

Before watching:

- Do you usually remember your dreams? Tell your partner about the last dream you remember.
 - Now tell the class about your partner's dream.
 - What verb forms were used while you talked about your dreams? Are there other ways of describing them?
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While watching:

1) In the passage you'll now watch, Chandler is telling his friends about a dream he's had. First, as you watch it for the first time, choose the sentence below which best summarizes Chandler's dream:

- a) Chandler was talking to his mom in his school's cafeteria
- b) Chandler was talking on the phone in his school's cafeteria
- c) Chandler was naked in his school's cafeteria

2) Before you watch it for the second time, try and fill in the blanks in the transcript below with the correct forms of the verbs in parentheses:

"So back in high school I _____ (be) standing in the middle of the cafeteria and I _____ (realize) I _____ (be) totally naked. Then I _____ (look) down and I _____ (realize) there _____ (be) a phone... there. That's right! All of a sudden, the phone _____ (start) to ring. Now I _____ (not know) what to do, everybody _____ (start) looking at me. Finally, I _____ (figure) I'd better answer it, and it _____ (turn) out it _____ (be) my mother, which _____ (be) very, very weird because she never _____ (call) me."

Now watch again and check.

After watching:

- Again in pairs, try and tell your friends about a different dream you had and remember well, but try to use all the verbs in the present like Chandler did.
- Now tell the class about your partner's dream.



Teacher's notes

Main Aims: *this activity aims at presenting and/or practicing Historical Present. The function is talking about your dreams (it can be used, therefore, as a lead-in to a unit, reading text or listening passage on the topic of dreams).*

Secondary Aims: *there'll be plenty of speaking practice, as well as listening for gist (while watching activity 1) and listening for specific information (while watching activity 2).*

DVD information: *disc 1, episode 1 (Pilot: The One Where It All Began), from 00:01:33 to 00:02:23 (50-second snippet).*

Level: *at least Pre-Intermediate. Students have to have mastered both the Simple Past and the Simple Present.*

Suggested plan

Lead-in:

- *Have students discuss first question in the Before Watching section in pairs – 3'*
- *Students take turns to tell the group about their partner's dream. – 10' (it can take less time depending on how many students you have in class. If you do it with a one-to-one student, pair up with him and use Historical Present!)*
- *Delayed feedback: while students recount their partners' dreams, make notes of mistakes worth correcting. At this point in the class, write a few of their mistakes on the board and give them a chance to try and correct them. – Check with the group) – 5'*

While-watching:

- *Ask students if they like watching Friends. Elicit whether or not they know who Chandler is; present him to them in case they don't (a picture will do). – 1'*
- *Do skimming activity (1) – students check in pairs – check with the whole group – 5'*
- *Do scanning activity (2) – students first fill gaps in pairs/groups – watch video again to check – check with the whole group. – 7'*
- *There's a good chance students will have filled in the blanks with the verbs with the Simple Past form of the verbs in parentheses. Ask them why Chandler probably chose to use the Simple Present. Possible explanation below:*

When the reference point of the [narration](#) is not the present moment but some point in the past, we have the '**historical present**,' in which a writer tries to parachute the reader into the midst of an unfolding story (*Genevieve lies awake in bed. A floorboard creaks . . .*). The historical present is also often used in the setup of a joke, as in *A guy walks into a bar with a duck on his head . . .* "

(Steven Pinker, *The Stuff of Thought*. Viking, 2007), found at <http://grammar.about.com>

After watching:

- *Students talk about another dream they've had, now using historical present, and repeat Lead-in procedure while teacher monitors.*

- *Delayed feedback*

Suggestion:

- *If you can use a laptop instead of a DVD player, this will be helpful. It is not usually easy using most DVD players to navigate through the episode to find such specific parts like 00:01:33, for example. It's far easier using Windows Media Player or similar software.*

Please send your questions and suggestions to higor@higorcavalcante.com, and thank you very much for having downloaded this activity. 😊