

Lesson Plan: Third conditional

Level	Intermediate (B1–B2)
Time	60–75 minutes
Skills	Grammar, speaking, writing
Focus	If + past perfect + would have — imagining different past outcomes

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:

- Form the third conditional correctly: if + past perfect, would have + past participle
- Use the third conditional to talk about imaginary past situations and their consequences
- Use mixed conditionals to link past situations to present results
- Produce natural-sounding conditional sentences about real regrets and different choices

TARGET LANGUAGE (EXAMPLES)

Third conditional form

- If + subject + had + past participle, subject + would have + past participle
- If I had studied harder, I would have passed the exam.
- She wouldn't have been late if she had set an alarm.
- Would they have come if you had invited them?

Contractions and variations

- If I'd known, I wouldn't have said that.
- could have / might have instead of would have for possibility
- If it hadn't rained, we might have had a picnic.

Mixed conditional

- If I had taken that job, I would be living in Tokyo now.
- (Past condition → present result)

LESSON PROCEDURE

1. Warm-up (10 min)

Task: Famous historical events: 'What if...?' discussion.

- 'What if Alexander Fleming hadn't discovered penicillin?'
- Elicit target language before teaching.

2. Presentation (15 min)

Task: Present form with colour coding: if-clause (past perfect) + result clause (would have).

- Highlight: the situation is always imaginary — it did NOT happen.
- Show could have / might have as alternatives.
- Briefly introduce the mixed conditional.

3. Guided practice (10 min)

Task: Complete conditional sentences and transform statements.

- 'He didn't bring a map. He got lost.' → 'If he had brought a map, he wouldn't have got lost.'

4. Regrets activity (20 min)

Task: Students write 3 real or imaginary regrets and consequences.

- Share in small groups. Others respond: 'If I had been you, I would have...'
- Encourage debate and alternative outcomes.

5. Writing task (5–10 min)

Task: Write a short paragraph about a historical event using third conditionals.

EXTENSION / HOMEWORK

Choose one:

1. Write about 3 decisions in your life. Explore what would have happened if you had decided differently.
2. Write a short newspaper editorial about a historical event using third conditionals.
3. Write 5 third conditional sentences using real news events as the starting point.