



APEX ENGLISH

Your voice. Global.

B2 · GENERAL ENGLISH

UNIT 5 · 5B

No regrets

Theme · Inner Worlds



Unit 5 · 5B

No regrets

Theme: Inner Worlds



Learning objectives

- Use 'wish + past simple / could' to express dissatisfaction with the present.
- Use 'wish + past perfect' to talk about regrets in the past.
- Use 'wish + would' for annoying habits and things you want to change.
- Distinguish 'I'm bored' from 'It's boring' — mastering -ed vs -ing feelings adjectives.
- Speak with natural sentence rhythm — stressing content words, reducing function words.
- Recognise falling intonation for regret and rising intonation for hopeful wishes.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Class Book

Warm-up · one small regret

Read the six 'I wish...' openers below. Pick ONE and finish it out loud for your partner in a full sentence — 30 seconds each. No dictionaries, no shame.

I wish I had learned...

I wish I hadn't said...

I wish I could speak...

I wish people wouldn't...

I wish I had spent more time with...

I wish I hadn't spent so much time on...

followUp: Every sentence you just made used the grammar of today's lesson: 'wish + past' for now, 'wish + past perfect' for regrets, 'wish + would' for other people's annoying habits.

Lead-in: three kinds of regret

Match each situation to the *FEELING* it usually creates. Then, in pairs, turn each one into a full sentence with 'I wish...'.
1. You skipped Grandma's 80th birthday for a work meeting...
2. You never learned to swim, and now your kids want to go to the beach every weekend...
3. Your neighbour plays loud music at 2am, every single Friday...
4. You bought an expensive gadget you've barely touched...
5. You didn't apply for a scholarship because you assumed you wouldn't get it...
6. You told a small lie years ago that still bothers you today...

a) frustrated / trapped

b) irritated / fed up

c) guilty / ashamed

d) foolish / disappointed in yourself

e) regretful / haunted

f) lost opportunity / bittersweet

1 → c · I wish I HADN'T skipped her birthday. She meant the world to me.

2 → a · I wish I HAD learned to swim as a child.

3 → b · I wish my neighbour WOULDNT play music at two in the morning.

4 → d · I wish I HADN'T bought it — total waste of money.

5 → f · I wish I HAD applied. I'll never know what would have happened.

6 → e · I wish I HADN'T lied. It's still on my mind, twenty years later.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



followUp: Notice: for RIGHT NOW → past simple ('I wish I had more time'). For a REGRET IN THE PAST → past perfect ('I wish I HAD called'). For OTHER PEOPLE'S habits → would ('I wish they wouldn't shout').

Reading: the four regrets that shape a life

In 2022, the American writer Daniel Pink published the largest ever survey of human regret — more than sixteen thousand people in one hundred and five countries, asked one simple question: 'What is the biggest regret of your life?'. What he found surprised almost everyone.

Across every culture, every income group, every age, the same four kinds of regret appeared again and again.

FOUNDATION regrets are the boring ones: I wish I had saved more, exercised more, gone to the dentist. They're the regrets of not doing the small, unglamorous things that quietly build a good life. They rarely feel urgent — until they do.

BOLDNESS regrets are the opposite. I wish I had taken the risk. I wish I had spoken to her. I wish I had started the business, quit the job, moved to the other city. Pink's research is unambiguous: in the long run, people regret the risks they DIDN'T take far more than the ones that failed.

MORAL regrets are the heaviest. I wish I had been kinder to my brother. I wish I hadn't cheated. I wish I hadn't stayed silent when I should have spoken. These don't fade with time — they harden.

But the deepest, most painful regret of all — the one that turned up most often, in every language — was the CONNECTION regret. I wish I had stayed in touch. I wish I had said 'I love you' more often. I wish I had called Dad the week before he died. Not a single one of Pink's sixteen thousand respondents said, at the end of a long life, 'I wish I'd worked more hours at the office'.

The comforting news, Pink argues, is that most connection regrets can still be repaired. Send the message. Make the call. Buy the plane ticket. In his data, more than seventy per cent of the awkward 'sorry it's been a while' messages got a warm reply within a week. Regret, he concludes, is not the enemy of a good life. Ignoring it is.

1. How many people did Daniel Pink survey, and in how many countries?
(A) 1,600 in 15 countries
(B) 16,000 in 105 countries
(C) 160,000 in 5 countries
2. Which type of regret involves small, unglamorous, long-term habits?
(A) Boldness
(B) Foundation
(C) Moral
3. According to the research, do people MORE regret the risks they took or the risks they didn't take?
(A) Risks they took (that failed)
(B) Risks they didn't take
(C) Both about equally

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



4. Which type of regret was the deepest and most common?
- (A) Foundation regrets
 - (B) Moral regrets
 - (C) Connection regrets
5. What does Pink recommend doing about most connection regrets?
- (A) Accept them — they can't be fixed
 - (B) Try to reach out; most people reply warmly
 - (C) Wait until the other person contacts you

Feelings vocabulary in context

Match the words from the text to their closest meaning.

haunt (v) — to keep coming back into your mind painfully

harden (v) — to become stronger, less flexible, more painful

unglamorous — not exciting or attractive; ordinary

urgent — needing immediate attention

bittersweet — mixing sweet feelings with sad ones

ashamed — feeling bad about something you did or are

Vocabulary: verbs vs -ed / -ing adjectives for feelings

intro: In English, feelings can be expressed as verbs (I annoyed him), as -ED adjectives (I was annoyed) or as -ING adjectives (that was annoying). Getting this right is the single fastest way to sound more natural at B2. Master the pattern once, use it for the rest of your life.

1. **label:** The golden rule

2. **label:** Common pairs (positive)

3. **label:** Common pairs (negative)

4. **label:** Regret vocabulary

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

**practice**

Complete each sentence with the correct form (verb, -ed or -ing) of the word in brackets.

1. That documentary was really ____ (interest). I couldn't stop watching.

2. I'm so ____ (frustrate) with the new software — nothing works properly.

3. Honestly, I find long train journeys really ____ (relax).

4. She was ____ (embarrass) when she realised she'd been calling him by the wrong name.

5. The results were incredibly ____ (disappoint) after all that hard work.

6. I'm not ____ (bore) — I just have a resting neutral face!

7. That story about the little dog rescued after the earthquake really ____ me (move).

8. It ____ me (annoy) when people don't reply to messages for three days.

Practice 2 — collocations & rewrite

Rewrite each sentence replacing the underlined phrase with ONE word from this lesson's vocabulary. Keep the meaning identical.

1. She still <u>blames herself harshly</u> for missing her friend's wedding.

2. He gave me a <u>regretful, slightly wry</u> smile before admitting his mistake.

3. Looking back, with the <u>understanding you get after the event</u>, I would have studied law instead.

4. The lecture was so <u>completely fascinating</u> that two hours felt like ten minutes.

5. The delay <u>strongly irritated</u> everyone waiting at the gate.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Practice 3 — discursive writing

prompt: Reflect on a regret you have — big or small — and how, looking back with hindsight, it changed your priorities or relationships.

Use at least FOUR of the target words from this unit.

Vary sentence length; include one relative clause.

Aim for a reflective, cohesive C1 register.

sample: For years I berated myself, quietly and often, for not visiting my grandfather more often before he died, a decision that still fills me with something close to shame. In hindsight, the excuses I gave myself at the time seem almost laughably unglamorous: too busy, too tired, always next week. I remember feeling rueful whenever his name came up in conversation, as though the feeling itself might somehow apologise for me. What haunts me most is not the absence itself but how easily it could have been avoided. These days, whenever I have second thoughts about calling someone or making the effort to visit, I try to remember that connection regrets, unlike foundation ones, rarely give you a second chance.



Grammar focus: 'wish' for the present, the future and the past

1. WISH + PAST SIMPLE — for the present — Use for something you'd like to be different right now. • I wish I **HAD** more time. (I don't have enough time.) • I wish she **LIVED** closer. (She lives far away.) • I wish it **WASN'T** so hot in here. ('weren't' is also correct and more formal.) Same structure as the second conditional — the past form signals unreality.

2. WISH + COULD — for present ability — Use for skills, freedoms or possibilities you don't currently have. • I wish I **COULD** speak French. • I wish we **COULD** stay another week. • I wish he **COULD** understand how I feel.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



3. WISH + WOULD — for other people (or things) you find annoying — Use for behaviour that irritates you and that you'd like to change. Almost NEVER used with 'I' (you can control yourself, so 'wish I would' is odd). • I wish you WOULD stop interrupting me. • I wish it WOULDN'T rain every weekend. • I wish my neighbours WOULDN'T play music at 3am. ✗ 'I wish I would exercise more.' → ✓ 'I wish I exercised more.'

4. WISH + PAST PERFECT — for regrets about the past — Use for things you did / didn't do and now regret. This is the grammar of true regret. • I wish I HAD STUDIED harder at university. • I wish I HADN'T said that. (I said it and regret it.) • I wish they HAD TOLD us earlier. • I wish I HADN'T SPENT so much time worrying.

5. 'If only...' — the emotional cousin of 'I wish...' — Same three patterns, but stronger and often used in dramatic or emotional speech. • If only I had more money! (present) • If only he WOULD listen to me! (annoying) • If only I HAD said sorry before she left. (past regret)

6. Common mistakes — ✗ I wish I have more time. → ✓ I wish I HAD more time. ✗ I wish I would speak French. → ✓ I wish I COULD speak French. ✗ I wish I studied harder last year. → ✓ I wish I HAD STUDIED harder last year. ✗ I wish it wouldn't so hot. → ✓ I wish it WASN'T so hot. (it, weather = present, not habit)

Exercise A — present or past regret?

Put the verb in the correct form: past simple, could, would or past perfect.

1. I wish I (be) ____ taller — everything's designed for tall people.

2. I wish I (study) ____ harder at university. I could have got a better job.

3. I wish you (stop) ____ leaving your dirty cups everywhere!

4. I wish I (can) ____ play the piano like her.

5. I wish we (not / miss) ____ that train yesterday.

6. I wish it (not / be) ____ so cold today — I'd love to go swimming.

7. I wish I (know) ____ his email — I need to contact him.

8. I wish my grandmother (teach) ____ me her recipes when she was still alive.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

**Exercise B — choose the correct form**

Choose the option that sounds most natural.

1. I wish it ____ raining. I want to go for a walk.
(A) stopped
(B) would stop
(C) had stopped
2. I wish I ____ what to say to her right now.
(A) knew
(B) would know
(C) had known
3. I wish I ____ to that concert last Friday — everyone said it was incredible.
(A) went
(B) had gone
(C) would go
4. I wish I ____ speak Italian fluently.
(A) would
(B) could
(C) had
5. I wish my phone battery ____ so quickly.
(A) didn't die
(B) wouldn't die
(C) hadn't died
6. I wish I ____ so many things I now regret.
(A) didn't say
(B) wouldn't say
(C) hadn't said

Exercise C — spot & fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. I wish I have more free time.

2. I wish I would speak Chinese.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



3. I wish I studied harder for last week's exam.

4. I wish it wouldn't be so cold today.

5. I wish I didn't say that this morning. I feel awful.

6. I wish my brother would be on time — just once!

Exercise D — the letter of regrets

Complete the letter using *ONE* form from the box (each used once).

Word bank: had known · could · wouldn't check · had spent · hadn't spent · would call · were · had listened · wasn't · could go

Dear old friend,

I don't know if you'll ever read this, but I need to write it anyway. Twenty years is a long time to be silent.

I wish I (1) ___ how much your friendship meant to me back then. I wish I (2) ___ more time with you and less time chasing things that didn't matter.

I wish I (3) ___ so many weekends at the office when you invited me for lunch. I wish I (4) ___ to your advice about my first marriage — you saw it before I did.

Now, honestly? I wish I (5) ___ turn the clock back one afternoon and just have coffee with you again.

There are new regrets, too. I wish I (6) ___ my email a hundred times a day. I wish I (7) ___ so distracted all the time. I wish you (8) ___ me back — but I know that's not really up to you.

If I (9) ___ you, I probably wouldn't reply either. I wouldn't blame you.

But if you ever (10) ___ answer, even one word, I'd be at the coffee shop on Baker Street tomorrow morning. Same one as always.

Yours, still.

had known

had spent

hadn't spent

had listened

could

wouldn't check

wasn't

would call

were

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



could go

Listening: 'I wish I'd gone to art school'

Two friends over dinner. One admits a life-long regret about not going to art school. The other pushes back gently — and turns the regret into an action for tonight. Play twice.

Before you listen

What's ONE thing you wish you had done differently by the age you are now?

Predict: does the second speaker agree with the first speaker's regret, or challenge it?

First listen — gist

1. What is the first speaker's biggest regret?

2. How does the second speaker try to reframe the regret?

3. What does the first speaker agree to do that same evening?

Second listen — detail

1. How does the first speaker say she feels when walking past a gallery?

2. Who did she blame in the past for her choice at 17?

3. What 'If I were you...' advice does the second speaker give?

4. What common line does the second speaker point out about time?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



5. What promise does the second speaker make about the first paintings?

6. How many past-perfect 'wish' clauses can you count in the dialogue? (approx.)

A: You know what I regret most? Not going to art school when I had the chance. I wish I'd applied. I wish I hadn't listened to everyone telling me it wasn't practical.

B: But you were seventeen. You did what felt safe. If I were you, I wouldn't be so hard on myself.

A: Maybe. But I'm forty now, and every time I walk past a gallery I feel this pain. I wish I could paint even half as well as the people showing there.

B: So paint. You wish you could paint — start tonight. Nobody's asking you to sell anything. I wish I could just decide something and do it, the way you could, right now.

A: It's not that simple. I wish my mother had encouraged me a little. She meant well, but every time I brought up art, she'd change the subject.

B: That's fair. But you can't fix the past. If I were you, I'd stop wishing you'd made different choices at seventeen, and start choosing differently at forty. That, you can actually control.

A: I know. I know. I just wish I'd figured this out ten years ago.

B: Everyone says that. Ten years from now you'll wish you'd started tonight. So, start tonight.

A: Okay. Fine. Tonight. If I buy paints on the way home, will you promise not to laugh at what I make?

B: I promise. I really do. And if it's terrible, I promise to lie beautifully.

Speaking: 'One regret, one repair'

One minute solo. Share ONE regret and ONE small repair you could make this week. You MUST use: (a) TWO 'I wish I had / hadn't...' clauses, (b) ONE 'I wish I could...', (c) ONE 'If only... would...', (d) TWO -ed / -ing feeling adjectives. Partner scores ■ for each.

1. **label:** The regret · **hint:** 'I wish I had / hadn't...'

2. **label:** How it makes you feel · **hint:** 'It's frustrating / I feel guilty...'

3. **label:** What you wish were different now · **hint:** 'I wish I could...'

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



4. **label:** What annoys you about others · **hint:** 'If only they would...'

5. **label:** The tiny repair this week · **hint:** 'This week, I'm going to...'

example: Honestly, my biggest regret is that I wish I had stayed closer to my grandmother in her last two years. I was so busy with work that I stopped visiting, and it's really painful to think about now — it's absolutely heartbreaking, actually. I wish I could still pick up the phone and call her. If only my younger self would have understood how little time was left. There's nothing I can do about that anymore. But this week, I'm going to call my aunt, who was closest to her, and just listen to her tell me stories about my grandmother for an hour. That's the small repair. It won't undo the regret — but it might soften it a little.

challenge: ■ Extra ■ if you use 'If only...' with real emotion (rising or falling intonation).

Writing mini-task — 'A letter I'll probably never send' (100–120 words)

Write a short letter to someone about a regret. It can be to your younger self, an old friend, a family member — anyone. You **MUST** use: at least 3 'wish + past perfect' regrets, 1 'wish + could' hope, 1 'if only... would...', 2 -ed / -ing feeling adjectives. Underline every target structure.

Wrap-up · the three envelopes

Three symbolic envelopes. Pick **ONE** and finish the sentence out loud. Class votes on the most moving answer.

1. **label:** Envelope 1 — to my younger self · **prompt:** If I could write to myself at 18, I'd say: 'I wish you would...'

2. **label:** Envelope 2 — to someone I miss · **prompt:** 'I wish I had told you...'

3. **label:** Envelope 3 — to my future self · **prompt:** 'Please don't ever wish you had...'

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Workbook — home practice



Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

No regrets - Workbook

Extra practice for home study · with answer keys

1. Vocabulary - -ed vs -ing feelings adjectives

Choose the correct form.

1. I'm so ____ with this puzzle. I've been trying for two hours.
(A) frustrating
(B) frustrated
(C) frustrate
2. That film was really ____ - I even cried at the end.
(A) stirred
(B) stirring
(C) stir
3. Sorry, I'm not ____ - my face just looks like this!
(A) boring
(B) bored
(C) bore
4. The results were ____ - we all expected higher marks.
(A) disappointed
(B) disappointing
(C) disappoint
5. I was so ____ when I found out my sister was moving to Japan.
(A) surprising
(B) surprised
(C) surprise
6. His constant complaining is really ____ .
(A) exasperating
(B) exasperated
(C) exasperate

2. Vocabulary - regret words in context

Complete each sentence with ONE word from the box.

BOX: hindsight · berate · haunts · rueful · bittersweet · second thoughts

1. In ____, I should have accepted their job offer.
2. The last conversation with my father still ____ me, ten years later.
3. Try not to ____ yourself for a decision you made when you were young.
4. She looked ____ when she talked about her old flat.
5. Saying goodbye to Rome was ____ - sweet memories, painful to leave.
6. I'm starting to have ____ about buying such an expensive car.

3. Vocabulary - discursive writing

Is the concept of a life with 'no regrets' a realistic goal, or is it a harmful myth that prevents us from learning from our mistakes?

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

Checklist:

- ☐ Use at least 4 regret-related vocabulary items
 - ☐ Maintain a formal, discursive register
 - ☐ Use cohesive devices to link your arguments
 - ☐ Check for varied C1-level grammatical structures
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-

4. Grammar - wish + past simple / could / would

Choose the correct verb form.

1. I wish I ____ speak more languages.
(A) would
(B) could
(C) had
2. I wish it ____ so cold. My hands are freezing.
(A) wasn't
(B) wouldn't be
(C) hadn't been
3. I wish my flatmate ____ leaving dishes in the sink for days.
(A) stopped
(B) would stop
(C) had stopped
4. I wish I ____ more sleep. I'm exhausted.
(A) got
(B) would get
(C) had got
5. I wish I ____ swim. Everyone else is going in the pool.
(A) could

(B) would

(C) had

6. I wish people ____ interrupt me when I'm concentrating.

(A) didn't

(B) wouldn't

(C) hadn't

5. Grammar - wish + past perfect (regrets)

Rewrite each sentence as a regret using 'I wish...'

1. I didn't call her last night.
2. I spent too much money on holiday.
3. I didn't learn a musical instrument as a child.
4. We didn't buy that flat when it was cheap.
5. I told him about the surprise party.
6. I didn't say goodbye properly.

6. Grammar - put the words in order

Rearrange the words to form a correct sentence.

1. wish / harder / I / had / studied / I
2. would / neighbours / my / wish / I / quieter / be
3. only / I / spoken / had / up / if / earlier
4. wish / could / travel / more / I
5. wasn't / wish / raining / it / I
6. hadn't / that / I / said / wish / I

7. Grammar - spot and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. I wish I have more money.
2. I wish I would play the guitar.
3. I wish I studied harder last term.
4. I wish it wouldn't be so noisy in here.
5. I wish my brother would being on time!
6. If only I didn't say that yesterday.

8. Reading - true / false / not given

Read the short text and mark each statement T, F or NG.

In 2021, an Australian palliative nurse called Bronnie Ware published the results of years listening to dying patients. She noticed the same regrets came up again and again. The top five were, in order: 'I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected.' 'I wish I hadn't worked so hard.' 'I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.' 'I wish I'd stayed in touch with my friends.' 'I wish I'd let myself be happier.' She noticed something surprising: none of her patients regretted taking risks or spending money on experiences. The regrets were almost always about the risks NOT taken and the connections

NOT kept.

1. Bronnie Ware is a doctor. [T / F / NG]
2. The top regret was about not working hard enough. [T / F / NG]
3. One regret was about not expressing feelings. [T / F / NG]
4. Ware surveyed more than a million people. [T / F / NG]
5. Most regrets were about risks people DIDN'T take. [T / F / NG]
6. Many patients regretted spending too much money on experiences. [T / F / NG]

9. Writing - guided task

Write 80-100 words: 'A regret I'm ready to let go of.' Include at least 2 'wish + past perfect', 1 'wish + could', 1 'if only + would', and 2 -ed/-ing feeling adjectives.

Checklist:

- [] 80-100 words
- [] 2 'wish + past perfect' regrets
- [] 1 'wish + could' hope
- [] 1 'if only + would'
- [] 2 -ed / -ing feeling adjectives

[illegible]

10. Listening - the interview with a regret expert

Listen to the interview. A journalist and a life-coach - two clearly different voices. Answer the questions. Play twice if you need.

Audio: Interview · a life-coach on regrets · ~1:30

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

11. Dictation - key 'wish' structures

Listen again and complete each line with the missing verbs.

Audio: Life-coach - key structures

1. I wish I ____ (take) it. I wish I ____ (tell) my father I loved him.
2. I wish I ____ (not / work) so hard.
3. I wish I ____ (have) the courage to live a life true to myself.
4. Ask what your future self wishes you ____ (start) today.
5. I wish they ____ (not / say) that. It's almost never too late.
6. I wish I ____ (learn) Italian when I was twenty.

12. ■ Challenge - sentence transformation

Rewrite the second sentence to mean the same, using 2-5 words including the KEYWORD.

1. 1. I'm sorry I didn't call her. → I wish I ____ her. (KEYWORD: CALLED)
2. 2. I don't have any brothers. → I wish I ____ a brother. (KEYWORD: HAD)
3. 3. My cat won't stop meowing at 5am. → I wish my cat ____ meowing at 5am. (KEYWORD: STOP)
4. 4. I regret spending so much time online. → I wish I ____ so much time online. (KEYWORD: SPENT)
5. 5. Unfortunately, I can't drive. → I wish I ____ drive. (KEYWORD: COULD)
6. 6. It's a shame my neighbour doesn't talk to me. → If only my neighbour ____ to me. (KEYWORD: TALK)

13. ■ Challenge - -ed or -ing?

Choose the correct form of each adjective.

1. This lesson is really ____ .
(A) interested
(B) interesting
2. I'm ____ by everything you've told me.
(A) fascinated
(B) fascinating
3. Long queues in the supermarket are so ____ .
(A) irritated
(B) irritating
4. The kids were completely ____ by the magician.
(A) amazed
(B) amazing
5. That was the most ____ documentary I've ever seen.
(A) shocked
(B) shocking
6. I felt really ____ after her speech - she has a gift.

- (A) inspired
- (B) inspiring

14. ■ Challenge - odd one out

Three share a category. Pick the ODD ONE OUT.

1. 1. Regret words:

- (A) reproach
- (B) hindsight
- (C) haunt
- (D) delighted

2. 2. Wish + past perfect signals:

- (A) I wish I had...
- (B) I wish I hadn't...
- (C) If only I had...
- (D) I wish I could...

3. 3. -ING adjectives:

- (A) amazing
- (B) boring
- (C) terrified
- (D) confusing

4. 4. Pink's four regret types:

- (A) foundation
- (B) boldness
- (C) moral
- (D) financial

15. ■ Challenge - extended writing

Write a 130-160 word 'letter you'll probably never send' - to your younger self, an old friend, a family member. Use AT LEAST 4 'wish + past perfect' regrets, 1 'wish + could', 1 'if only + would', and 3 different feeling adjectives (mix -ed and -ing).

Checklist:

- ☐ 130-160 words
- ☐ 4+ 'wish + past perfect' regrets
- ☐ 1 'wish + could'
- ☐ 1 'if only + would'
- ☐ 3+ different feeling adjectives (mix -ed and -ing)

16. Self-check

Tick what you can now do confidently.

- ☐ I use 'wish + past simple' for present dissatisfaction.
- ☐ I use 'wish + could' for a present ability I don't have.
- ☐ I use 'wish + would' for other people's annoying habits (not for myself).
- ☐ I use 'wish + past perfect' for regrets about the past.
- ☐ I distinguish -ed (how I feel) from -ing (the thing that causes it).
- ☐ I stress content words and reduce function words in natural rhythm.
- ☐ I use falling intonation for regret, rising for hopeful wishes.

No regrets — Workbook

Extra practice for home study · with answer keys

1. Vocabulary — -ed vs -ing feelings adjectives

Choose the correct form.

1. I'm so ____ with this puzzle. I've been trying for two hours.
(A) frustrating
(B) frustrated
(C) frustrate
2. That film was really ____ — I even cried at the end.
(A) stirred
(B) stirring
(C) stir
3. Sorry, I'm not ____ — my face just looks like this!
(A) boring
(B) bored
(C) bore
4. The results were ____ — we all expected higher marks.
(A) disappointed
(B) disappointing
(C) disappoint
5. I was so ____ when I found out my sister was moving to Japan.
(A) surprising
(B) surprised
(C) surprise
6. His constant complaining is really ____ .
(A) exasperating
(B) exasperated
(C) exasperate

2. Vocabulary — regret words in context

Complete each sentence with ONE word from the box.

BOX: hindsight · berate · haunts · rueful · bittersweet · second thoughts

1. In ____, I should have accepted their job offer.
2. The last conversation with my father still ____ me, ten years later.
3. Try not to ____ yourself for a decision you made when you were young.
4. She looked ____ when she talked about her old flat.
5. Saying goodbye to Rome was ____ — sweet memories, painful to leave.
6. I'm starting to have ____ about buying such an expensive car.

3. Vocabulary — discursive writing

Is the concept of a life with 'no regrets' a realistic goal, or is it a harmful myth that prevents us from learning from our mistakes?

Checklist:

- Use at least 4 regret-related vocabulary items
- Maintain a formal, discursive register
- Use cohesive devices to link your arguments
- Check for varied C1-level grammatical structures

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

4. Grammar — wish + past simple / could / would

Choose the correct verb form.

1. I wish I ____ speak more languages.
(A) would
(B) could
(C) had
2. I wish it ____ so cold. My hands are freezing.
(A) wasn't
(B) wouldn't be
(C) hadn't been
3. I wish my flatmate ____ leaving dishes in the sink for days.
(A) stopped
(B) would stop
(C) had stopped
4. I wish I ____ more sleep. I'm exhausted.
(A) got
(B) would get
(C) had got
5. I wish I ____ swim. Everyone else is going in the pool.
(A) could

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

(B) would

(C) had

6. I wish people ____ interrupt me when I'm concentrating.

(A) didn't

(B) wouldn't

(C) hadn't

5. Grammar — wish + past perfect (regrets)

Rewrite each sentence as a regret using 'I wish...'.

1. I didn't call her last night.
2. I spent too much money on holiday.
3. I didn't learn a musical instrument as a child.
4. We didn't buy that flat when it was cheap.
5. I told him about the surprise party.
6. I didn't say goodbye properly.

6. Grammar — put the words in order

Rearrange the words to form a correct sentence.

1. wish / harder / I / had / studied / I
2. would / neighbours / my / wish / I / quieter / be
3. only / I / spoken / had / up / if / earlier
4. wish / could / travel / more / I
5. wasn't / wish / raining / it / I
6. hadn't / that / I / said / wish / I

7. Grammar — spot and fix the mistake

Each sentence has ONE mistake. Rewrite it correctly.

1. I wish I have more money.
2. I wish I would play the guitar.
3. I wish I studied harder last term.
4. I wish it wouldn't be so noisy in here.
5. I wish my brother would being on time!
6. If only I didn't say that yesterday.

8. Reading — true / false / not given

Read the short text and mark each statement T, F or NG.

In 2021, an Australian palliative nurse called Bronnie Ware published the results of years listening to dying patients. She noticed the same regrets came up again and again. The top five were, in order: 'I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself, not the life others expected.' 'I wish I hadn't worked so hard.' 'I wish I'd had the courage to express my feelings.' 'I wish I'd stayed in touch with my friends.' 'I wish I'd let myself be happier.' She noticed something surprising: none of her patients regretted taking risks or spending money on experiences. The regrets were almost always about the risks NOT taken and the connections

NOT kept.

1. Bronnie Ware is a doctor. [T / F / NG]
2. The top regret was about not working hard enough. [T / F / NG]
3. One regret was about not expressing feelings. [T / F / NG]
4. Ware surveyed more than a million people. [T / F / NG]
5. Most regrets were about risks people DIDN'T take. [T / F / NG]
6. Many patients regretted spending too much money on experiences. [T / F / NG]

9. Writing — guided task

Write 80–100 words: 'A regret I'm ready to let go of.' Include at least 2 'wish + past perfect', 1 'wish + could', 1 'if only + would', and 2 -ed/-ing feeling adjectives.

Checklist:

- 80–100 words
- 2 'wish + past perfect' regrets
- 1 'wish + could' hope
- 1 'if only + would'
- 2 -ed / -ing feeling adjectives

[illegible]

10. Listening — the interview with a regret expert

Listen to the interview. A journalist and a life-coach — two clearly different voices. Answer the questions. Play twice if you need.

■ **Audio:** Interview · a life-coach on regrets · ~1:30

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

- 4.
- 5.
- 6.

11. Dictation — key 'wish' structures

Listen again and complete each line with the missing verbs.

■ **Audio:** *Life-coach — key structures*

1. I wish I ____ (take) it. I wish I ____ (tell) my father I loved him.
2. I wish I ____ (not / work) so hard.
3. I wish I ____ (have) the courage to live a life true to myself.
4. Ask what your future self wishes you ____ (start) today.
5. I wish they ____ (not / say) that. It's almost never too late.
6. I wish I ____ (learn) Italian when I was twenty.

12. ■ Challenge — sentence transformation

Rewrite the second sentence to mean the same, using 2–5 words including the KEYWORD.

1. 1. I'm sorry I didn't call her. → I wish I ____ her. (KEYWORD: CALLED)
2. 2. I don't have any brothers. → I wish I ____ a brother. (KEYWORD: HAD)
3. 3. My cat won't stop meowing at 5am. → I wish my cat ____ meowing at 5am. (KEYWORD: STOP)
4. 4. I regret spending so much time online. → I wish I ____ so much time online. (KEYWORD: SPENT)
5. 5. Unfortunately, I can't drive. → I wish I ____ drive. (KEYWORD: COULD)
6. 6. It's a shame my neighbour doesn't talk to me. → If only my neighbour ____ to me. (KEYWORD: TALK)

13. ■ Challenge — -ed or -ing?

Choose the correct form of each adjective.

1. This lesson is really ____ .
(A) interested
(B) interesting
2. I'm ____ by everything you've told me.
(A) fascinated
(B) fascinating
3. Long queues in the supermarket are so ____ .
(A) irritated
(B) irritating
4. The kids were completely ____ by the magician.
(A) amazed
(B) amazing
5. That was the most ____ documentary I've ever seen.
(A) shocked
(B) shocking
6. I felt really ____ after her speech — she has a gift.

- (A) inspired
- (B) inspiring

14. ■ Challenge — odd one out

Three share a category. Pick the *ODD ONE OUT*.

1. 1. Regret words:

- (A) reproach
- (B) hindsight
- (C) haunt
- (D) delighted

2. 2. Wish + past perfect signals:

- (A) I wish I had...
- (B) I wish I hadn't...
- (C) If only I had...
- (D) I wish I could...

3. 3. -ING adjectives:

- (A) amazing
- (B) boring
- (C) terrified
- (D) confusing

4. 4. Pink's four regret types:

- (A) foundation
- (B) boldness
- (C) moral
- (D) financial

15. ■ Challenge — extended writing

Write a 130–160 word 'letter you'll probably never send' — to your younger self, an old friend, a family member. Use *AT LEAST* 4 'wish + past perfect' regrets, 1 'wish + could', 1 'if only + would', and 3 different feeling adjectives (mix -ed and -ing).

Checklist:

- 130–160 words
- 4+ 'wish + past perfect' regrets
- 1 'wish + could'
- 1 'if only + would'
- 3+ different feeling adjectives (mix -ed and -ing)

16. Self-check

Tick what you can now do confidently.

- I use 'wish + past simple' for present dissatisfaction.
- I use 'wish + could' for a present ability I don't have.
- I use 'wish + would' for other people's annoying habits (not for myself).
- I use 'wish + past perfect' for regrets about the past.
- I distinguish -ed (how I feel) from -ing (the thing that causes it).
- I stress content words and reduce function words in natural rhythm.
- I use falling intonation for regret, rising for hopeful wishes.



Answer key — Class Book

Reading: the four regrets that shape a life

1. (B) 16,000 in 105 countries
2. (B) Foundation
3. (B) Risks they didn't take
4. (C) Connection regrets
5. (B) Try to reach out; most people reply warmly

Vocabulary: verbs vs -ed / -ing adjectives for feelings

1. interesting
 2. frustrated
 3. relaxing
 4. embarrassed
 5. disappointing
 6. bored
 7. moved
 8. annoys
1. She still berates herself for missing her friend's wedding.
 2. He gave me a rueful smile before admitting his mistake.
 3. In hindsight, I would have studied law instead.
 4. The lecture was so enthralling that two hours felt like ten minutes.
 5. The delay exasperated everyone waiting at the gate.

Grammar focus: 'wish' for the present, the future and the past

1. were / was
 2. had studied
 3. would stop
 4. could
 5. hadn't missed
 6. wasn't / weren't
 7. knew
 8. had taught
1. (B) would stop
 2. (A) knew
 3. (B) had gone
 4. (B) could
 5. (B) wouldn't die
 6. (C) hadn't said
1. I wish I had more free time.
 2. I wish I could speak Chinese.
 3. I wish I had studied harder for last week's exam.
 4. I wish it wasn't (weren't) so cold today.
 5. I wish I hadn't said that this morning. I feel awful.
 6. I wish my brother would be on time — just once!

Listening: 'I wish I'd gone to art school'

1. Not going to art school when she had the chance.
 2. You can't change the past — but you can start painting tonight, at forty.
 3. Buy paints on the way home and start painting.
1. She feels a physical pain / sadness.
 2. Everyone who told her art school wasn't practical, and her mother who changed the subject.
 3. Stop wishing you'd made different choices at 17, and start choosing differently at 40.
 4. In ten years, you'll wish you'd started tonight — so start tonight.
 5. Not to laugh; and if they're terrible, to lie beautifully.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



6. At least six — 'I wish I'd applied', 'I wish I hadn't listened', 'I wish my mother had encouraged me', etc.

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class



Answer key — Workbook

Ask the teacher — notes to bring to class

No regrets - Workbook — Answer Key

1. Vocabulary - -ed vs -ing feelings adjectives

1. **(B)** *frustrated*
2. **(B)** *stirring*
3. **(B)** *bored*
4. **(B)** *disappointing*
5. **(B)** *surprised*
6. **(A)** *exasperating*

2. Vocabulary - regret words in context

1. *hindsight*
2. *haunts*
3. *berate*
4. *rueful*
5. *bittersweet*
6. *second thoughts*

3. Vocabulary - discursive writing

Sample answer

The ideal of living a life with 'no regrets' is frequently championed in popular culture, yet its practicality is highly questionable. In hindsight, we can always find decisions that we might have made differently, and some of these memories may even haunt us for years. Acknowledging a mistake can lead to a rueful smile and a deeper understanding of oneself. However, the goal should not be to live without errors, but rather to avoid berating oneself for them. Regret, while often bittersweet, is a powerful teacher; it is through having second thoughts about our past actions that we grow and refine our values. If we aim for a state of perfect decision-making, we deny ourselves the opportunity to learn from the natural messiness of life. Ultimately, it is more productive to accept our regrets as part of our history than to pretend they do not exist.

4. Grammar - wish + past simple / could / would

1. **(B)** *could*
2. **(A)** *wasn't*
3. **(B)** *would stop*
4. **(A)** *got*
5. **(A)** *could*
6. **(B)** *wouldn't*

5. Grammar - wish + past perfect (regrets)

1. *I wish I had called her last night.*
2. *I wish I hadn't spent so much money on holiday.*
3. *I wish I had learned a musical instrument as a child.*
4. *I wish we had bought that flat when it was cheap.*
5. *I wish I hadn't told him about the surprise party.*
6. *I wish I had said goodbye properly.*

6. Grammar - put the words in order

1. *I wish I had studied harder.*
2. *I wish my neighbours would be quieter.*
3. *If only I had spoken up earlier.*
4. *I wish I could travel more.*
5. *I wish it wasn't raining.*
6. *I wish I hadn't said that.*

7. Grammar - spot and fix the mistake

1. *I wish I had more money.*
2. *I wish I could play the guitar.*
3. *I wish I had studied harder last term.*
4. *I wish it wasn't (weren't) so noisy in here.*
5. *I wish my brother would be on time!*
6. *If only I hadn't said that yesterday.*

8. Reading - true / false / not given

1. **F**
2. **F**
3. **T**
4. **NG**
5. **T**
6. **F**

9. Writing - guided task

Sample answer

There's one regret I've carried for far too long. I wish I had spoken to my grandfather about his life before he died. He was a quiet man, full of stories, and I was a distracted teenager. I wish I hadn't been so wrapped up in my own tiny problems. Even now, it feels a bit haunting when I look at his old photograph. If only my younger self would have understood how quickly people disappear. I wish I could hear his voice for just one afternoon. I can't. But I've started asking my mother the same questions I never asked him - and honestly, it's surprisingly healing.

10. Listening - the interview with a regret expert

1. *Overwhelmingly the things they DIDN'T do.*
2. *'I wish I hadn't worked so hard' and 'I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself'.*
3. *Ask what your future self wishes you'd start today - and do that ONE thing this week, not next year.*
4. *It's almost never too late - the regret of NOT trying is heavier than the risk of failing.*
5. *Not learning Italian at twenty.*
6. *She started Italian at 58 - and has never been happier.*

11. Dictation - key 'wish' structures

1. *had taken / had told*
2. *hadn't worked*
3. *had had*
4. *would start*
5. *wouldn't say*
6. *had learned*

12. ■ Challenge - sentence transformation

1. *had called*
2. *had*
3. *would stop*
4. *hadn't spent*
5. *could*
6. *would talk*

13. ■ Challenge - -ed or -ing?

1. **(B)** *interesting*
2. **(A)** *fascinated*
3. **(B)** *irritating*
4. **(A)** *amazed*
5. **(B)** *shocking*
6. **(A)** *inspired*

14. ■ Challenge - odd one out

1. **(D)** *delighted*
2. **(D)** *I wish I could...*
3. **(C)** *terrified*
4. **(D)** *financial*

15. ■ Challenge - extended writing

Sample answer

Dear old friend, I don't know if you'll ever read this, but I need to write it anyway. Twenty years is a long time to be silent. I wish I had known how much your friendship meant to me back then. I wish I had spent more time with you and less time chasing things that didn't matter. I wish I hadn't cancelled that trip we planned. I wish I had listened to your advice about my first marriage - you saw it before I did. Honestly, in hindsight, it's still a bit heartbreaking. I wish I could turn the clock back one afternoon and just have coffee with you again. If only life would give us second chances more often. I've been carrying this bittersweet regret for years, and I'm surprised how relieved I feel just writing it down. Yours, still.

16. Self-check

Self-assessment — no fixed answers.

No regrets — Workbook — Answer Key

1. Vocabulary — -ed vs -ing feelings adjectives

1. **(B)** *frustrated*
2. **(B)** *stirring*
3. **(B)** *bored*
4. **(B)** *disappointing*
5. **(B)** *surprised*
6. **(A)** *exasperating*

2. Vocabulary — regret words in context

1. *hindsight*
2. *haunts*
3. *berate*
4. *rueful*
5. *bittersweet*
6. *second thoughts*

3. Vocabulary — discursive writing

Sample answer

The ideal of living a life with 'no regrets' is frequently championed in popular culture, yet its practicality is highly questionable. In hindsight, we can always find decisions that we might have made differently, and some of these memories may even haunt us for years. Acknowledging a mistake can lead to a rueful smile and a deeper understanding of oneself. However, the goal should not be to live without errors, but rather to avoid berating oneself for them. Regret, while often bittersweet, is a powerful teacher; it is through having second thoughts about our past actions that we grow and refine our values. If we aim for a state of perfect decision-making, we deny ourselves the opportunity to learn from the natural messiness of life. Ultimately, it is more productive to accept our regrets as part of our history than to pretend they do not exist.

4. Grammar — wish + past simple / could / would

1. **(B)** *could*
2. **(A)** *wasn't*
3. **(B)** *would stop*
4. **(A)** *got*
5. **(A)** *could*
6. **(B)** *wouldn't*

5. Grammar — wish + past perfect (regrets)

1. *I wish I had called her last night.*
2. *I wish I hadn't spent so much money on holiday.*
3. *I wish I had learned a musical instrument as a child.*
4. *I wish we had bought that flat when it was cheap.*
5. *I wish I hadn't told him about the surprise party.*
6. *I wish I had said goodbye properly.*

6. Grammar — put the words in order

- 1. I wish I had studied harder.*
- 2. I wish my neighbours would be quieter.*
- 3. If only I had spoken up earlier.*
- 4. I wish I could travel more.*
- 5. I wish it wasn't raining.*
- 6. I wish I hadn't said that.*

7. Grammar — spot and fix the mistake

- 1. I wish I had more money.*
- 2. I wish I could play the guitar.*
- 3. I wish I had studied harder last term.*
- 4. I wish it wasn't (weren't) so noisy in here.*
- 5. I wish my brother would be on time!*
- 6. If only I hadn't said that yesterday.*

8. Reading — true / false / not given

- 1. F*
- 2. F*
- 3. T*
- 4. NG*
- 5. T*
- 6. F*

9. Writing — guided task

Sample answer

There's one regret I've carried for far too long. I wish I had spoken to my grandfather about his life before he died. He was a quiet man, full of stories, and I was a distracted teenager. I wish I hadn't been so wrapped up in my own tiny problems. Even now, it feels a bit haunting when I look at his old photograph. If only my younger self would have understood how quickly people disappear. I wish I could hear his voice for just one afternoon. I can't. But I've started asking my mother the same questions I never asked him — and honestly, it's surprisingly healing.

10. Listening — the interview with a regret expert

- 1. Overwhelmingly the things they DIDN'T do.*
- 2. 'I wish I hadn't worked so hard' and 'I wish I'd had the courage to live a life true to myself'.*
- 3. Ask what your future self wishes you'd start today — and do that ONE thing this week, not next year.*
- 4. It's almost never too late — the regret of NOT trying is heavier than the risk of failing.*
- 5. Not learning Italian at twenty.*
- 6. She started Italian at 58 — and has never been happier.*

11. Dictation — key 'wish' structures

1. *had taken / had told*
2. *hadn't worked*
3. *had had*
4. *would start*
5. *wouldn't say*
6. *had learned*

12. ■ Challenge — sentence transformation

1. *had called*
2. *had*
3. *would stop*
4. *hadn't spent*
5. *could*
6. *would talk*

13. ■ Challenge — -ed or -ing?

1. **(B)** *interesting*
2. **(A)** *fascinated*
3. **(B)** *irritating*
4. **(A)** *amazed*
5. **(B)** *shocking*
6. **(A)** *inspired*

14. ■ Challenge — odd one out

1. **(D)** *delighted*
2. **(D)** *I wish I could...*
3. **(C)** *terrified*
4. **(D)** *financial*

15. ■ Challenge — extended writing

Sample answer

Dear old friend, I don't know if you'll ever read this, but I need to write it anyway. Twenty years is a long time to be silent. I wish I had known how much your friendship meant to me back then. I wish I had spent more time with you and less time chasing things that didn't matter. I wish I hadn't cancelled that trip we planned. I wish I had listened to your advice about my first marriage — you saw it before I did. Honestly, in hindsight, it's still a bit heartbreaking. I wish I could turn the clock back one afternoon and just have coffee with you again. If only life would give us second chances more often. I've been carrying this bittersweet regret for years, and I'm surprised how relieved I feel just writing it down. Yours, still.

16. Self-check

Self-assessment — no fixed answers.