

11

Life's little lessons

1 SNAPSHOT

Rites of Passage Some important life events

- | | |
|--|---|
| ☐ First birthday (or first 100 days, as in South Korea) | ☐ High school graduation |
| ☐ First haircut | ☐ 20th birthday (or 21st birthday, as in the United States and Canada) |
| ☐ Losing your first tooth | ☐ College graduation |
| ☐ First day of school | ☐ Marriage |
| ☐ Sweet 16 (or Sweet 15, as in Latin America) | ☐ Becoming a parent |
| ☐ First job | ☐ Retirement |

Source: Peace Corps Handbook for RPCV Speakers

Which rites of passage, or life events, are important in your country?

Check (✓) the events.

What are other rites of passage for people in your country?

Have any of these things recently happened to you or someone you know?

2 CONVERSATION I was really immature.

A Listen and practice.

Alan: So what were you like when you were younger?

Carol: When I was a kid, I was kind of irresponsible.

Alan: You? Really? What made you change?

Carol: Graduating from high school.

Alan: What do you mean?

Carol: Well, until I graduated, I'd never had any important responsibilities. But then, I went off to college. . .

Alan: I know what you mean. I was really immature when I was a teenager.

Carol: So what made you change?

Alan: I think I became more mature after I got my first job and moved away from home. Once I had a job, I became totally independent.

Carol: Where did you work?

Alan: I worked for my dad at the bank.

B Listen to the rest of the conversation.

What was another turning point for Carol? for Alan?



3 GRAMMAR FOCUS

Time clauses

Before I had my first job, I was really immature.

After I got my first job, I became more mature.

Once I had a job, I became totally independent.

The moment I moved away from home, I felt like a different person.

As soon as I got my own bank account, I started to be more responsible.

Until I graduated, I'd never had any important responsibilities.

By the time I graduated from high school, I had already started working.

A Match the clauses in column A with appropriate information in column B. Then compare with a partner.

A

1. By the time I was 15,
2. Until I started working part-time,
3. The moment I got my first paycheck,
4. As soon as I left home,
5. Once I started sharing an apartment,
6. After I began a relationship,
7. Before I traveled abroad,
8. Until I got really sick,

B

- a. I didn't appreciate my own country.
- b. I began to understand the value of money.
- c. I learned that love can hurt!
- d. I realized that I wasn't a child anymore.
- e. I had learned how to take care of myself.
- f. I learned how to get along better with people.
- g. I had never saved any money.
- h. I hadn't understood the importance of good health.

B Which of the clauses in column A can you relate to your life? Add your own information to those clauses. Then compare with a partner.

"The moment I got my first paycheck, I became more independent."

C GROUP WORK What do you think people learn from these events? Write sentences using time clauses in the present. Then take turns reading and talking about them.

1. getting a credit card
2. going out on your first date
3. getting your first job
4. getting your driver's license
5. buying your first bike, moped, or car
6. opening your own bank account
7. getting married
8. becoming a parent

1. Once you get a credit card, you learn it's important not to overspend.



Complete the chart.

Event	How it affected him or her
1. Sally	
2. Henry	
3. Debbie	

B  Listen again. What do these three people have in common?

5 **SPEAKING** Milestones

A PAIR WORK In your country, how old are people when these things happen?

get a driver's license	graduate from college
begin to date	get married
move out of their parents' home	retire

B GROUP WORK Choose three milestones. What do you think life is like before and after each one? Join another pair and discuss.

"Before people get a driver's license, they are very dependent on their parents. Once they get a license, they ..."



6 **WORD POWER** Behavior and personality

A PAIR WORK At what age do you think people possess these traits? Check (✓) one or more ages for each trait.

	In their teens	In their 20s	In their 30s	In their 40s	In their 60s
ambitious	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
argumentative	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
carefree	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
conscientious	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
naive	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
pragmatic	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
rebellious	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
sensible	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐
sophisticated	☐	☐	☐	☐	☐

B GROUP WORK Use the words in part A to describe people you know.

"My older brother is argumentative. He disagrees with me about everything!"

7 PERSPECTIVES I should have ...

A Listen to Maya Misery talk about her regrets. Do you have any similar regrets?



"I should have studied something more practical while I was in college."

"If I'd listened to my mother, I would have learned to play a musical instrument."

"If I'd been more ambitious in college, I could have learned to speak another language."

"I shouldn't have waited so long to choose a major."

"If I hadn't wasted so much money last year, I would have moved into my own apartment by now."

"If I hadn't been so irresponsible, I could have gotten better grades."

B What do you suggest to help Maya feel better?

8 GRAMMAR FOCUS

Expressing regret and describing hypothetical situations

Use should have + the past participle to express regret.

I should have studied something more practical when I was in college.

I shouldn't have waited so long to choose a major.

Use would have + the past participle to express probable outcomes in hypothetical situations.

Use could have + the past participle to express possible outcomes.

If I'd listened to my mother, I **would have learned** to play a musical instrument.

If I hadn't been so irresponsible, I **could have gotten** better grades.

A For each statement, write a sentence expressing regret. Then talk with a partner about which statements are true for you.

1. I was very rebellious when I was younger.
2. I didn't pay attention to what I ate as a kid.
3. I didn't make many friends in high school.
4. I was very argumentative as a teenager.
5. I was too naive when I started looking for my first job.

1. I should have been less rebellious when I was younger.

B Match the clauses in column A with appropriate information in column B.

A

1. If I'd listened to my parents,
2. If I'd been more active,
3. If I'd been more ambitious,
4. If I'd studied harder in school,
5. If I'd saved my money,

B

- a. I wouldn't have had to borrow so much.
- b. I could have learned a lot more.
- c. I would have made more pragmatic decisions.
- d. I wouldn't have gained all this weight.
- e. I could have gotten a promotion.

C Add your own information to the clauses in column A. Then compare in groups.

9 INTERCHANGE 11 When I was younger, ...

Imagine if things were different. Go to Interchange 11 on page 125.

10 PRONUNCIATION Reduction of have and been

A Listen and practice. Notice how **have** and **been** are reduced in these sentences.

I should ~~have been~~ less selfish when I was younger.
If I'd ~~been~~ more ambitious, I could ~~have~~ gotten a promotion.

B PAIR WORK Complete these sentences and practice them. Pay attention to the reduced forms of **have** and **been**.

I should have been ... when I was younger. If I'd been more ..., I could have ...
I should have been ... in high school. If I'd been less ..., I would have ...

11 LISTENING Regrets

A Listen to people describe their regrets. What does each person regret?

	What does he or she regret?	Why does he or she regret it?
1. Alex		
2. Yi-yun		
3. Jacob		

B Listen again. Why does he or she regret it?

12 WRITING A letter of apology

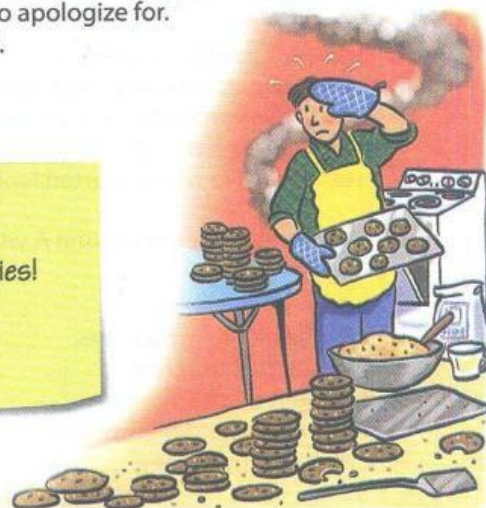
A Think about something you regret doing that you want to apologize for. Consider the questions below. Then write a letter of apology.

What did you do? What were the consequences?
Is there any way you can undo those consequences?

Dear Jonathan,

I'm really sorry I forgot to tell you that my party was canceled. You worked so hard making all those cookies! I should've called or sent you a text before you started baking them, but I got really busy at work and didn't get around to it. If I'd been more conscientious, ...

B PAIR WORK Read your partner's letter. Talk about what you would have done if you'd had a similar regret.



Milestones Around the World

Scan the article. Where does each milestone take place?
Who is each milestone for?



EGYPT

In Egypt, many families with new babies celebrate *El Sebou'*, which means *the seventh*. Some say the ancient pharaohs believed that children who lived to be seven days old were ready for a long and healthy life. Family and friends meet at the parents' house, and the baby is put in a round wooden cradle called a *ghorbal*. Songs are sung, and the baby is rocked gently to awaken its senses. Salt is scattered to keep evil away, and the mother carries the baby around the house. Children follow with lit candles. Finally, bags full of candies, sweets, and gold- and silver-like coins are distributed to all attendees.



MEXICO

Families in Mexico and several other Latin American countries have a special celebration for *La quinceañera*, the birthday girl who turns 15 years old. It marks a girl's passage from girlhood to womanhood. Wearing a spectacular dress and carrying a bouquet of flowers, the girl arrives at a church for a thanksgiving service. Then there is a party with live music, dancing, and plenty of delicious food. An important moment is when the girl cuts a multilayered birthday cake.



VANUATU

On a single island in the South Pacific nation of Vanuatu, young men hurl themselves from a 30-meter wooden tower, with only vines tied around their ankles to break their fall. The original bungee jumpers, these "land divers", jump to prove their manhood. The goal is for the young man's shoulder to just touch the ground. The vines' measurement must be exact as there is no safety net. When a young man jumps, his mother holds a favorite childhood item. After the jump, she throws the item away, demonstrating that he is now a man.

A Read the article. Find the words in *italics* in the article. Then match each word with its meaning.

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--|
| 1. <i>senses</i> | a. thrown in different directions |
| 2. <i>scattered</i> | b. demonstrate |
| 3. <i>spectacular</i> | c. throw |
| 4. <i>plenty</i> | d. sight, hearing, taste, touch, and smell |
| 5. <i>hurl</i> | e. very exciting to look at |
| 6. <i>prove</i> | f. more than enough |

B Check (✓) the correct milestone(s) for each description.

	El Sebou'	La quinceañera	Land diving
1. The person's family participates.	☐	☐	☐
2. There is a religious ceremony.	☐	☐	☐
3. Children carry candles.	☐	☐	☐
4. The event is dangerous.	☐	☐	☐
5. The event requires special clothing.	☐	☐	☐

C GROUP WORK Which of the milestones do you think is the most serious? Which is the most fun? Why do you think people celebrate milestones like these?