

# 20 If only . . .

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**Type of activity**

whole class

matching

**Function practised**

expressing past regrets

**Exponent**

*I wish I hadn't . . .*

*I shouldn't have . . .*

*If I had done X, I wouldn't be doing Y now.*

*If only I hadn't . . .*

## **Lexical areas**

life decisions

## **Problem vocabulary**

*fulfilling, benefits, colleagues, engaged, promotion, put off, qualifications, apprenticed, carpenter, heartbroken, jealous, routine, frustrating, retrain, put up with, make a break, stressful, bustle, dead-end*

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## **How to use the game**

Copy one card for each person in the class, making sure that as far as possible each role card has a 'mate'.

Give out one role card to each student in the class.

Tell them that they all regret some decision they made at sometime in the past, but that somewhere in the class is someone who took the path that they failed to take.

**The object of the game is to find the person who did what you didn't.**

To do this, they must move around the class, talking to other students, and describing their past lives and in particular their past regrets.

When they find the person who *did* do what they regret not having done, they should go and sit down together and discuss the situation further: maybe they can offer each other some advice!

You are a successful businesswoman at the top of your profession. You have everything you want: a fulfilling career, a good salary, comfortable house, car ... You enjoy your job and the benefits it brings. You have plenty of friends and get on well with your colleagues at work, so you aren't lonely. You do regret one thing, however: you were once engaged to a boy from your home town. A few years ago, you had to make a difficult decision: you were offered promotion in the company you work for, but this meant moving to another town. Your fiancé did not want to leave his job, so you had to choose between marriage and a career. You chose a career. Recently, though, you've been wondering if you made the right decision. You haven't met anyone else since leaving him, and you find yourself thinking about him more and more ...

You are married with three small children. You love your husband and children, but in many ways you wonder if you made the right decision in marrying so young. You gave up your job when you got married, and now you think that that was a big mistake. You were doing well in your career, and had just been offered promotion, but at the time, marriage and a family seemed much more important to you. Now you wish you had kept your job and put off having children until later.

You work in a factory – and you hate it! The trouble is, you left school at 16 with no qualifications because you were bored at school and were in a hurry to get a job and earn some money. How you wish you'd worked harder when you had the chance and done some kind of training course when you left school: you might have a more interesting job now if you'd been sensible then. You're trying to take some exams at night school, but studying is so much harder when you're older, and it's difficult to study as well as work full-time.

You spent the best years of your life working for examinations – school, college, university, and two years training after university. What a waste of time! Your parents wanted you to be an accountant, so to please them, you took an accountancy course and then did two years training – and more studying for more exams – with a firm of accountants in London. You hated every minute of it! But it wasn't until last year that you finally decided you had to make a change; that you wanted to leave office life and work with your hands instead of your head. You'd always been good at and enjoyed woodwork, so you became apprenticed to a carpenter and learnt how to make furniture. You're much happier now, but regret spending the ten best years of your life studying for exams that you didn't need.

