

Auxiliary words

HSK 6

Use the examples with their context and limits. Recall a sentence before reading the model. Original teaching additions accompany examples adapted from Chinese Grammar Wiki (AllSet Learning, CC BY-NC-SA); see the course reference provenance.

Sentence + 来着 (recalling the recent past)

■ Recall a name learned long ago

- You recognise an old classmate but cannot recall the name you once knew.
- 他叫什么名字来着? – The speaker is trying to retrieve an earlier known fact.

Recall a name learned long ago

SITUATION

You recognise an old classmate but cannot recall the name you once knew.

SPEAKER MEANING

The speaker is trying to retrieve an earlier known fact.

CHECK THE LIMIT

The recalled information need not be recent.

■ Locate the pattern in real examples

- Sentence + 来着 (recalling the recent past):** 你刚才说什么来着?; 他叫什么名字来着?
- Read the whole clause before choosing a translation. The examples show the pattern in use; the context below determines what the speaker claims.

■ Follow the speaker

你刚才说什么来着?

nǐ gāng cái shuō shén me lái zhe

Word guide: 你 – you; 刚才 – just now; 说 – say; 什么 – what; 来着 – (recall).

- In the opening situation: 他叫什么名字来着?
- The speaker is trying to retrieve an earlier known fact.

■ Check the limit of the explanation

- The recalled information need not be recent.
- 明天几点开会来着 can recall a previously announced future meeting time; 来着 is not a ban on future-time words.

■ Repair the form before interpreting it

- The form 来着他叫什么名字 needs repair here. Write 他叫什么名字来着 instead; keep the word or frame in its demonstrated order.
- Form and meaning are separate checks. After the repair, explain the sentence in its situation rather than treating a familiar translation as a universal rule.

■ Keep the distinction

- The speaker is trying to retrieve an earlier known fact. Check the relevant speaker, time or group in the surrounding context.
- The recalled information need not be recent. 明天几点开会来着 can recall a previously announced future meeting time; 来着 is not a ban on future-time words.

■ Try it with help closed

You recognise an old classmate but cannot recall the name you once knew. Close the examples. Say a Mandarin response, then write it in Chinese. Explain briefly in English what the lesson's pattern adds. Compare with the model, then change one detail and try again.

One possible response: 他叫什么名字来着?

- My response conveys a message that fits the opening situation.
- I can explain the meaning of the pattern, rather than only naming it.
- The recalled information need not be recent.
- 明天几点开会来着 can recall a previously announced future meeting time; 来着 is not a ban on future-time words.
- I tried a second response with a name, time, place, or description changed.

Practise this pattern step by step.