VIDEO 26

6.5 GRAMMAR

Third Conditional

I can talk about hypothetical past results of a past action using the Third Conditional.



1 3.5 **Read and listen to an incredible survival story. What two decisions did Simon Yates have to make? Do you think he made the right decisions?**

DECISION TIME

In 1985, two young climbers, Joe Simpson and Simon Yates, were the first climbers to climb the west face of the Siula Grande mountain in the Andes. But as they were coming down the mountain, Simpson fell and broke his leg badly. Yates had to make a terrible decision – should he leave his friend or should he try to get him down the mountain. He chose the second option. If he had left his friend, Simpson would have died. Yates tied himself to Simpson with a rope and they slowly came down the mountain together. Then disaster struck again. Simpson fell and was hanging over a cliff. Yates couldn't hold him. He found his penknife and decided to cut the rope. Simpson fell twenty-fi ve metres. Yates returned to base camp alone. He was sure Simpson was dead. But he also knew that if he hadn't cut the rope, he would have fallen and died too. Miraculously, Simpson didn't die. He pulled himself slowly along the ground with a broken leg for three days and nights. He arrived back at base camp just in time. Yates would have already left if Simpson had arrived a few hours later.

2 Answer the questions about the story.

1 Why didn't Yates leave Simpson when he broke his leg?
2 Why did Yates cut the rope?
3 Why did Simpson arrive at base camp 'just in time'?

3 Read the GRAMMAR FOCUS and underline the three Third Conditional sentences in the story. Do you always begin a Third Conditional sentence with *If*?

GRAMMAR FOCUS 26

Third Conditional

You use the **Third Conditional** to talk about the imaginary past result of an imaginary past event.

imaginary past event	→	imaginary past result
***if* + Past Perfect,**		***would/wouldn't have* + Past Participle**

*... if he **hadn't cut** the rope, he **would have fallen and died** too.*
(real past event: he cut the rope →
real past result: he didn't fall and die)

4 Complete more Third Conditional sentences about the story.

1 If Simpson *hadn't fallen* (not fall), he _____ (not break) his leg.
2 If Simpson _____ (not break) his leg, the climbers _____ (come down) the mountain without a problem.
3 If Yates _____ (be able) to hold Simpson, he _____ (not have to) cut the rope.
4 Yates _____ (not be able) to cut the rope if he _____ (not find) a penknife.
5 Yates _____ (not leave) Simpson on the mountain if he _____ (know) he was still alive.

5 Read about three more incredible survival stories. Use your imagination and write Third Conditional sentences to describe alternative outcomes for each story.

(A) In 2003, Aron Ralston went hiking alone in a canyon in Utah. He trapped his arm under a rock and couldn't move. He had a penknife. He cut off his own arm. Ralston survived.

(B) In 1996, Pete Goss was leading a round the world yacht race. During a terrible storm, he got an emergency call. Another competitor – Raphaël Dinelli – was in trouble and Goss's boat was the only one in the area. Goss turned back. He saved Dinelli's life but lost the race.

(C) In 1972, the pilot of a plane carrying a Uruguayan rugby team miscalculated his position and crashed 3,600 metres up in the Andes. The plane was white and the rescue teams couldn't see it. There was no food and the survivors had to eat their dead teammates. Only sixteen people survived.

A If Ralston had been hiking with a friend, his friend would have helped him.

6 SPEAKING Compare your sentences in Exercise 5 with a partner. Which story do you like best and why?

7 Use your imagination and write three Third Conditional sentences using three of the endings provided.

1 ... I would've been much happier.
2 ... I would've had a great weekend.
3 ... I wouldn't have felt so tired this morning.
4 ... I wouldn't have enjoyed it.
5 ... I wouldn't have bought one.

If I had got a bike for my last birthday, I would've been much happier.

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LIVEWORKSHEETS