Edit the given passage.

Thomas Alva Edison is (a) born on February 11, 1847. When he was a child he was enjoying (b) reading. He reads (c) many science and chemistry books. Edison sold newspapers and candy where (d) he was twelve years old.

When he is (e) 13 or 14, Edison lost his faculty of hearing. Edison, however, believed that his deafness was helping (f) him to be a better scientist. As he was deaf, he had not (g) to listen to others. He enjoyed alone (h). He enjoyed not to hear (i) the noises of his environment. This allowed him to think clear (j) without distractions.

Solution

a) Edison **was born** on February 11, 1847. (To give someone’s place or date of birth, we use the simple past ‘was/were born’.)

b) When he was a child he **enjoyed** reading. (The past continuous tense is used to talk about an activity that was going on at a point of time in the past. To say that somebody did or enjoyed something, we use the simple past tense.)

c) He **read** many science and chemistry books. (Here the reference is to the past, so we need a past tense.)

d) Edison sold newspapers and candy **when** he was twelve years old.

e) When he **was** 13 or 14, he lost the faculty of hearing.

f) his deafness **helped** him to be a better scientist (The continuous tenses are only used to talk about ongoing activities.)

g) As he was deaf, he **did not have** to listen to others.

h) He enjoyed **being alone**.

i) He enjoyed **not hearing** the noises of his environment. (Enjoy is one of those verbs that cannot be followed by a to-infinitive.)

j) This allowed him to think **clearly** without distractions. (Clear is an adjective. We need an adverb to modify the verb think.)