition was a strong dislike of all kinds of profitable labor. It (9) [not be] _____ from the want of perseverance; for he would sit on a wet rock, with a rod as long and heavy as a lance, and fish all day without a murmur, even though he should not be encouraged by a single nibble. He would carry a fowling piece on his shoulder for hours together, trudging through woods and swamps, and up hill and down dale, to shoot a few squirrels or wild pigeons. He (10) [not refuse] _____ to assist a neighbor even in the roughest toil, and was a foremost man at all country frolics for husking Indian corn, or building stone fences; the women of the village, too, (11) [use] _____ to employ him to run their errands, and to do such little odd jobs as their less obliging husbands would not do for them. In a word, Rip was ready to attend to anybody's business but his own; but as to doing family duty, and keeping his farm in order, he (12) [find] _____ it impossible.

