

A

PROPOSITO

While English sometimes uses a progressive verb form—*was approaching*, *was wagging*—to signal an action in progress, the simple past tense—*it seemed*, *it had*, *it wore*—may also have this meaning, depending on the context. Learning to use the preterite and imperfect correctly does not involve matching English forms to Spanish equivalents but rather paying attention to contextual clues that signal middle (imperfect) or non-middle (preterite).

Era¹ el 31 de octubre y todos los niños estaban² muy emocionados. A las dos y media, salieron³ de la escuela y caminaron⁴ hacia sus casas. Mientras caminaban,⁵ hablaban⁶ de las actividades que siempre hacían⁷ en esa noche. También planeaban⁸ algunas travesuras que iban⁹ a hacer. De repente, vieron¹⁰ que una extraña figura se acercaba.¹¹ Parecía¹² una mezcla de animal y de monstruo: tenía¹³ la cabeza de Frankenstein y llevaba¹⁴ una enorme capa negra como un vampiro. Pero caminaba¹⁵ sobre cuatro patas. Asustados, los niños lo miraron¹⁶ en silencio por unos instantes. Luego, todos gritaron¹⁷ y corrieron¹⁸ en mil direcciones para escapar. Desaparecieron¹⁹ rápidamente sin notar que debajo de la capamencaba²⁰ alegremente la cola de un perro que también quería²¹ salir esa noche para recibir dulces o hacer travesuras.

It was¹ October 31st and all the children were² very excited. At 2:30, they left³ school and walked⁴ toward their houses. While they walked,⁵ they talked⁶ about the activities they always did⁷ on that night. They also planned⁸ some tricks that they were going⁹ to play. All of a sudden, they saw¹⁰ that a strange figure was approaching.¹¹ It seemed like¹² a mixture of animal and monster: it had¹³ the head of Frankenstein and wore¹⁴ a huge black cape like a vampire. But it was walking¹⁵ on four legs. Frightened, the children looked at¹⁶ it in silence for a few seconds. Then everyone began to shout¹⁷ and run¹⁸ in a thousand directions to escape. They disappeared¹⁹ rapidly without noticing that underneath the cape was happily wagging²⁰ the tail of a dog who also wanted²¹ to go out that night to trick or treat.

¹middle: in progress ²middle: in progress ³end ⁴beginning: set off ⁵middle: in progress ⁶middle: in progress
⁷middle: repeated ⁸middle: in progress ⁹middle: not yet happened ¹⁰beginning: the action of seeing continues after this point ¹¹middle: in progress ¹²middle: in progress ¹³middle: in progress ¹⁴middle: in progress
¹⁵middle: in progress ¹⁶end ¹⁷beginning ¹⁸beginning ¹⁹end ²⁰middle: in progress ²¹middle: in progress

Practica Lea el siguiente párrafo y decida si los verbos entre paréntesis indican el medio de la acción o no. Luego dé la forma correcta de cada verbo (pretérito o imperfecto) según el caso.

La historia de un ex novio

I used to have (tener)¹ a boyfriend named Hector. He was (ser)² very tall and handsome, and we used to spend (pasar)³ a lot of time together. We would go (ir)⁴ everywhere together. That is, until he met (conocer)⁵ a new girl, Jane. He talked to her (hablarle)⁶ once and then invited her (invitarla)⁷ to a big dance. He told me (decirme)⁸ that it was because he felt sorry for her (tenerle compasión),⁹ but I didn't believe him (creérselo).¹⁰ I wanted (querer)¹¹ to kill him! But I decided (decidir)¹² to do something else. Since I knew (saber)¹³ where she lived (vivir),¹⁴ I went (ir)¹⁵ over to her house to tell her what a rat Hector was (ser).¹⁶ But when I got there (llegar),¹⁷ I saw (ver)¹⁸ that his car was (estar)¹⁹ parked in front. I got (ponerme)²⁰ so angry that I started (empezar)²¹ to slash his tires. Just then, Hector came out (salir)²² of the house. When he saw me (verme),²³ he yelled (gritar)²⁴ and ran (correr)²⁵ toward me. . . .

(Continúa en Repaso, Capítulo 6.)