

GRAMMAR

- 1 a** Choose the correct options to complete the extracts.
- a It *would* / *wouldn't* reduce crime if we used this type of punishment more.
 - b If this type of punishment were more common, we *might* / *might not* need so many prisons.
 - c If he had reported the crime, the boy *would* / *wouldn't* have ended up with a criminal record, which *could* / *couldn't* have affected him for the rest of his life.

IF SENTENCES: IMAGINED SITUATIONS (1)

We can use *if* + past simple or past perfect to describe imagined situations.

a) Use *if* + past simple to describe situations in the
(1) or (2)

If we used this punishment more frequently... (but we don't)

b) Use *if* + past perfect to describe situations in the
(3)

If he had reported the boy to the police... (but he didn't)

NOTE: Some people prefer to use *were* instead of *was* with *I/he/she/it* to describe an imagined situation in the present or future. *Were* is more formal than *was*:

If he were older, he would get a prison sentence.

Describing imagined consequences

To describe the consequence of the imagined situation, we use the modal verbs *would*, *could* or *might*.

a) To talk about an imagined consequence in the present or future, we use *would/could*, etc., + ⁽⁴⁾

b) To talk about an imagined consequence in the past, we use *would/could*, etc., + ⁽⁵⁾

Would, could or might?

We use ⁽⁶⁾ to say that this is the definite consequence of the imagined situation.

We use ⁽⁷⁾ or ⁽⁸⁾ to say that the consequence is possible, but not definite:

He would have ended up with a criminal record, which could have affected him for the rest of his life.