

## F Language study 3

Look at these situations and imagine what each person might say, using *I wish* ...

**Remember:** use *would(n't)* when you are complaining about someone else's behaviour, but do not say: *I wish I would* ...

Examples:

Jenny's son has a lot of annoying habits.

*I wish he wouldn't make such a mess.*

Anna told her horrible boss exactly what she thought of him yesterday, and now she is worried.

*I wish I hadn't been so rude to him.*

1 Jenny's son is complaining about his mother.

2 George sold his shares a few weeks ago for 235p and now they have gone up to 894p.

3 Jason is fed up with the behaviour of Sam, one of the other students in his class.

4 Lars has just started his military service, and doesn't like the way they treat him.

5 Mick is in prison.

6 Harry has just split up with his girlfriend because she was unhappy with the way he behaved.

7 Peter went for a drive and is now completely lost.

8 Mrs Green's children have left home, and they rarely get in touch with her.

## 14 Wishes, regrets and preferences

### 14.1 Wishes and regrets ▷ pp. 43, 47

1 **I wish I were rich!**  
**If only we could see each other more often!**  
**I wish we didn't live in this terrible place.**

2 **I wish you wouldn't make so much noise!**  
**If only they would stop that terrible noise!**  
**I wish it would stop raining!**

3 **I wish I had never married him.**  
**If only I had studied harder at school.**  
**I wish you hadn't told me your secret.**

1 These examples express wishes (often suggesting that the speaker is sorry about something – *I'm sorry I'm not rich*).  
**Notice** the 'past' form of the verbs (*were, could see, didn't live*) after *I wish* and *if only* as with conditional 2. ▷ GS 4.2

2 These examples express wishes for a change in the future and often suggest that the speaker is angry or dissatisfied about (or tired of) the present situation. ▷ GS 7.3.

3 These examples express wishes or regrets about the past (*I wish I had studied harder but I didn't!*).  
**Notice** the past perfect is used in the same way as conditional 3 sentences. ▷ GS 4.3

*I wish* and *If only* ▷ GS 14.1

**A Which of these sentences (a or b) expresses most clearly that the speaker is sorry about something or regrets it?**

- a I don't want to be here.  
b I wish I weren't here.
- a I want to have more money.  
b If only I had more money.
- a I hope I can come to your party.  
b I wish I could come to your party.
- a I want to be in London now.  
b If only I were in London now.

**B Rewrite the second sentence in each pair. Use no more than five words including the word in bold. Do NOT change this word.**

- I'm sorry I can't speak English perfectly.  
**wish** I \_\_\_\_\_ English perfectly.
- I'm sorry I can't do this exercise.  
**only** If \_\_\_\_\_ this exercise.
- I'm sorry I'm not rich.  
**only** If \_\_\_\_\_ rich.
- Are you ever sorry that you aren't rich?  
**wish** Do you ever \_\_\_\_\_ rich?
- I'm sorry I can't answer that question.  
**wish** I \_\_\_\_\_ that question.
- It's a pity the weather isn't better today.  
**only** If \_\_\_\_\_ better today.
- I'm sorry you don't love me.  
**only** If \_\_\_\_\_ me.
- It's a pity you can't understand how I feel about you.  
**wish** I \_\_\_\_\_ how I feel about you.

**A Explain the difference in meaning in these pairs of sentences.**

- 1 I don't think you're very interested.  
I don't think you are very interesting.
- 2 The problem with you is that you're bored.  
The problem with you is that you're boring.
- 3 You aren't very amusing.  
You aren't very amused.

**Repeat the sentences that people do not like to hear about themselves. Then describe a situation or situations in which you might say the other sentences.**

Example: I don't think you're very interested.

► *Perhaps I would say this if I told someone a story and I could see that he or she wasn't listening.*

**B Read this text and the words in capital letters below it. Change the form of the word so that it fits the numbered space. An example is given (0).**

I saw a film last week that was not very (0) *interesting*. It was a comedy but it was not very (1) \_\_\_\_\_. But perhaps the real problem was not that the film was bad but that I was (2) \_\_\_\_\_. The weather was very (3) \_\_\_\_\_ that day too. To add to my problems, I was (4) \_\_\_\_\_ because I had just had some very (5) \_\_\_\_\_ news. I had been hoping to get a very (6) \_\_\_\_\_ job that someone else got instead. In fact, I was very (7) \_\_\_\_\_ I didn't get it because I was (8) \_\_\_\_\_ that I had all the right qualifications. However, (9) \_\_\_\_\_ things like this happen all the time, don't they? So why was I (10) \_\_\_\_\_?

- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| 0 INTEREST   | 6 INTEREST   |
| 1 AMUSE      | 7 SHOCK      |
| 2 DEPRESS    | 8 CONVINCED  |
| 3 DEPRESS    | 9 DISAPPOINT |
| 4 DISAPPOINT | 10 SURPRISE  |
| 5 SURPRISE   |              |

**C In groups or pairs, say one or two sentences about each of the following things.**

- 1 Some news that you would find surprising.
- 2 What you do when you are bored.
- 3 Something which you have found boring.

*I wish you would/wouldn't do it*  
*I wish you had/hadn't done it* ► GS 14.1

**A Which two examples below could mean 'Please do or don't do this in the future'? Explain what the other two examples mean.**

- 1 I wish you would phone me.
- 2 I wish you had phoned me.
- 3 I wish you wouldn't lie to me.
- 4 I wish you hadn't lied to me.

**B Complete the second sentence in each pair. Always begin the second sentence with *I wish*.**

Example: I'm sorry I said that.

► *I wish I hadn't said that.*

- 1 Please don't say things like that.
- 2 Please don't do that.
- 3 I'm angry because you said that.
- 4 I'm angry because you did that.
- 5 Don't ask me so many questions.
- 6 Don't smoke here!
- 7 I'm sorry I asked you that question.
- 8 It was wrong of you to ask me that question.