

**Speaking Focus: expressing opinion**  
**Grammar Focus: Conditional**

**Vocabulary Focus: Education**

## Back to school, aged 35

### SPEAKING

**A. In groups, each choose one different topic from the list below. Decide if you agree or disagree and write down at least 3 reasons.**

-  Private schools are usually better than state schools.
-  All schools should let children wear whatever they want at school.
-  Cooking and housework should be taught at all schools.
-  Physical education should be optional.
-  Girls study better without boys in the class.
-  School summer holidays should be shorter.
-  Boys study better in a mixed class.

**B. Explain to the rest of your group what you think about your topic. The others in the group should listen and say if they agree or disagree with and why.**

#### Expressing opinion

I think ...

As far as I'm concerned

To my mind ...

It seems to me that ...

#### Agreeing with an opinion

I agree completely with this view ...

I agree with this opinion ...

This is absolutely right.

I couldn't/ can't agree more.

#### Partial agreement

I agree with this point of view, but ...

This idea is right, but...

I agree completely with this view ...

#### Disagreement with an opinion

I'm afraid I can't agree with you.

I disagree with you.

I'm not sure I agree with you.

## READING

# So School These Days Is Easy? Think Again

People and politicians complain that school is getting easier. Damian Whitworth, a 35-year-old journalist, decided to see for himself. He spent a week as a pupil at a British secondary school, Brentwood County High School. It's a large state school and has about 1,800 pupils, girls and boys, aged between 11 and 18.

### FRENCH

My first lesson is French. I am in a class of thirteen year olds. Outside the classroom some girls start interrogating me. 1 \_\_\_\_\_ 'How old are you?' 'How old do you think I am?' I reply. 'Well ... you're not 13!'

First we have a listening test which I find difficult. I get 14 out of 20. Not bad. Then we make revision lists on the computer. 2 \_\_\_\_\_. Now every pupil has one.

### MATHS

As we wait outside the maths classroom a teacher tells me to do up the top button of my shirt. The maths teacher uses an interactive whiteboard which has graphics and video, but the pupils don't look very interested in the lesson. A mobile rings and the owner hurries to switch it off. 3 \_\_\_\_\_

### HISTORY

Mr. Fishleigh is the history teacher. He doesn't have any problems controlling the noise level (other teachers do). 4 \_\_\_\_\_. He talks to them as if they were adults and gets their attention in return.

### LUNCH

In the canteen we can choose between traditional and fast food. Burger and chips is the most popular meal. 5 \_\_\_\_\_

### INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

We are designing spreadsheets for mobile phone sales and I cannot imagine a more boring lesson. 6 \_\_\_\_\_. Most children have internet access at home and the school have website where parents can see what homework their children have and when they have to give it in.

### RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

The teacher introduces us to meditation. We sit cross-legged on our desks and try to fill our minds with blackness and think positively about people who have been thinking negatively about. For 15 minutes, the children sit, eyes closed, in total silence. When they leave the class they are slightly dazed: 'Incredible!' 'Amazing!'

'We should do this in maths!'

7 \_\_\_\_\_

The bell goes. End of school for the day. As we leave there is a fight at the school gates. 8 \_\_\_\_\_ 'if anyone hits anyone, I'll call the police,' says a teacher.

**SO HAS SCHOOL GOT EASIER?**

It's difficult to say if lessons are harder or easier since I was a child because teaching methods have changed so much. All I can say is that during my working life I have had many tiring experiences. Being back at school for a week was as tiring as any of them. Being a pupil today is very, very hard work.

**QUIZ**

**Answer the following questions**

Read the introduction. Why did Damain Whitworth go back to school? What kind of school did he go to?

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Read Damain's diary for one of the days he spent back at school. Does he think school is easier or harder now?

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Read the text again and put the phrases A – H in the correct places.

- A. A crowd of pupils are watching. \_\_\_\_\_
- B. However, the pupils are totally involved. \_\_\_\_\_
- C. He's friendly with the pupils but not too friendly. \_\_\_\_\_
- D. When I was the same age as these children I had never used a computer. \_\_\_\_\_
- E. It's a magical moment and the most effective class I have seen. \_\_\_\_\_
- F. 'Are you really in our class?' \_\_\_\_\_
- G. One boy says he has chips every day. \_\_\_\_\_
- H. Phones that ring in class are confiscated until the end of the week. \_\_\_\_\_

Look at the underlined words and phrases. Try to guess what they mean from the context.

- A. Interrogating = \_\_\_\_\_
- B. Do up = \_\_\_\_\_
- C. In return = \_\_\_\_\_
- D. Spreadsheets = \_\_\_\_\_
- E. Give it in = \_\_\_\_\_
- F. Slightly dazed = \_\_\_\_\_

Complete the following sentences with a suitable verb from the box below

Behave	Cheat	Do	Fail	Learn	Leave	Pass	Revise	Start	Study	Take
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- a. When she was at school, she used to \_\_\_\_\_ for hours every evening.
- b. I must \_\_\_\_\_ tonight. I have an exam tomorrow.
- c. Our history teacher was terrible. We didn't \_\_\_\_\_ anything.
- d. If you don't \_\_\_\_\_ your homework, you can't watch TV later.
- e. The teacher was angry because some of the pupils had tried to \_\_\_\_\_ in the exam.
- f. If you want to be a doctor, you have to \_\_\_\_\_ a lot of exams.
- g. In the UK children \_\_\_\_\_ school when they are four and can't \_\_\_\_\_ before they are 16.
- h. I hope I'm going to \_\_\_\_\_ my exams. My parents will be furious if I \_\_\_\_\_.
- i. He was a rebel at school. He used to \_\_\_\_\_ very badly.

## 5 Types of Conditional Sentences in English

Conditionals are sentences with two clauses – an ‘if clause and a main clause – that are closely related. The order of these two parts of the sentence isn’t important. Conditional sentences are often divided into different types. These types of sentences are used to express possible or imaginary situations. When written, if the *if* part of the sentence comes first, a comma should be used to separate it from the second part.

### Type Zero Conditional Sentences (zero condition)

This type of conditional sentence is used to describe scientific facts, generally known truths, events and other things that are always true.

#### **The structure of Type Zero conditional sentences:**

Main part: Present Simple; *if* part: Present Simple

Examples:

- Water **boils if** you **heat** it to 100 degrees Celsius.
- A red light **comes on if** you **press** the main button.

In Type Zero sentences, *if* can be replaced by *when*.

Examples:

- **When** you heat ice, it **melts**.
- It **gets** dark **when** the sun **goes** down.

### Type One Conditional Sentences (open condition)

This type of sentence expresses real and possible situations in the future; it is possible for the condition to be met.

#### **The structure of Type One conditional sentences:**

Main part: will + infinitive; *if* part: Present Simple

Examples:

- We **will stay** at home **if** it snows.
- **If** we **get** the money for this job, we **will** buy a new car.

### Type Two Conditional Sentences (half-open condition)

This type of conditional sentence describes an unreal situation with regard to the present or future; a hypothetical condition that can only be fulfilled in theory.

#### **The structure of Type Two conditional sentences:**

Main part: would + infinitive; *if* part: Past Simple

In conditional sentences, the past tense form of the verb *to be* is *were* for all persons.

Examples:

- We **would stay** at home **if** it **snowed**.
- If he **were** rich, he’d **buy** an island.

Type two conditional sentences are also used when making polite requests.

Examples:

- I **would be** grateful **if** you **helped** me.
- He **would be** so pleased **if** you **came** to the birthday party.

The phrases *If I were you* or *If I were in your place* are usually used to give advice.

Examples:

- **If I were you** I would accept the offer.
- **If he were in your place** he would do it.

### Type Three Conditional Sentences (closed condition)

Type three conditional sentences are used to express situations that cannot exist, such as actions or events that happened in the past. They are often used to indicate a missed opportunity.

#### **The structure of Type Three conditional sentences:**

Main part: would + perfect infinitive; *if* part: Past Perfect

Examples:

- If you **hadn't been late** for work, the boss **wouldn't have gotten** furious.
- They **would have finished** earlier if the meeting **hadn't been held** so late.

### Mixed Conditionals

This type of conditional sentence uses (mixes) different parts of the above-mentioned conditional sentence types.

There are a few combinations: the result of the action in the present is emphasized by the condition in the past tense, or the result of the action in the past is emphasized by the present-day condition.

Examples:

- If you **had taught** me how to make waffles (in the past), I **wouldn't have to buy** them in a shop (now).
- I **would buy** a house by the sea (now or in the future) **if I had won** the lottery last week.
- Their team **would have scored** more in the match yesterday **if they were** good players.

### IMPORTANT



If the modal verbs **can/could**, **may/might** or **should** are used in the main part of the sentence, they take the place of **will**:

- We **can go** to the seaside **if you have** time tomorrow.
- **If you leave** now, you **may catch** the last bus.
- **If you want to pass** the exam, you **should** study much harder.

The words **will** and **would** are not usually used in the *if* part, except when they express willingness, for example, in requests (that is, when they carry a modal meaning):

- If you **will** phone the manager now, he **will** surely make an appointment with you. (willingness)
- I **would** be very thankful if you **would** help me with my homework. (very polite request)

In negative sentences, **if...not** can be substituted with **unless**.

- You won't pass the exam **unless** you study very hard. (= if you don't study very hard)

### Let's practice

#### **Find the correct conditions**

1. If we had taken enough water, we wouldn't have been thirsty.  
 type I (probable condition)  
 type II (improbable condition)  
 type III (impossible condition)
2. If the children were older, they would go to the party.  
 type I (probable condition)  
 type II (improbable condition)  
 type III (impossible condition)
3. If Mark does the washing up, his mother will have more time for him.  
 type I (probable condition)  
 type II (improbable condition)  
 type III (impossible condition)
4. What would you do if you saw a burglar?  
 type I (probable condition)  
 type II (improbable condition)  
 type III (impossible condition)

5. We might have had a glass of hot chocolate if you had bought some milk.

- type I (probable condition)
- type II (improbable condition)
- type III (impossible condition)

6. If I were you I should keep the secret.

- type I (probable condition)
- type II (improbable condition)
- type III (impossible condition)

**Form meaningful sentences. Match the if-clauses on the left with the main clauses on the right**

IF – CLAUSES					MAIN CLAUSES				
1. If Steven gets out,					he can save more money.				
2. If Jack was at school today,					He'll never take an umbrella with him.				
3. If Steven eats so many sweets,					He will get fat.				
4. If Jack washed his feet,					He would know about the history test.				
5. If Steven didn't foul the other players so often,					He would be in the school team.				
6. If Jack read the newspaper regularly,					He could be better in social studies.				
7. If Steven didn't play the music too loud,					His neighbor would not be angry with him.				
8. If Jack turns off the heating more often,					His parents would buy him a new one.				
9. If Steven opens the windows,					It would not smell in our room.				
10. If Jack rode his old bike more carefully,					The air in the room will be better.				
1. +...	2. +...	3. +...	4. +...	5. +...	6. + ...	7. +...	8. +...	9. +...	10. +...

**Put in the correct phrases and form a conditional sentence (type I, II, III).**

1. If we meet at 9:30, we \_\_\_\_\_ (to have) plenty of time.
2. Lisa would find the milk if she \_\_\_\_\_ (to look) in the fridge.
3. The zookeeper would have punished her with a fine if she \_\_\_\_\_ (to feed) the animals.
4. If you spoke louder, your classmates \_\_\_\_\_ (to understand) you.
5. Dan \_\_\_\_\_ (to arrive) safe if he drove slowly.
6. You \_\_\_\_\_ (to have) no trouble at school if you had done your homework.
7. If you \_\_\_\_\_ (to swim) in this lake, you'll shiver from cold.
8. The door will unlock if you \_\_\_\_\_ (to press) the green button.
9. If Jane \_\_\_\_\_ (to ask) her teacher, she'd have answered her questions.
10. I \_\_\_\_\_ (to call) the office if I were you.