Language focus 2

Future clauses with *if*, *when*, etc.

Work in pairs. Read about the people in the photos again. Who do you think said these things?

a "If I don't enjoy it, I'll try something else. I'm never going to go back to teaching, though."

b "When she has the baby, we'll have to get more staff to help us."

c "I'll be fully-qualified in about three years, unless I fail my exams, of course!"

d "We can't both work full-time until our youngest child starts school in about three years' time."

e "As soon as he finds a job again, I'm going to change to working part-time."

f "I'm hoping to redecorate a lot of the hotel before I have the baby."

Analysis

1 These conjunctions join two clauses (parts) of a sentence.
as soon as *before* *if* *unless* *until* *when*
Underline them in the sentences in exercise 1. Then underline the verb that follows the conjunction.

2 The sentences in exercise 1 are about the future, but what tense is used after the conjunctions?

3 What verb forms are used in the other clause?

▶ Read Language summary B on page 148.

Practice

1 Read what Clare, Kevin and Lorna's friends say about them. Choose the most appropriate conjunction and complete with the correct verb form, affirmative or negative.

a 'When / Before Clare _____ (qualify) as a plumber, she _____ (earn) a lot of money.'
b 'Lorna _____ (make) herself ill unless / as soon as she _____ (get) more rest.'
c 'I'm sure Kevin _____ (go) mad if / when he _____ (not find) work soon.'
d 'Lorna and Ian _____ (have) to sort out their financial problems before / until they _____ (have) the baby.'
e 'I'm sure Kevin _____ (go) back to work as soon as / until it _____ (be) right for the children.'
f 'Things _____ (not get) easier for Kevin and Sally unless / until the children _____ (be) a bit older.'
g 'It _____ (be) difficult for Kevin to find a job if / when he _____ (wait) too long.'
h 'I think Clare _____ (get) bored with plumbing, when / unless she _____ (have) to do it all day every day.'

2 Work in small groups. Complete the sentences to make them true for yourself. Then tell your group.

a I'm going to buy a ... as soon as ...
b I'll continue learning English until ...
c I'll be able to relax once ...
d I'll be home by ... o'clock tonight if/unless ...
e I'm (not) going out tonight if/unless ...
f I'm going to ... next weekend if/unless ...
g I will/won't be late home today if/unless ...
h My English will/won't improve if/unless ...

3 Work in small groups. Take turns to talk about the plans and ambitions of someone you know. The others think of a consequence if their plans come true.

My friend Mina wants to become a ballet dancer.

If she wants to go to ballet school, she'll have to work very hard.

She won't earn much money unless she gets into a really big ballet company.

She'll probably have to do something else if she has children.

LIVEWORKSHEETS