



Mini Lesson 165 - The Use of 'If Only' for Regretful Statements

The phrase "if only" is used to express regret about something that has happened or to wish that things were different. It often indicates a desire for a different outcome in the past or a longing for a change in the present.

When we use "if only," we can talk about:

- Regrets from the past:
 - Example: If only I had studied harder for the test!

- Wishes for the present:
 - Example: If only I were taller, I could play basketball better.

Structure:

- If only + past simple: For present wishes (Example: If only I were there).
- If only + past perfect: For past regrets (Example: If only I had known).





Exercises:

Section 1: Fill in the Blanks

Complete the sentences using 'if only' and the correct verb form.

1. If only I _____ (know) about the party, I would have gone.
2. If only I _____ (be) able to sing well, I would join the choir.
3. She feels sad. If only she _____ (call) her friend yesterday.
4. If only they _____ (study) harder, they might have passed the exam.
5. If only I _____ (have) more time, I could finish my project.

Section 2: Rewrite the Sentences

Rewrite the following sentences using 'if only.'

1. I regret not going to the concert.
- If only I _____ to the concert.
2. I wish I could travel more this summer.
- If only I _____ travel more this summer.
3. I didn't prepare for the test, and now I am worried.
- If only I _____ for the test.
4. She didn't listen to my advice and now she is sorry.
- If only she _____ to my advice.
5. I missed the bus this morning and had to walk.
- If only I _____ the bus this morning.





Section 3: Choose the Correct Form

Choose the correct verb form for 'if only' statements.

1. If only I _____ (have/had) a bike, I wouldn't be late.
2. If only we _____ (leave/left) earlier, we could have avoided traffic.
3. If only she _____ (not forget) my birthday last year!
4. If only I _____ (be) able to attend the concert next week.
5. If only they _____ (not argue) about the game, they could have enjoyed it more.

Section 4: Complete the Conversation

Complete the dialogue using 'if only' and the correct verb form.

A: I can't believe I failed the exam!

B: If only you _____ (study) harder, you would have done better.

A: I know! If only I _____ (listen) to you and started studying earlier.

B: Exactly! If only I _____ (help) you more, maybe you would have passed.

A: Well, I still have the chance to improve. If only I _____ (be) more organized next time!





Answers:

Section 1:

1. had known
2. were
3. had called
4. had studied
5. had

Section 2:

1. If only I had gone to the concert.
2. If only I could travel more this summer.
3. If only I had prepared for the test.
4. If only she had listened to my advice.
5. If only I had caught the bus this morning.

Section 3:

1. had
2. had left
3. hadn't forgotten
4. could be
5. hadn't argued

Section 4:

1. had studied
2. had listened
3. had helped
4. am

