

GRAMMAR

HYPOTHETICAL CONDITIONAL: PAST

2 Circle the correct options to complete the text.

Regrets – just a few

President Theodore Roosevelt once said, 'The only time you really live fully is from thirty to sixty. The young are slaves to dreams; the old [are] servants of regrets.' Indeed, it's often claimed that young people wish they¹ _____ the things they did and old people regret not doing the things they didn't do.

A very informal poll among friends and acquaintances for this column reveals that people generally regret² _____ (more) children, choosing the wrong career and missing out on the man or woman of their dreams. Then there are the odd, individual cases.

A close friend said, 'I wish³ _____ become a vegetarian earlier.⁴ _____ I done so, over the years I'd have saved about 400 chickens, 50 pigs and 30 cows.'

Another pal said, 'If I⁵ _____ such an idiot when I was eighteen, I'd never have had this tattoo done. Imagine spending your whole life with a picture of your ex-girlfriend on your arm. If only it⁶ _____ Mother Teresa or someone who deserves to be there!'

I spoke to an ex-professional footballer whose career was cut short by injury. 'If I'd been smarter, I⁷ _____ put all my eggs in one basket. I⁸ _____ at least finished school. Aged twenty-seven, I had no qualifications apart from kicking a ball.'

Of my elderly contacts, about half wished⁹ _____ followed their passion instead of taking the safe option. One grandfather-of-fifteen said, 'I might¹⁰ _____ a good actor, but at the time I had a big family to support and acting isn't a secure profession. So I became a bank clerk and spent the rest of my life cashing other people's cheques.'

As an antidote to all this doom and gloom, another friend cheerfully said, 'Regrets? If only we¹¹ _____ how good life is.' Then he told me that people should make lists of all the friends they've had, the places they've seen, the things they've enjoyed. 'I wish everyone¹² _____ the good things in life!' he said and drained his cup of tea in one gulp.

- 1 a) hadn't been doing b) hadn't done c) are doing d) have done
- 2 a) to have b) of not having c) not having d) not to have
- 3 a) I was b) I'm c) I've d) I'd
- 4 a) If b) Had c) Have d) Should
- 5 a) hadn't been b) had been c) didn't be d) not been
- 6 a) were b) was being c) 's been d) wasn't
- 7 a) didn't b) wouldn't c) wouldn't have d) would have
- 8 a) have b) must have c) would d) 'd have
- 9 a) they'd b) they c) they did d) they'd been
- 10 a) have been becoming b) have become c) had become d) become
- 11 a) realise b) can realise c) realised d) are realising
- 12 a) has appreciated b) is appreciating c) appreciates d) would appreciate

3 Match 1–8 with a)–h) to make sentences.

- 1 We wouldn't have got here so early had we
- 2 They would have lost the match but
- 3 Supposing you'd been offered a part in that film,
- 4 Tom wouldn't be sitting here right now if
- 5 If only the Johnsons had never
- 6 Imagine you'd really lost your ticket, how would
- 7 I think all of us regret
- 8 I really wish I

- a) would you have accepted?
- b) you have got home?
- c) not being nicer to Mandy.
- d) hadn't said those things to Mum.
- e) I hadn't pulled him through that window.
- f) for Thomson's goal at the end.
- g) known you weren't going to be here until 6.00.
- h) bought that house, they wouldn't be in debt now.

VOCABULARY PLUS

METAPHORS

5 Sentences 1–8 each have a word missing. Complete the sentences with the words in the box.

at downhill for go ideas of regurgitate to

regurgitate

- 1 I hate exams in which you just have to *at* the teacher's ideas.
- 2 Although she was at the peak her career, she decided to take a year off.
- 3 My tennis has gone as I've got older.
- 4 I was a crossroads in my career so I had to make a move.

- 5 I find a lot of his theories rather hard swallow.
- 6 When I joined the company, my boss said, 'You'll far.'
- 7 This report says human cloning is only a few years away. Hmm, that's food thought.
- 8 He emails me with these ridiculous half-baked on how to improve the business.