



Narrative Tenses:

Sequencing Events: Past Perfect in Narratives

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

1. When I arrived at the cinema, the film ___ already ____.
a) had / started
b) has / started
c) was / starting
d) did / start
2. She was tired because she ___ all night.
a) worked
b) had worked
c) was working
d) has worked
3. By the time the ambulance arrived, the patient ___ consciousness.
a) lost
b) was losing
c) had lost
d) has lost
4. After he ___ the letter, he felt much better.
a) read
b) was reading
c) has read
d) had read
5. I ___ never ___ such a beautiful sunset before that day.
a) had / seen
b) have / seen
c) was / seeing
d) did / see
6. The thief ___ before the police arrived.
a) escaped
b) had escaped
c) was escaping
d) has escaped
7. When we got to the restaurant, we realized we ___ our wallet at home.
a) left
b) were leaving
c) had left
d) have left
8. He knew the area well because he ___ there as a child.
a) lived
b) was living
c) has lived
d) had lived
9. She ___ just ___ home when the phone rang.
a) had / got
b) has / got
c) was / getting
d) did / get
10. Before I met him, I ___ never ___ of his company.
a) have / heard
b) had / heard
c) was / hearing
d) did / hear
11. The streets were wet. It ___ during the night.
a) rained
b) was raining
c) had rained
d) has rained

12. By the time she graduated, she ____ three internships.
a) completed
b) was completing
c) has completed
d) had completed
13. He couldn't enter the building because he ____ his ID card.
a) had forgotten
b) forgot
c) was forgetting
d) has forgotten
14. After they ____ dinner, they went for a walk.
a) finished
b) had finished
c) were finishing
d) have finished
15. I recognized her immediately because we ____ before.
a) met
b) were meeting
c) had met
d) have met
16. When we arrived, we discovered that someone ____ into our house.
a) broke
b) was breaking
c) has broken
d) had broken
17. The patient ____ already ____ by the time the doctor came.
a) had / recovered
b) has / recovered
c) was / recovering
d) did / recover
18. She didn't want to watch the movie because she ____ it twice.
a) saw
b) had seen
c) was seeing
d) has seen
19. They sold the house where they ____ for twenty years.
a) lived
b) were living
c) had lived
d) have lived
20. By midnight, all the guests ____ home.
a) went
b) were going
c) have gone
d) had gone



Answers

1. a) had / started
2. b) had worked
3. c) had lost
4. d) had read
5. a) had / seen
6. b) had escaped
7. c) had left
8. d) had lived
9. a) had / got
10. b) had / heard
11. c) had rained
12. d) had completed
13. a) had forgotten
14. b) had finished
15. c) had met
16. d) had broken
17. a) had / recovered
18. b) had seen
19. c) had lived
20. d) had gone



Explanations

1. “had / started” (a)

Past Perfect 'had started' shows the film began before the arrival (Past Simple).

2. “had worked” (b)

Past Perfect explains the earlier action that caused the tiredness.

3. “had lost” (c)

'By the time' + Past Simple requires Past Perfect for the earlier event.

4. “had read” (d)

'After' + Past Perfect shows the reading happened first, then the feeling.

5. “had / seen” (a)

Past Perfect with 'never...before' shows lack of prior experience up to that past moment.

6. “had escaped” (b)

Past Perfect shows the escape happened before the arrival (Past Simple).

7. “had left” (c)

The leaving of the wallet happened before the realization, requiring Past Perfect.

8. “had lived” (d)

Past Perfect explains the background reason - living there happened before knowing it well.

9. “had / got” (a)

'Just' with Past Perfect shows she arrived home immediately before the phone rang.

10. “had / heard” (b)

'Before' + Past Simple requires Past Perfect for the earlier (lack of) experience.

11. “had rained” (c)

Past Perfect explains why the streets were wet - the rain happened earlier.

12. “had completed” (d)

'By the time' + Past Simple requires Past Perfect for accumulated experience before graduation.

13. “had forgotten” (a)

Past Perfect explains the earlier action that caused the present problem.

14. “had finished” (b)

'After' + Past Perfect clearly shows the dinner was completed before the walk.

15. “had met” (c)

Past Perfect shows the previous meeting that enabled recognition.

16. “had broken” (d)

Past Perfect shows the break-in happened before the discovery.

17. “had / recovered” (a)

'Already' with Past Perfect emphasizes the recovery was complete before the doctor's arrival.

18. “had seen” (b)

Past Perfect explains the reason - she had already watched it before.

19. “had lived” (c)

Past Perfect shows the living happened before the selling.

20. “had gone” (d)

'By midnight' + Past Perfect shows all departures were complete before that time.