Will
Hello, and welcome to today’s Grammar Gameshow! I’m your host, Will. But I’m no auxiliary! And, of course, let’s not forget Leslie, our all-knowing voice in the sky.

Leslie
Hello, everyone!

Will
Tonight, we’re going to ask three questions about…

Leslie
The present perfect simple and continuous tenses. Yes, those past to present tenses using have plus a past participle!

Will
OK! Now, let’s meet our contestants!

Mya
Hi, everyone. I’m Mya!

Will
And contestant number two?

Mike
Hi, Will. My name’s Mike!

Will
Welcome back Mike. OK! Let’s get going. And don’t forget you can play along at home too. Question one: True or false? The present perfect continuous has a use that is the same as the present perfect simple.

Mya
True!

Will
Leslie?
Leslie
It is true. Both can be used for an activity which started in the past and continues into the present.

Will
Well done. You score two points. And for a bonus 19 points, can you give us an example?

Mya
Errr…I’ve been working as an accountant for eight years?

Will
And?

Mya
Err…I’ve worked as an accountant for eight years?

Will
Leslie?

Leslie
Yep. Both correct and with the same meaning.

Will
Well done, Mya. You score six points.

Mya
But you said…

Will
Question two: As we have just said, the present perfect simple and continuous can have the same use. However, sometimes the present perfect continuous cannot be used, but the present perfect simple can. Why?

Mike
Trick question! They can always be used the same!

Will
Leslie?

Leslie
Nope! Sorry! Because of its continuous form, the present perfect continuous cannot usually be used with state verbs. This means you must use the simple form. Even if you mean continuous.
Mike, if you can give us an example of some state verbs, you can still score.

Mike
Know, need, want?

Will
That'll do nicely! One point for you. OK, time for our final question. This one is a picture question. Have a look at this picture, and make two sentences with it; one in the present perfect simple and one in the continuous.

Mya
He's been writing letters for an hour. He's written a number of letters.

Will
Leslie?

Leslie
Absolutely right again. The present perfect simple looks at completed actions, and often counts how many or how much, whereas, the present perfect continuous tends to see one action in duration, and cares about how long.

Will
Good job. 33 points to you. Well, that brings us to the end of today’s Grammar gameshow. Let’s count out the points. And the winner is…. Mya with 37 and a half. Well done! Here’s what you’ve won!

Leslie
It’s a toothbrush!

Will
That should help you ‘brush up’ on your English. We’ll see you again next week, where you can play for an even bigger prize. And Mike? You got totally destroyed, didn’t you?

Mike
I just wanted to say…

Will
Bring out the venomous snakes. It looks like we’ll need another contestant. Thanks for joining us. Say goodbye, Leslie.

Leslie
Goodbye, Leslie.
Will
Every time! We’ll see you again next time!