



TENSES

Writing Support Desk



University
of Windsor

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THREE TENSES

past

present

future

FOUR MOODS

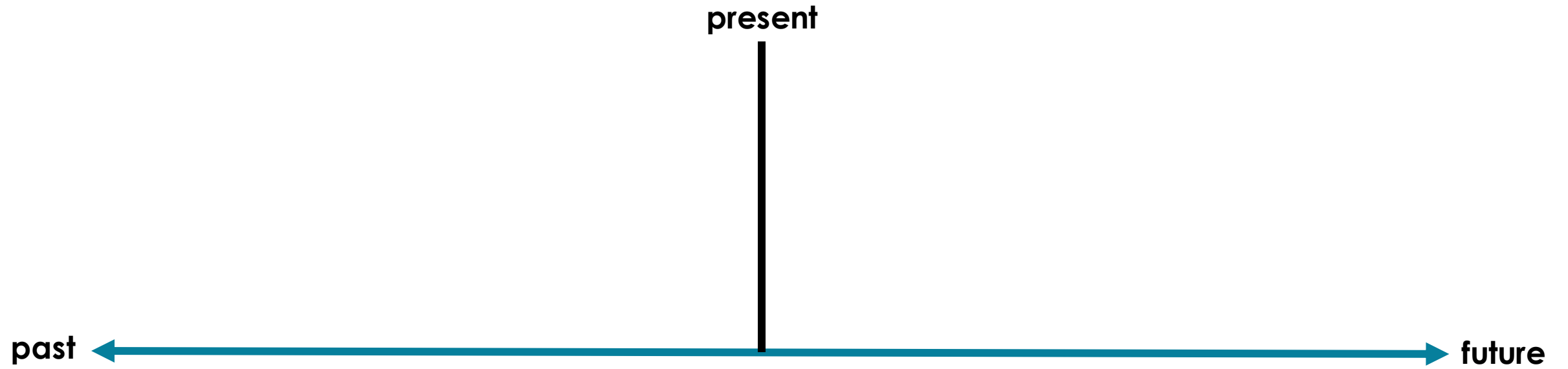
simple

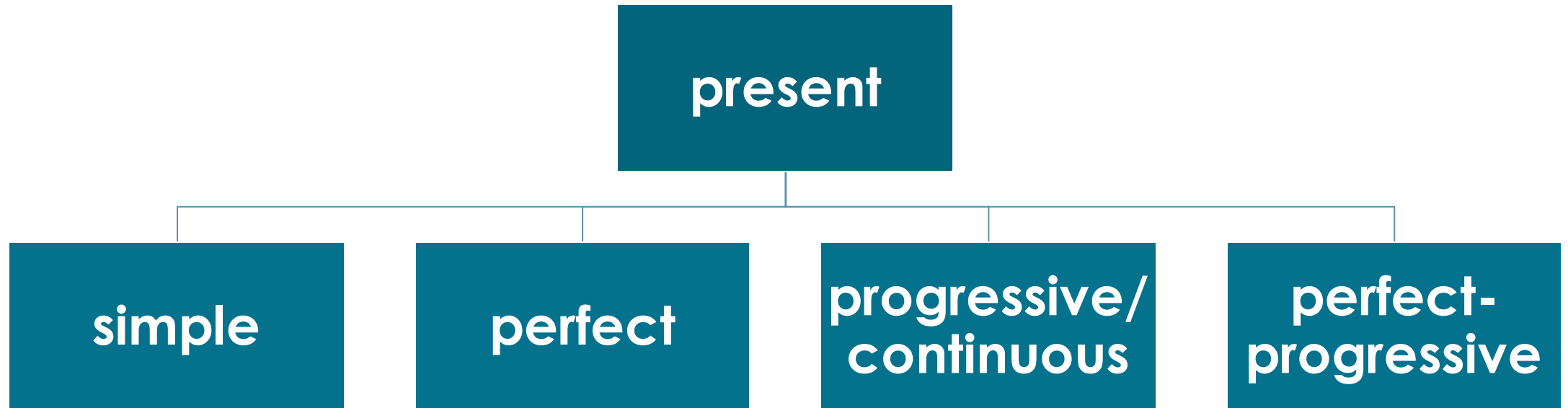
perfect

progressive/continuous

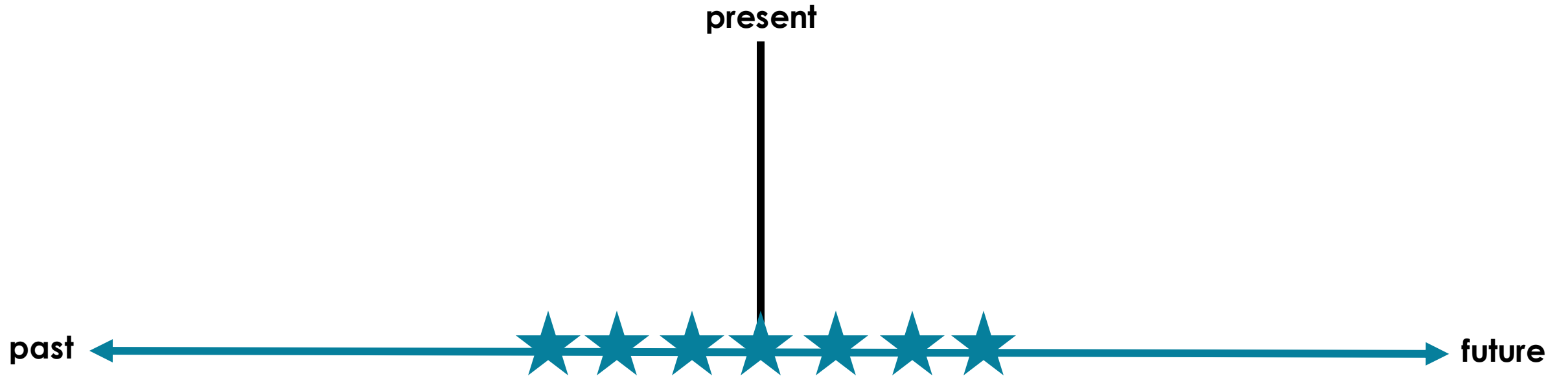
perfect-progressive

TENSE TIMELINE





SIMPLE PRESENT



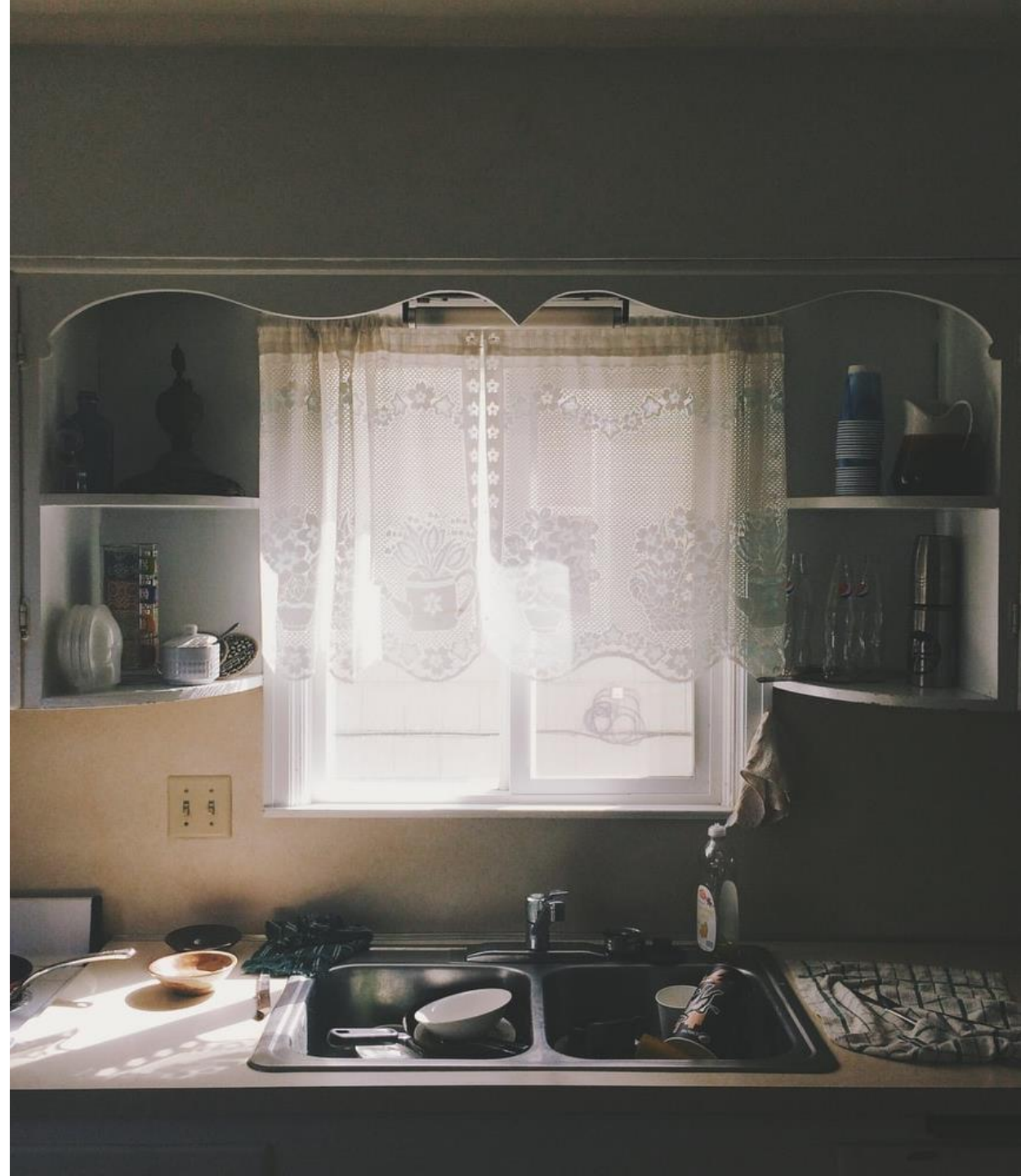
- tense of habit (an action done regularly)
 - look for 'often,' 'seldom,' 'sometimes,' 'never'

SIMPLE PRESENT

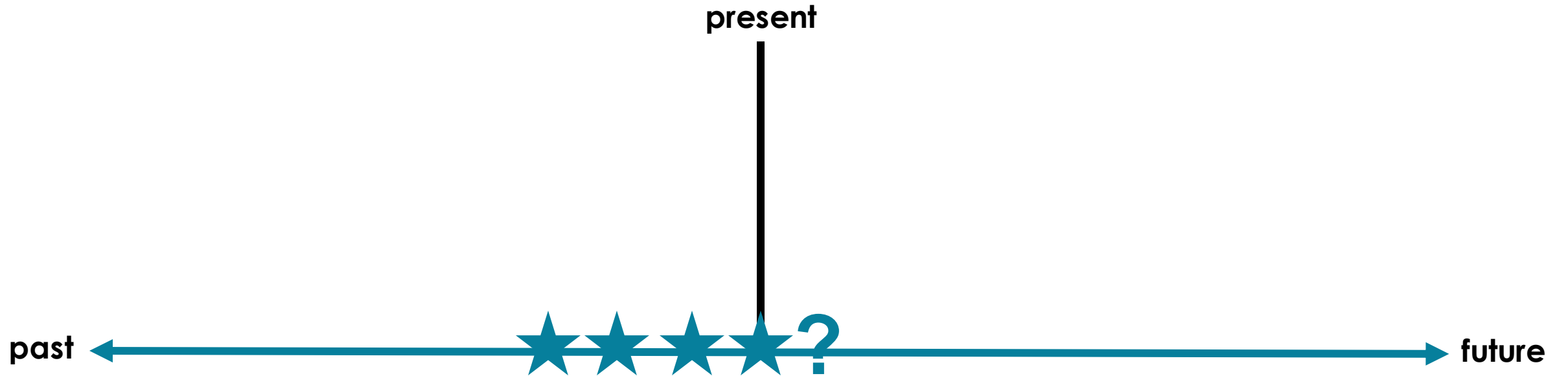
My roommates always **leave** their dishes in the sink.

I never **want** to live with friends again.

I often **dream** of having my own place.

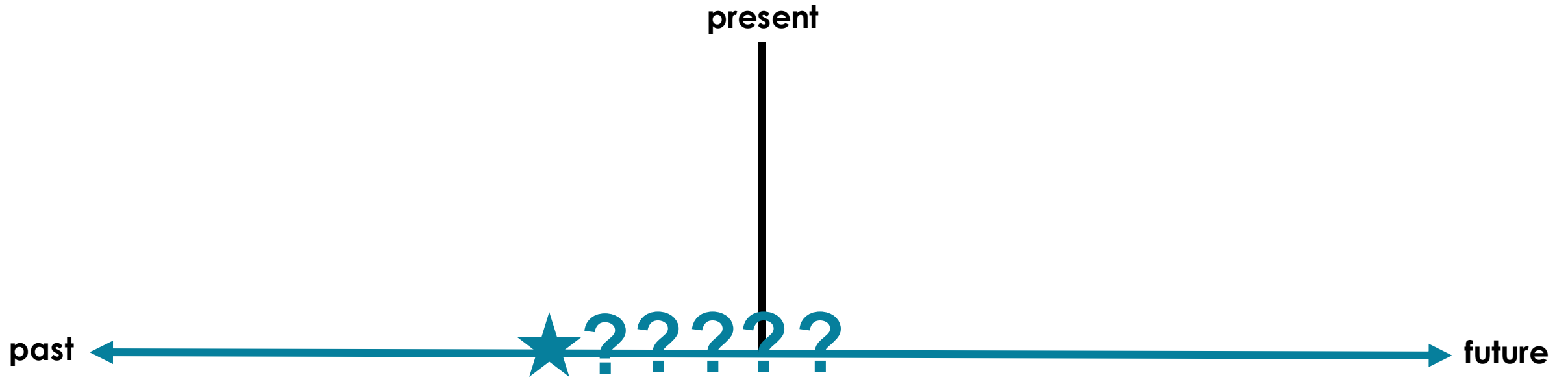


PRESENT PERFECT



- past event that continues into the present

PRESENT PERFECT



- past event, but the specific time is unimportant
 - Uses 'has' or 'have' + past tense verb

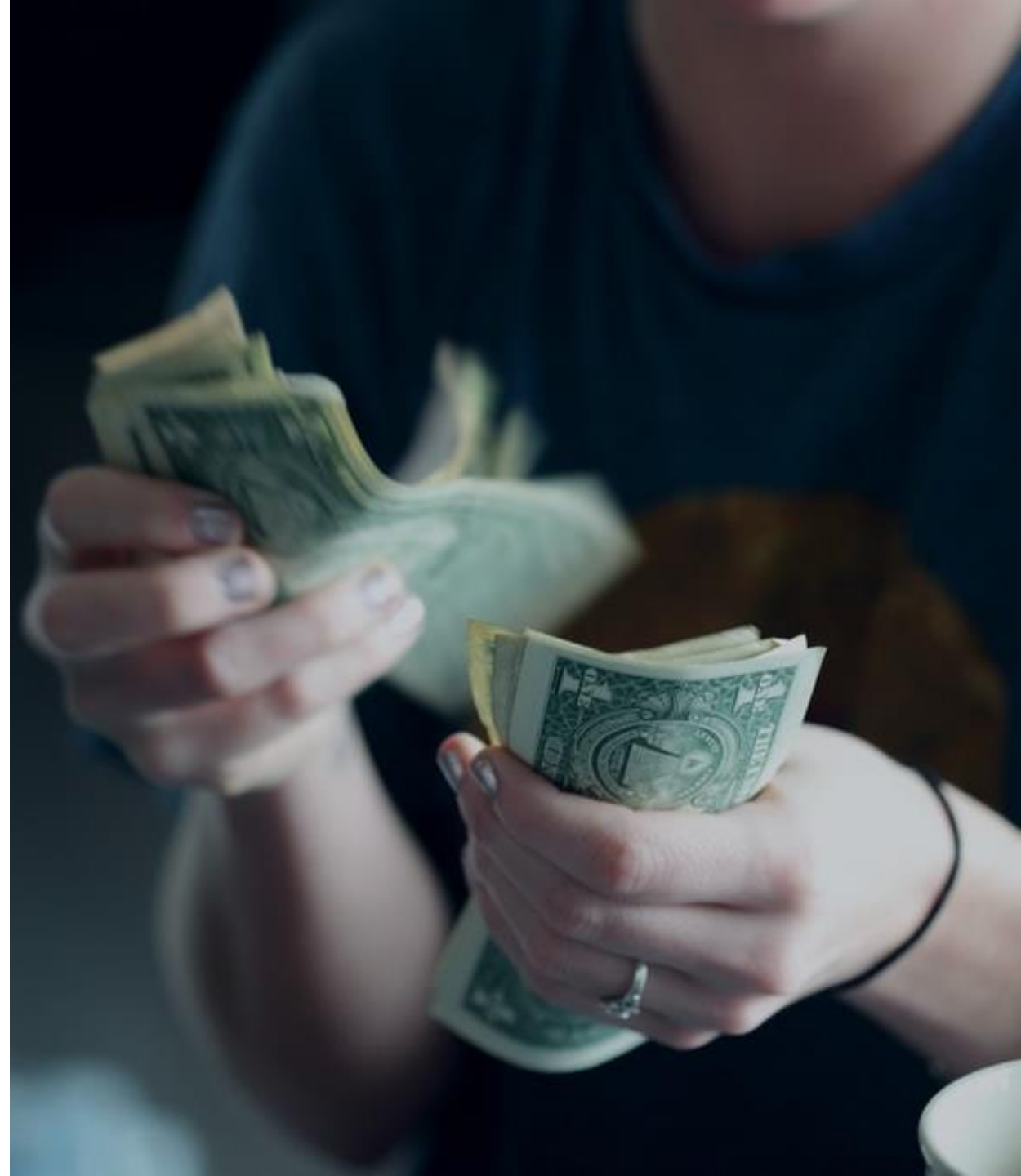
PRESENT PERFECT

I **have worn** my hair short for ten years.

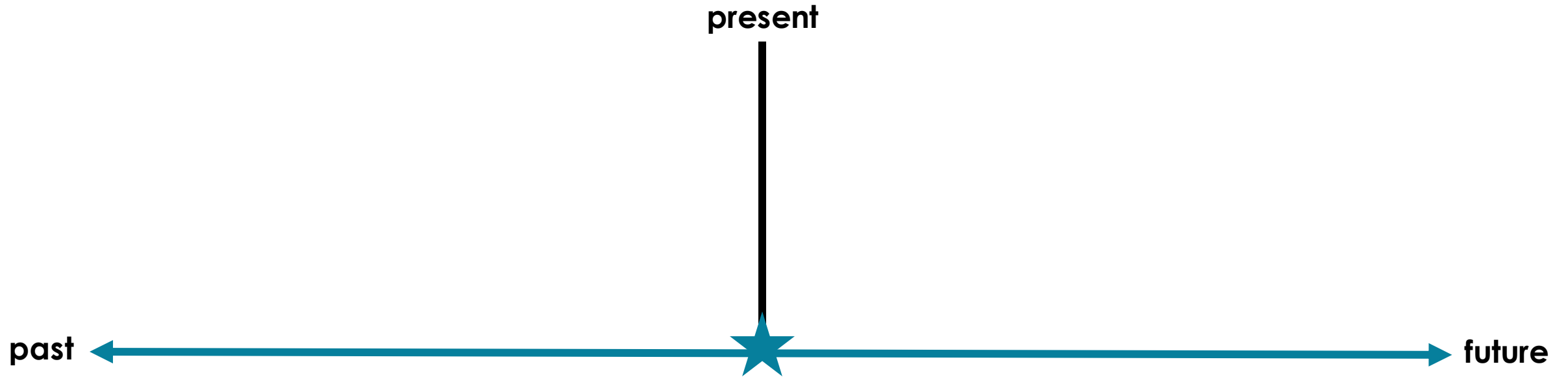
*I started wearing it short ten years ago and continue to do so.

She **has** already **spent** her entire paycheck.*

*She spent her paycheck in the past, but when she did it is unimportant.



PRESENT PROGRESSIVE/CONTINUOUS



- action occurring in the present moment
 - Uses the verb 'to be' + -ing verb

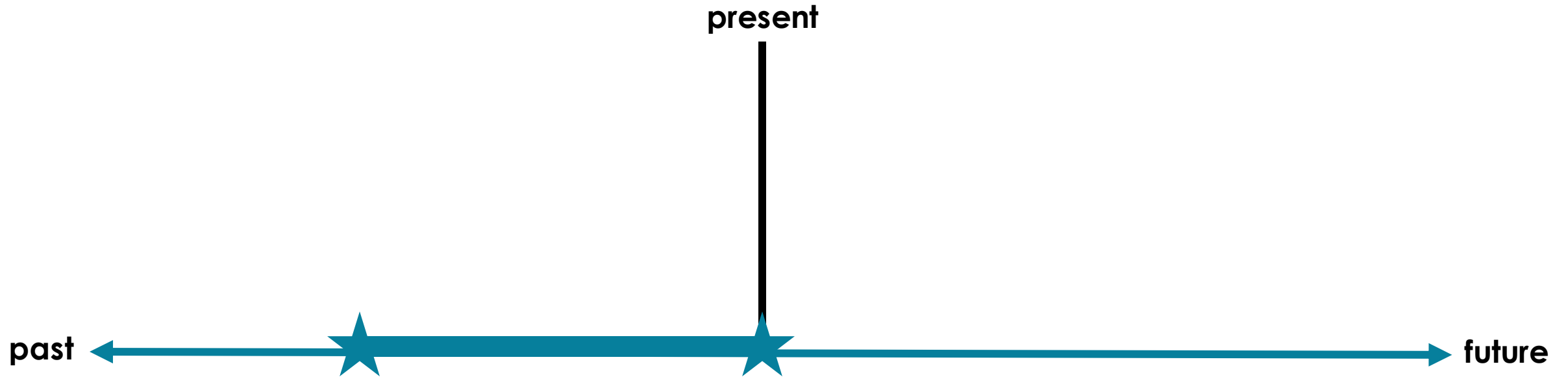
PRESENT PROGRESSIVE

I **am** currently **writing** a novel.

They **are** **filming** a new movie downtown.



PRESENT PERFECT-PROGRESSIVE



- emphasizes duration of event that started in the past and continues into the present
- Uses 'have been' or 'has been' + -ing verb

PRESENT PERFECT- PROGRESSIVE

I **have been studying** for this test for three weeks.

She **has been working** at the coffee shop for a couple years.



present

simple

- I **attend** the University of Windsor.

perfect

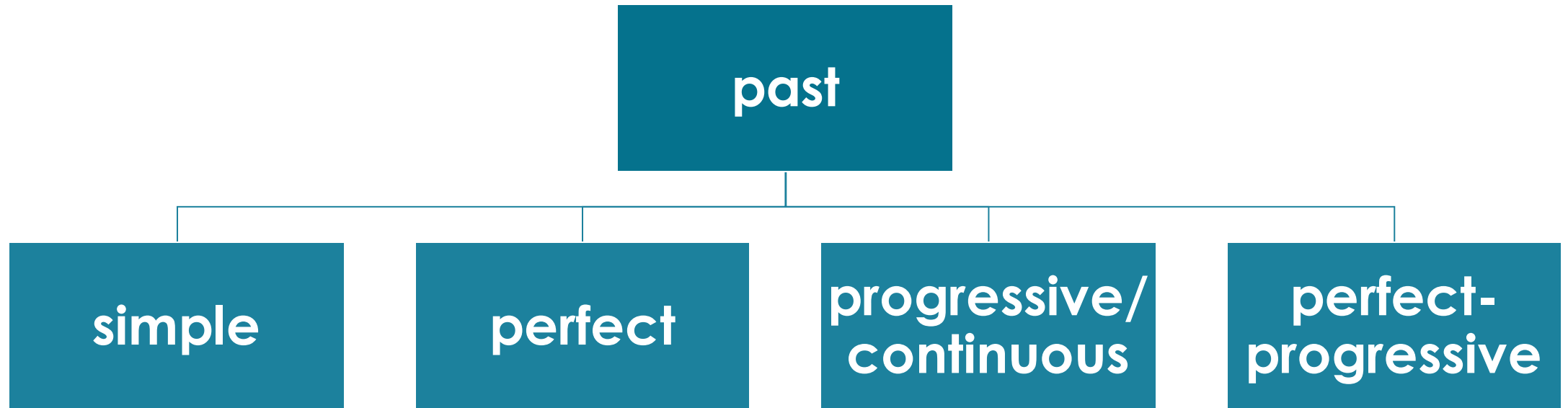
- I **have attended** this school for three years.
- I **have** already **finished** most of my degree requirements.

progressive

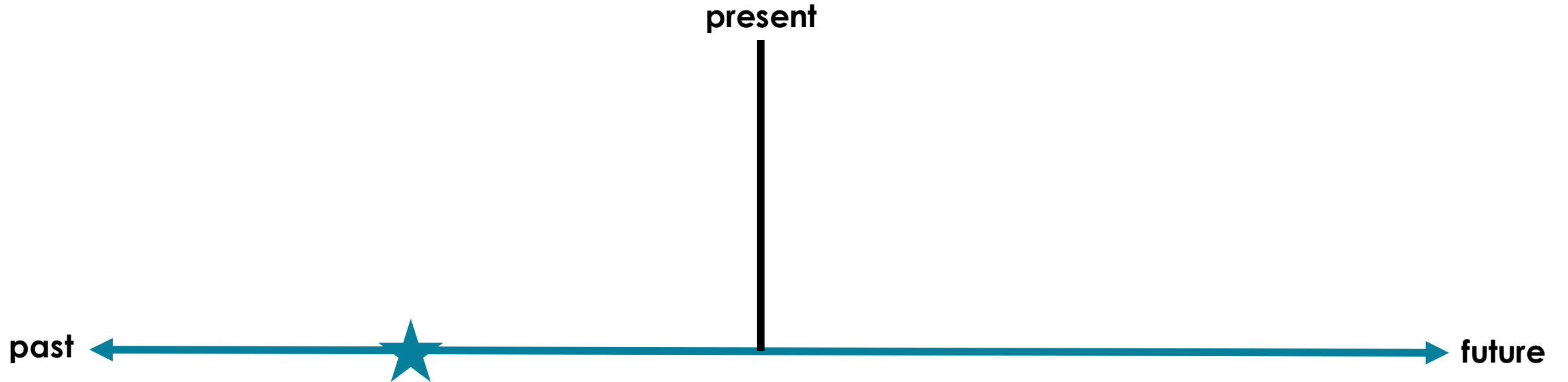
- I **am taking** a Spanish class.

progressive-perfect

- I **have been practicing** my pronunciation all semester.



SIMPLE PAST



- an event that was completed in the past and is no longer true
- Uses –ed with regular verbs

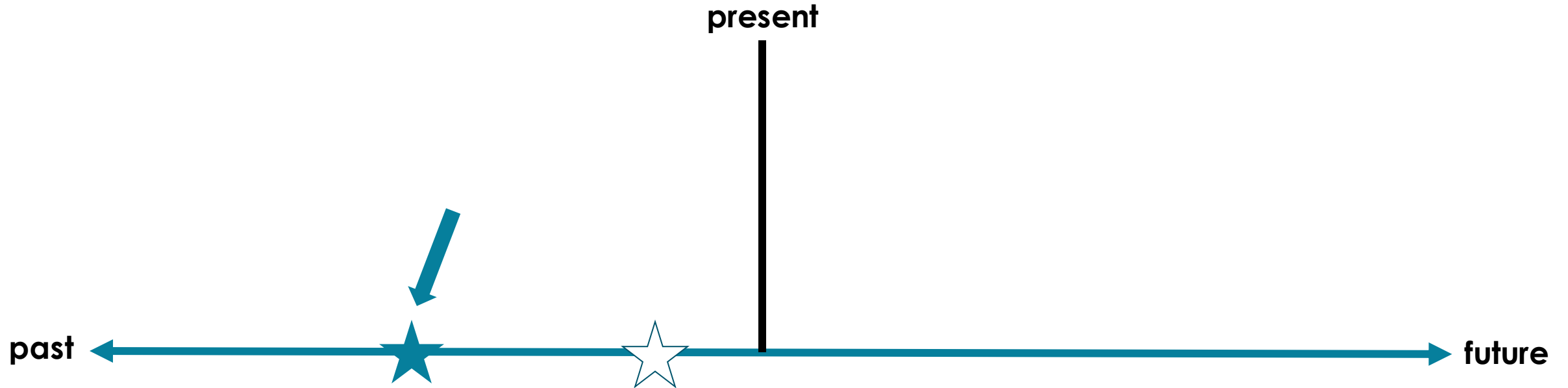
SIMPLE PAST

I **saw** a movie with my friends last night.

I **lived** in Portland in 2012.



PAST PERFECT

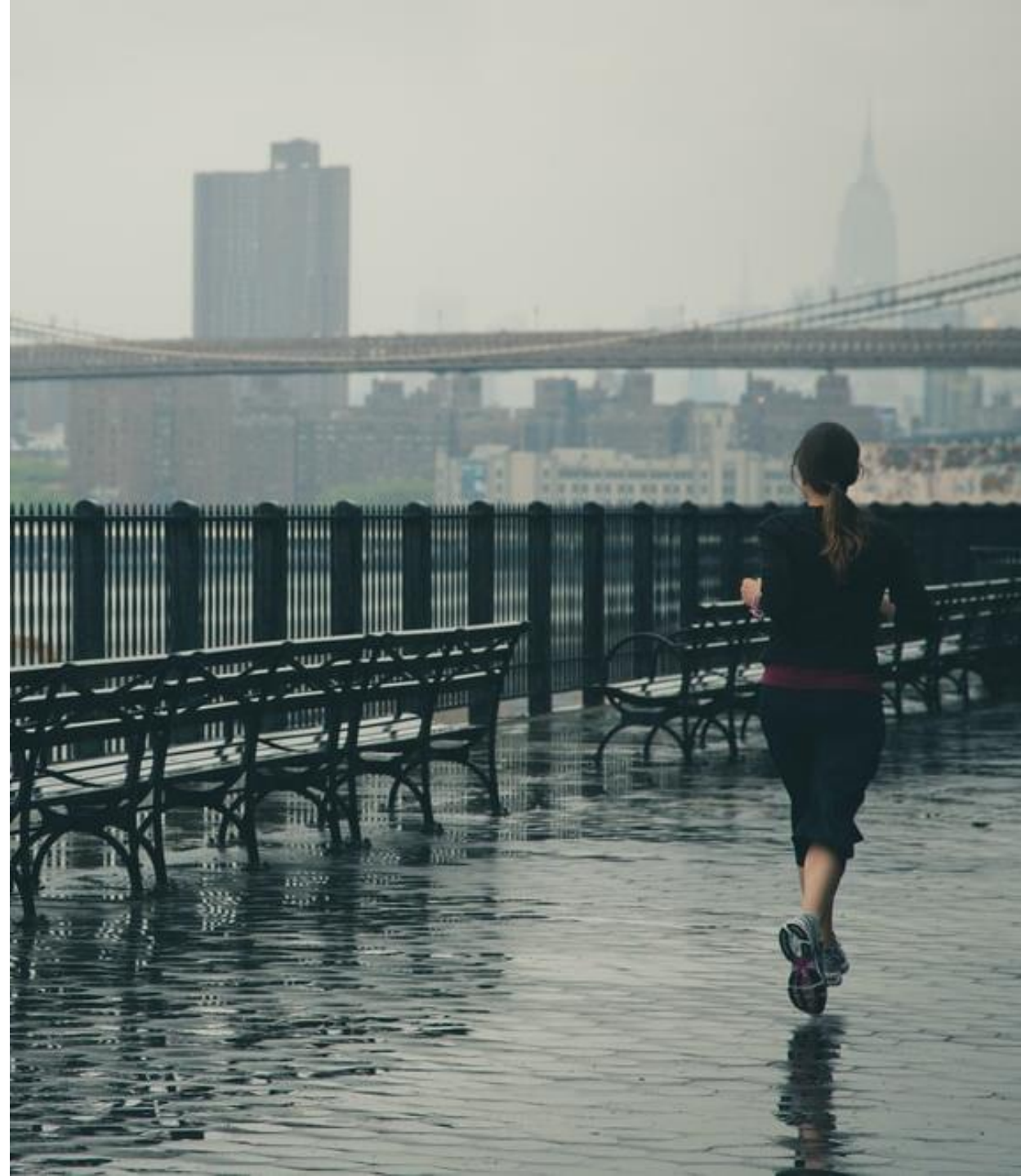


- an event that was completed in the past before another past event
- Uses 'had' + past-tense verb

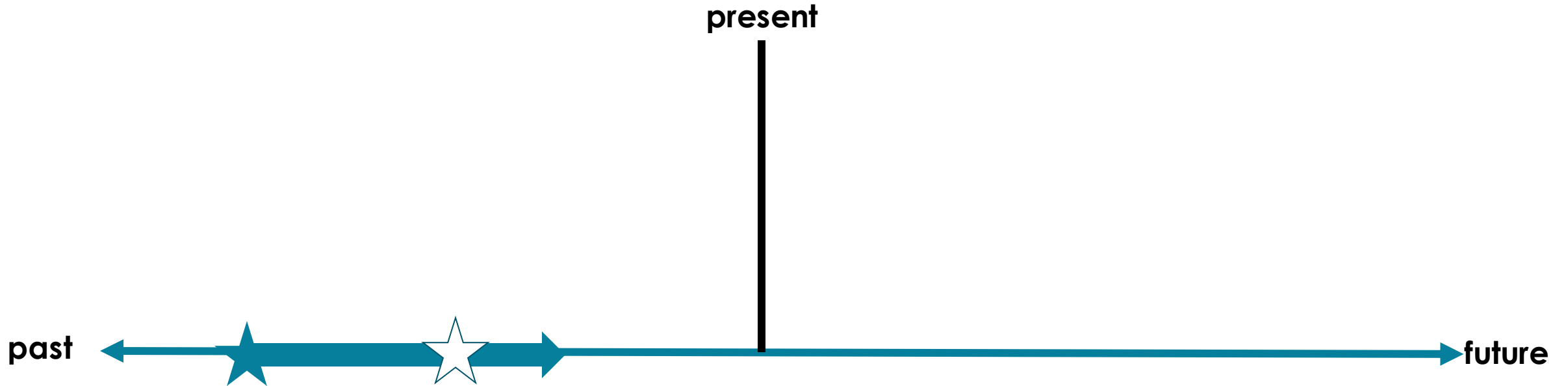
PAST PERFECT

She **had auditioned** eight times before she was cast in the musical.

I **had planned** to go for a jog before it started to rain.



PAST PROGRESSIVE



- an action that was in progress in the past when another action occurred
- Uses 'was' or 'were' + -ing verb

PAST PROGRESSIVE

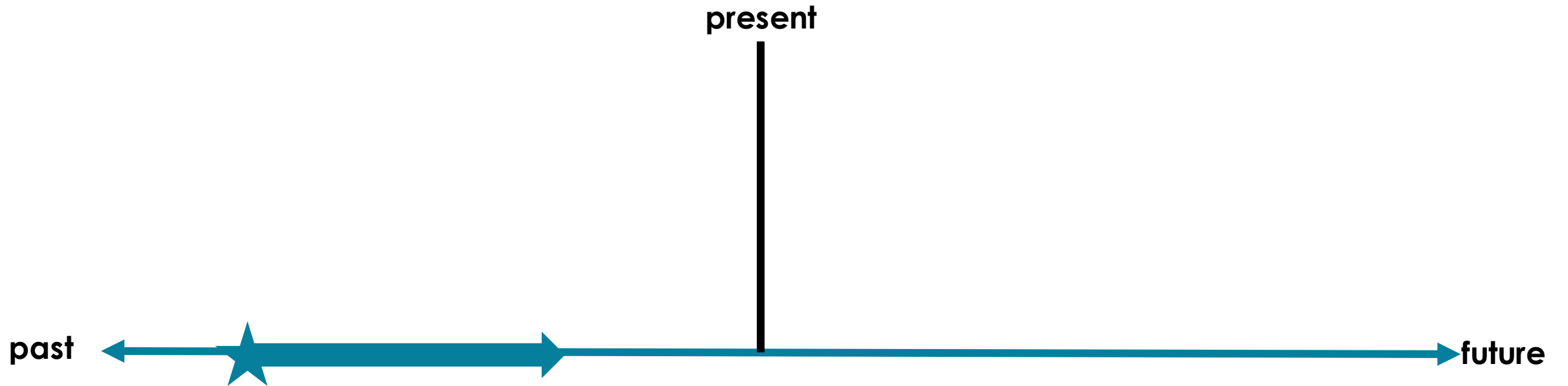
I **was explaining** my research when he interrupted me.

He **was cleaning** the house when his parents showed up.



"Let me interrupt your expertise with my confidence."

PAST PROGRESSIVE



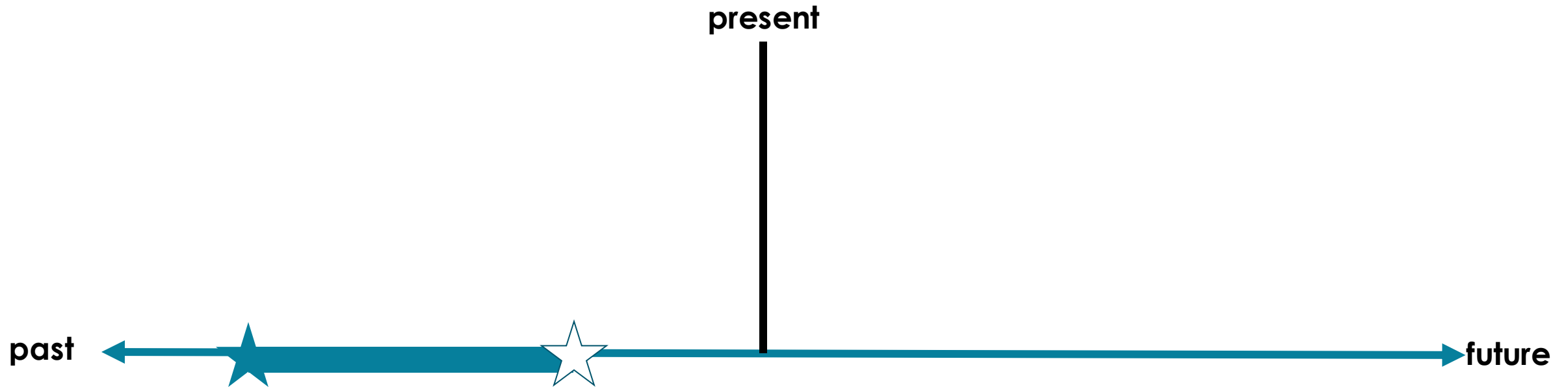
- also emphasizes duration of past events
 - Uses 'was' or 'were' + -ing verb

PAST PROGRESSIVE

We **were scrolling** on Instagram for three hours last night.



PAST PERFECT-PROGRESSIVE



- emphasizes duration of a past event completed before another past event
 - Uses 'had been' + -ing verb

PAST PERFECT- PROGRESSIVE

She **had been walking** around the neighbourhood for three hours before she finally found the taco truck.



past

simple

- She **slept** in and missed the bus.

perfect

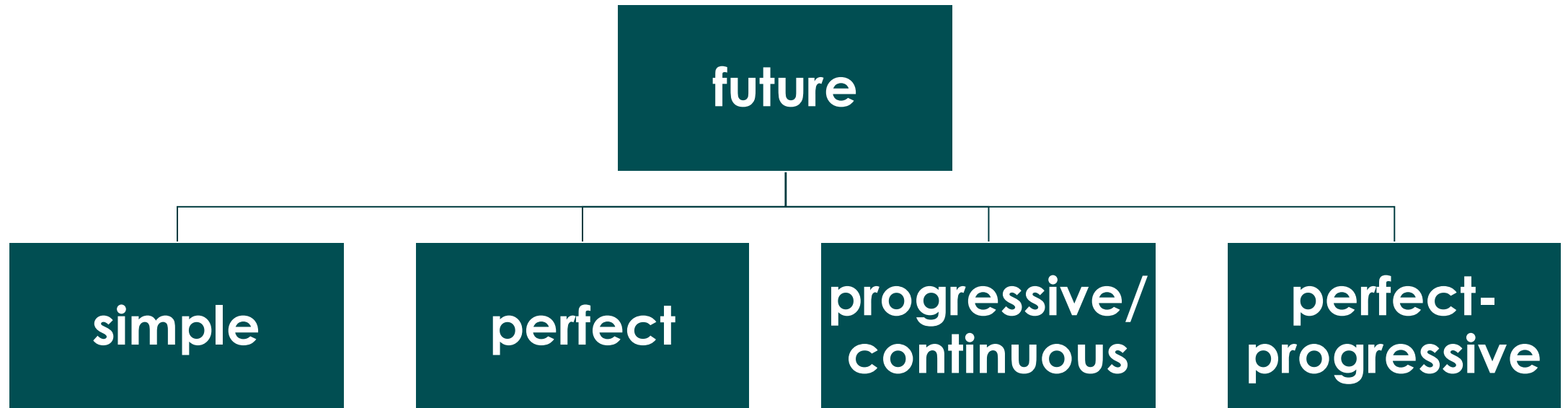
- She **had checked** her alarm twice before she went to bed.

progressive

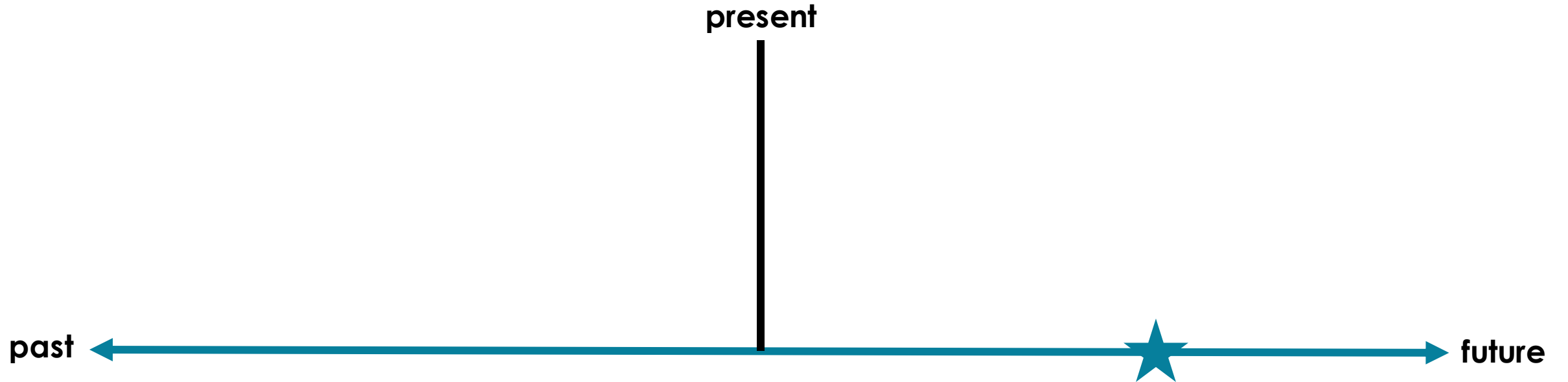
- She **was running** for the bus when the driver closed the door.

progressive-perfect

- She **had been waiting** for forty minutes before another bus arrived.



SIMPLE FUTURE

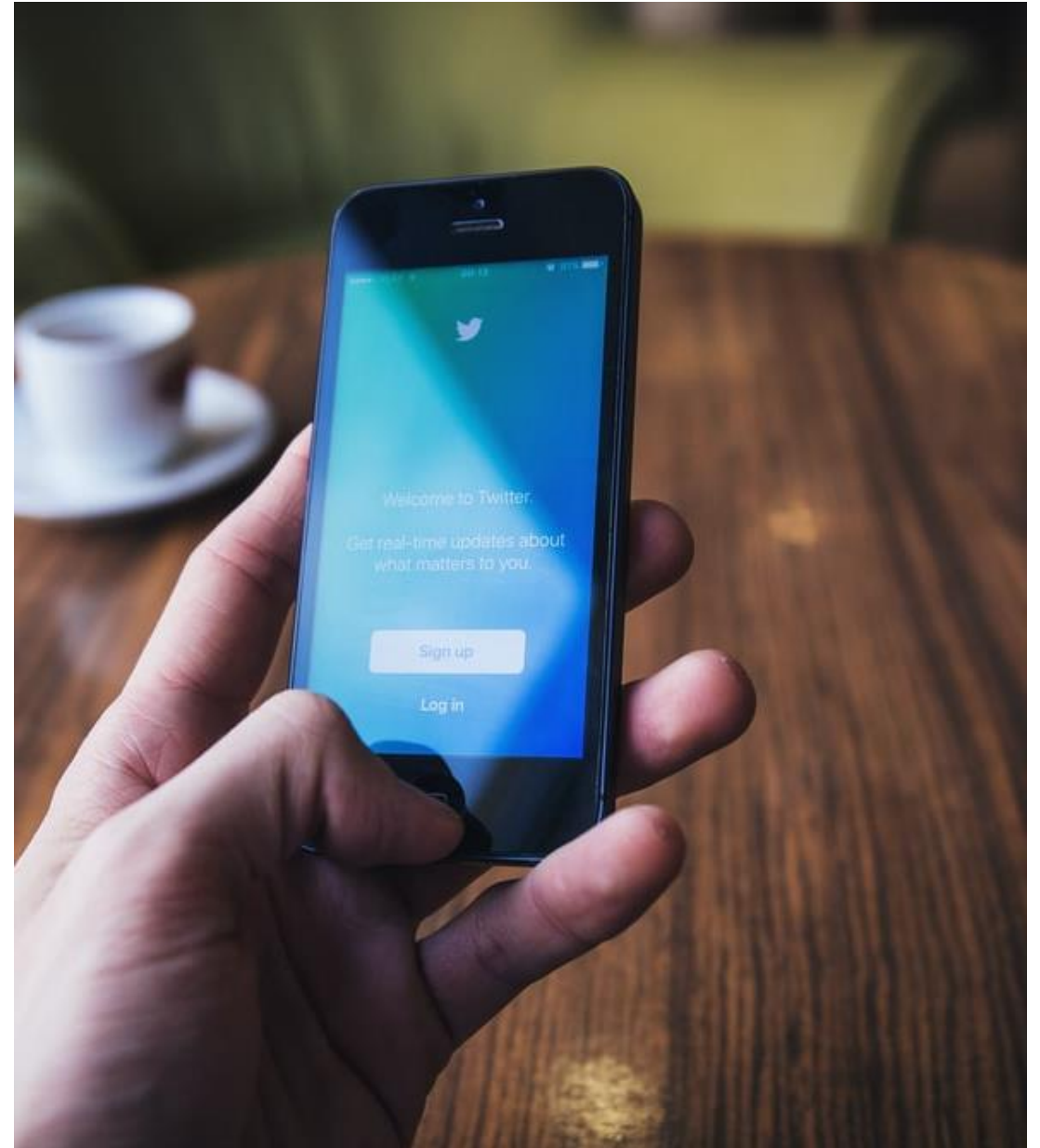


- an event that will happen in the future
 - Uses 'will' or 'am/is/are going to' + verb

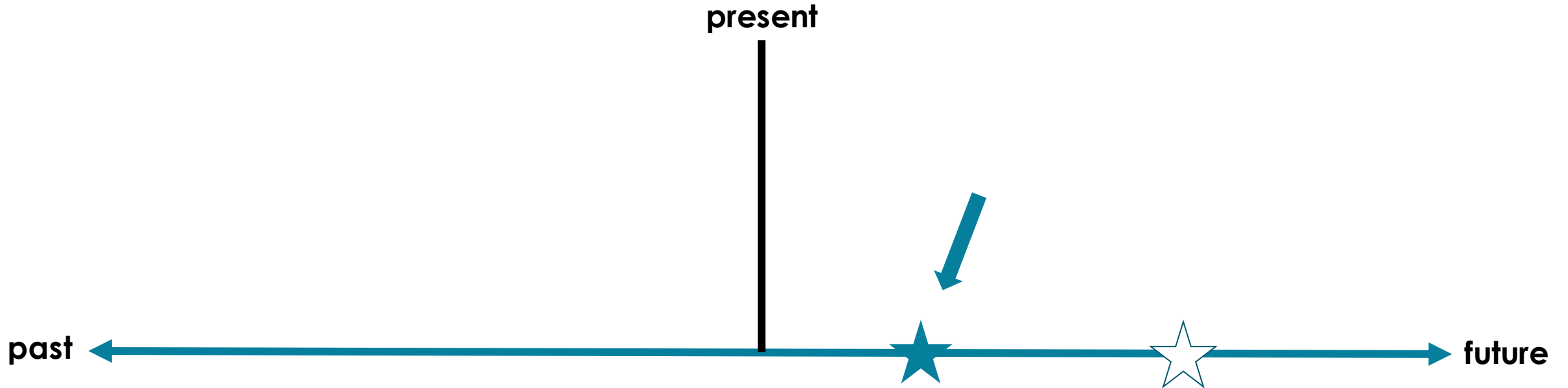
SIMPLE FUTURE

Twitter **will give** users 240 characters tomorrow.

The company **is going to** regret this decision.



FUTURE PERFECT



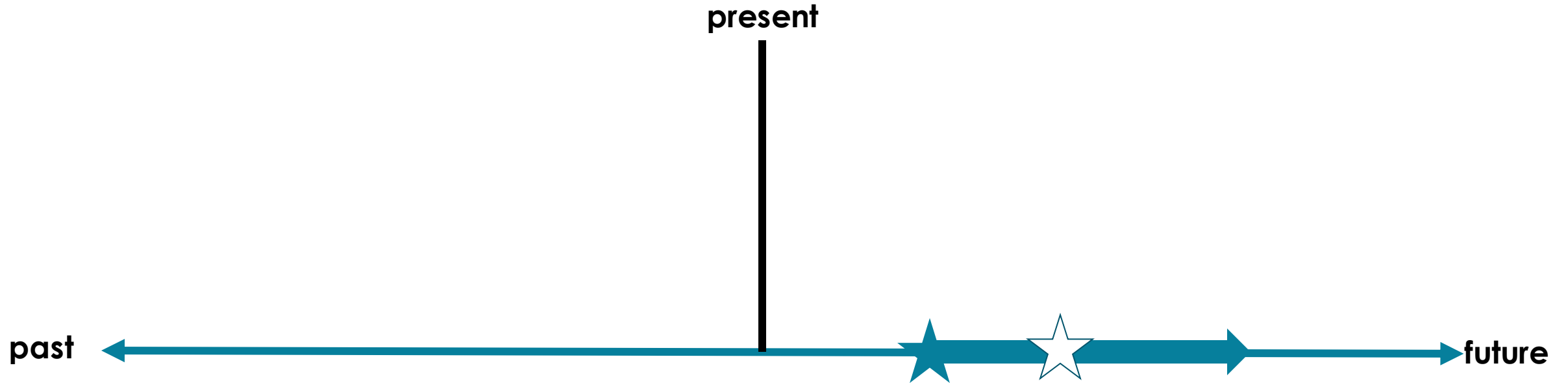
- an event that will happen in the future before another future event
- Uses 'will have' + past-tense verb

FUTURE PERFECT

We **will have left** for the party by the time James is ready to go out.



FUTURE PROGRESSIVE



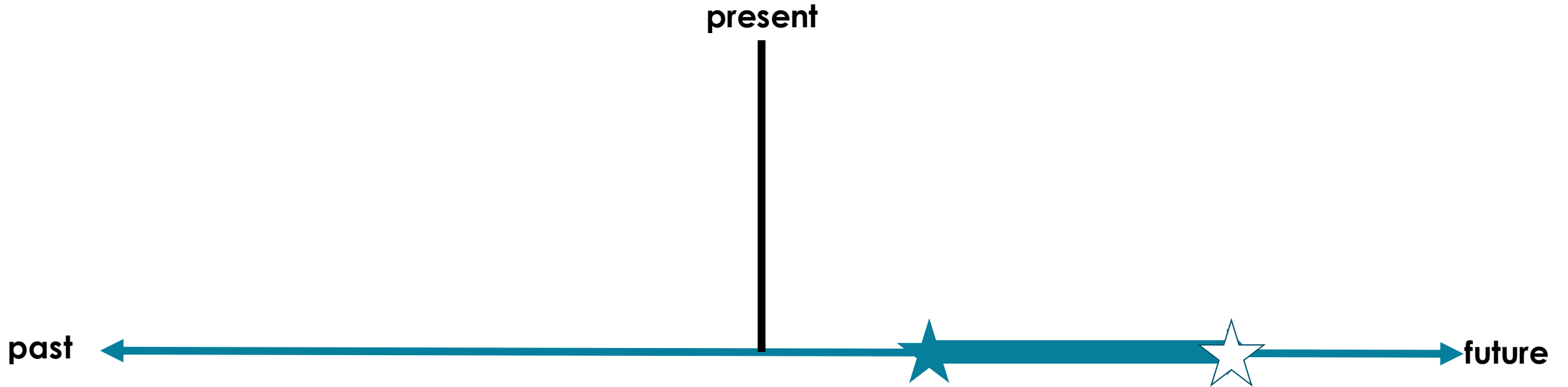
- describes an action that will occur over a period of time at a specific point in the future
 - Uses 'will be' + -ing verb

FUTURE PROGRESSIVE

I **will be sleeping** by the time you leave for the party.



FUTURE PERFECT-PROGRESSIVE



- describes an action that has been in progress for a duration of time before another future event
 - Uses 'will has/have been' + -ing verb

FUTURE PERFECT- PROGRESSIVE

By the time he finishes law school, he **will have been living** on mac and cheese for 8 years.



future

simple

- He **is going to plan** a vacation.

perfect

- He **will have accumulated** 10 days of vacation time before he leaves.

progressive

- He **will be wishing** for more time once the 10 days are up.

progressive-perfect

- By the time he gets back to work, he **will have already been planning** his next holiday for several days.

tense in academic writing

past

- Discuss the research process in the past
- Ex. "The researchers **studied** 1,200 participants."

present

- Discuss articles, books, and reports of findings in the present
- Ex. "The researchers **report** significant findings."

QUESTIONS?

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