El pretérito
–vs- el
imperfecto

pretérito

- To express completed action
- To report events
- To indicate a beginning/end
- For limited time periods
- To interrupt an ongoing action

imperfecto

- To set the scene
- To give background info
- To tell time
- Describe actions for unspecified time
- To express an ongoing action
- To express habitual actions

pretérito

imperfecto

- To describe physical, mental charc/ emotions/age
- To express habitual actions
- To describe physical charac/emotions