Short story: The leg of lamb by Roald Dahl

1. The following excerpts all come from the short story. They are jumbled up. Try to arrange them in the correct order.

- "For God’s sake," he said, hearing her, but not turning round, "don't make supper for me. I'm going out."

- "Tired, darling?"
  "Yes," he said. "I'm tired."

- "It's the old story," he said. "Get the weapon and you've got the man."

- "This is going to be a bit of a shock to you, I'm afraid," he said.

- When the clock said ten minutes to five, she began to listen, and a few moments later, punctually as always, she heard the tyres on the gravel outside...

- "Personally, I think it's right here on the premises."

- All the old love and longing for him welled up inside her, and she ran over to him, knelt down beside him, and began to cry her heart out.

- "Quick! Come quick! Patrick's dead!"

- Soon, other men began to come into the house. First a doctor, then two detectives, one of whom she knew by name.

2. Answer each question with complete sentences and fully explaining your answer.

1. What sort of story does the title lead us to expect?

2. What does the first paragraph of the story suggest about Mary Maloney’s relationship with her husband?

3. What do we learn about Mary Maloney in the second paragraph?

4. What sort of household do we imagine the Maloney home to be? How does Dahl evoke a homely atmosphere and why is the sense of domestic peace recalled at the end of the tale?

5. Before the husband breaks the news, what three clues are there that this particular evening is going to be a break with routine?
6. What does Mr. Maloney announce? What reaction would you expect from Mrs. Maloney?
7. Do you think the murder was “premeditated” or a “crime of passion”?
8. Are Mrs. Maloney’s reactions and actions after the murder believable? How are we first informed that she is planning to establish an alibi, and what is that alibi to be?
9. How does Mary Maloney create the alibi?
10. Is it reasonable that the policemen should be fooled by what she says (remember she is a policeman’s wife) or do you find the whole thing rather unlikely?
11. Do you find Mary Maloney to be very cunning?
12. Why does the writer concentrate on such detail as “their voices thick and sloppy because their mouths were full of meat”?
13. This story ends with dramatic irony. Explain the dramatic irony?
14. Mrs. Maloney commits what her lawyer might call “a crime of passion”. Does that justify her crime and what would your verdict be if you were a jury member at her trial?
15. Do you think Mary Maloney is a “normal” person? Did she react in a normal way? Why or why not?

Past Perfect

El Pasado Perfecto en el idioma inglés es un tiempo verbal que se utiliza para referirnos a una acción que tuvo lugar en un momento anterior a otra acción, aunque ambas hayan sucedido en el pasado estableciendo un orden entre ellas, por ejemplo:

The film had finished when she arrived at the cinema.
La película había terminado cuando ella llegó al cine.
(Primera acción: la película había terminado
Segunda acción: ella llegó al cine)

Sarah had prepared dinner when her husband got home.
Sarah había preparado la cena cuando su esposo llegó a casa.
(Primera acción: Sarah había preparado la cena
Segunda acción: su esposo llegó a casa)

Para poder construir la forma afirmativa del Pasado Perfecto debemos utilizar como auxiliar el verbo TO HAVE en Pasado Simple y acompañado por el verbo principal en su Pasado Participio (ya sean verbos regulares o verbos irregulares):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I had bought a new car.</th>
<th>Yo había comprado un nuevo auto.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>You had cleaned the house.</td>
<td>Tú habías limpiado la casa.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>He had brought the gifts.</td>
<td>Él había traído los regalos.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>She had lost the credit card.</td>
<td>Ella había perdido la tarjeta de crédito.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Para formar una interrogación deberemos colocar el auxiliar al comienzo de la oración, luego el sujeto y posteriormente el verbo principal también en Pasado Participio:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Had I bought a new car?</th>
<th>Había comprado yo un nuevo auto?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Had you cleaned the house?</td>
<td>Habías limpiado tú la casa?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had he brought the gifts?</td>
<td>Había traído él los regalos?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Had she lost the credit card?</td>
<td>Había perdido ella la tarjeta de crédito?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Por su parte, la forma negativa se construye poniendo la negación NOT entre el auxiliar y el verbo principal, por ejemplo:
I had not bought a new dress.  Yo no había comprado un nuevo vestido.

You had not cleaned the house.  Tú no habías limpiado la casa.

He had not brought the gifts.  Él no había traído los regalos.

She had not lost the credit card.  Ella no había perdido la tarjeta de crédito.

También puede utilizarse la forma contraída de la negación colocando HADN'T en vez de HAD NOT.


Exercise 1: Put the verbs into the correct form (Past Perfect simple).
A. My little brother ate all of the cake that I _____________________ (make).
B. The waitress brought a dish that we _____________________ (not / order).
C. Last night I couldn't get in because I _____________________ (forget) my keys.
D. When we arrived at the station, the train _____________________ (go).
E. They didn't have any money because they _____________________ (pay) all the bills.
F. We had a big party because we _____________________ (pass) all our exams.
G. I got to the cinema at 6.30 but fortunately the film _____________________ (not start).
H. I was exhausted because I _____________________ (study) too much.

Exercise 2: Put the Past Simple or the Past Perfect.
1. When their mum _______________ (come) home last night, the children _____________ (eat) their dinner.
2. Yesterday I _______________ (see) a woman who _______________ (be) at school with my grandfather. Isn't it strange?
3. It started to rain and I _______________ (remember) that I _______________ (forget) to close my bedroom window.
4. I _______________ (find) a book that I ______ never _______________ (read)
5. We _______________ (try) to change the plane tickets but it was too late they ______ already _______________ (edit) the boarding pass.
6. I _______________ (think) I _______________ (met) this girl before.

Exercise 3: Fill the gaps with the verb in brackets using the Past Perfect.
1. By the time we got to the cinema the film _________________ (start), so we missed the first five minutes.
2. When I rang the bell there was no answer. The neighbour told me that they _______________ (go) about half an hour ago.
3. I saw New York for the first time last night. I _________________ (not see) it before.
4. There was so much to see in London. I _________________ (plan) to see a lot of things but there wasn't enough time. I'll have to come back.
5. If she _________________ (take) my advice, it wouldn't have happened.
6. We wouldn't have had an argument, if they _________________ (not mention) politics.
7. If you _________________ (not park) there, you wouldn't have got a parking fine.
8. John told me he _________________ (buy) a new car.
9. When we arrived in Ireland, the airline company ________________ (lose) our luggage, so we had to wait two days to get it back. Fortunately they delivered it to the hotel.

**Exercise 4: Circle the correct answers:**
1. I didn't recognise / hadn't recognised Sue, because she cut / had cut her hair.
2. I arrived / had arrived at the shop at 6.45, but it already closed / had already closed.
3. David didn't play / hadn't played the match because he hurt / had hurt his leg.
4. When I looked / had looked everywhere for my car keys, I started / had started to panic.
5. When he had finished / finished his dinner he sat down / had sat down to watch TV.
6. It was / had been a film I didn't see / hadn't seen before.

**EXTRA EXERCISES**
**ONLINE ACTIVITIES:**
- [http://www.perfect-englishgrammar.com/supportfiles/past_perfect_or_past_simple_1.pdf](http://www.perfect-englishgrammar.com/supportfiles/past_perfect_or_past_simple_1.pdf)

**REPORTED SPEECH**

**VIDEO:** [http://www.blueblocnotes.com/grammar/reported-speech/basic-tenses](http://www.blueblocnotes.com/grammar/reported-speech/basic-tenses)

Watch the video and complete the table

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lenguaje Directo</th>
<th>Lenguaje Indirecto</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>now</td>
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<td>today</td>
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<td>his afternoon</td>
<td>his month</td>
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<td>his month</td>
<td>next week</td>
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<tr>
<td>next week</td>
<td>here</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>here</td>
<td>next year</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Rewrite these statements into reported speech:

1. I don't want to eat this soup, it's too hot!
   Tony .................................................................

2. There was a serious car crash yesterday
   Mandy .................................................................
3. We’re going on holiday next month
   My friends .............................................................

4. The team has scored 3 goals today
   The radio .............................................................

5. I’ve prepared breakfast this morning
   Alice .................................................................

7. We really enjoy living here
   My mum .............................................................

8. Your postcard hasn’t arrived, Paul
   I .................................................................

9. The doctor won’t come here until six
   The receptionist ..............................................

10. It’s the best cheese cake I’ve ever eaten
    Pam .................................................................

11. Yesterday’s party was quite boring
    The girls ..........................................................

12. The children will be here in a minute
    Mel .................................................................

ONLINE EXERCISES

http://www.english-4u.de/rep_speech_ex1.htm

http://www.english-4u.de/rep_speech_ex2.htm

http://www.english-4u.de/rep_speech_ex3.htm

http://www.english-4u.de/rep_speech_ex4.htm