

8D Clause patterns: subordinate clauses – The it race

Aim

to review and practise the use of introductory *it*

Activity type

a competitive game identifying sentences that can be rewritten using introductory *it*

Classroom dynamics

pairwork and groups of four

Time taken

25 minutes

Preparation

You will need one copy of the activity sheet per pair.

Procedure

- 1 Ask students what they consider to be the main stages of life, and what the main difficulties or advantages of each stage are.
- 2 Divide the class into pairs and give each pair an activity sheet. Tell students they have a few minutes to quickly read the four texts and check whether the stages and difficulties/advantages mentioned match the ideas shared in step 1. Allow around 3 minutes for this before conducting whole-class feedback.
- 3 Write this example on the board and ask students how the sentence could be rephrased using introductory *it*:
Finding time to work out when you have a full-time job is difficult.
(*It is difficult to find time to work out when you have a full-time job.*)
- 4 Now tell the students to race to highlight or underline sentences in the four texts that can be transformed using introductory *it*. Give them at least 10 minutes to do this and tell them there are a possible 13 in total.
- 5 Once completed, go through the answers. The pairs get ten points for each correctly transformed sentence. The pair with the most points wins. Point out that you wouldn't necessarily use *all* these examples of introductory *it* in one text.
- 6 Now put students into groups of four and ask them to discuss whether they agree with the opinions expressed in the texts or not. Within their groups, they should debate what they believe to be the easiest/most difficult stage of life and why.

Suggested answers

- 1 It is (definitely) young children who have the easiest lives.
I find it frustrating to explain this to children while they are young.
It is a dream come true to have someone cook all your meals for you ...
- 2 I hated it when I was expected to know what I wanted to do when I grew up.
It is ridiculous to ask a 16-year-old to choose subjects which affect their future choices.
It was my parents (not me) who picked which exams I was going to take.
It is thought that teenagers aren't bothered by these things ...
- 3 It is the responsibility of being an adult that frightens me the most.
It is always said that you are more comfortable in your own skin as an adult, but what about the stress that comes with age?
It's exhausting to work all day to provide for yourself and other people.
It is even frightening for me having a pet sometimes, because of the responsibility it brings.
- 4 It is amusing to think about the fact that we start and finish our lives in a very similar way.
It is good that elderly people spend their days just relaxing.

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1
So, which stage of our lives is the easiest and most stress-free? Young children definitely have the easiest lives, don't you think? However, explaining this to children while they are young is something I find frustrating. They just don't understand how good they have it! Having someone to cook all your meals for you, take you where you want to go, and who lets you play all day with your friends is a dream come true.

2
At school, I really hated being expected to know what I wanted to do when I grew up. Asking a 16-year-old to choose subjects which affect their future choices is ridiculous. My parents picked which exams I was going to take, not me. I was too immature, but I remember being really stressed about it. People think that teenagers aren't bothered by these things, but believe me – they are.

3
The responsibility of being an adult frightens me the most. People always say you are more comfortable in your own skin as an adult, but what about the stress that comes with growing older? And having a family? Wow! Working all day to provide for yourself and other people is exhausting, both physically and mentally. Even having a pet dog sometimes frightens me because of the responsibility it brings.

4
Thinking about the fact that we start and finish our lives in a very similar way is amusing. Like children, old people don't really have to worry about much. Elderly men and women spend their days just relaxing, and that's good. If you're careful with your money when you're working, this last stage in our lives could truly be the best.