

4B

Volunteering

- › **Goal:** discuss political or social issues
- › **Language focus:** real conditionals
- › **Vocabulary:** adjective + noun collocations



Reading

- 1 **Work in pairs. Look at the photos and discuss the questions.**
 - 1 What types of volunteering can you see? What other jobs do people volunteer for?
 - 2 Have you ever worked as a volunteer? If so, what happened? If not, would you like to?
 - 3 What are the benefits of volunteering? What does the volunteer get out of it?
- 2 **Read the article quickly and answer the questions.**
 - 1 What are the benefits of intergenerational volunteering for the two groups of people?
 - 2 What are the benefits for society as a whole?

Bridging the age gap

For many retired people, the greatest threats to their health and well-being are loneliness, isolation and lack of purpose. Studies have shown that when they have a strong sense of purpose, they live longer, healthier lives. At the other end of the spectrum, teenagers and young adults face daunting challenges of their own. In some cases, young people may experience peer pressure to join gangs, commit crimes or simply drift away from education and employment. They may face the challenge of finding a job without prior work experience or practical skills. Or they may wish to live independently but be unable to pay the exorbitant rents in their area.

Intergenerational volunteering can provide a solution to these problems. It involves bringing older and younger people together for mutual support. After all, 'the aged' represent a huge untapped resource: they include retired engineers, doctors, teachers and businesspeople with years of accumulated experience and expertise. Young people, too, have valuable skills to share, most obviously their up-to-date knowledge of technology.

In some schemes, retired people help out in primary schools, to hear the children read and offer them individual support. Similar schemes are run in secondary schools and even universities. Other projects involve sending children and teenagers into old people's homes on a regular basis to teach them 'twenty-first century skills', to entertain them or simply to befriend them and listen to their stories and advice. Elsewhere, there are schemes that match university students with more affluent elderly people who have spare rooms. The student can either live rent-free in exchange for household chores and support for the homeowner, or they can pay a reduced rent in exchange for chatting with the older person regularly and keeping an eye on their health and well-being.

Intergenerational volunteering projects have had a truly profound impact on both demographics. By bringing together people of different generations and socioeconomic backgrounds, they have fostered trust, respect and friendship, which are essential for the fabric of society.

3 Work in pairs and discuss the questions.

- 1 Do you think intergenerational volunteering exists where you live? If not, would it work?
- 2 Can you think of any challenges or risks arising from projects like this?

Vocabulary

4 a Choose the adjectives that collocate with the nouns in bold. Then find the collocations in the article to check.

- 1 I have a very *high/rich/strong* **sense** of duty towards society.
- 2 Applicants must have at least two years' *foregoing/preceding/prior* **work experience**.
- 3 I can't afford the *exorbitant/extravagant/inflated* **rent** on my flat – I need to find something cheaper.
- 4 I like studying with friends because we can offer each other *mutual/reciprocal/shared* **support**.
- 5 The island's unspoilt beaches represent an *intact/untapped/untested* **resource** which could encourage tourism.
- 6 You should practise on a *frequent/persistent/regular* **basis**, not just every now and then.
- 7 My elderly grandfather can no longer cope with all his *household/homely/indoor* **chores**.
- 8 My year as a volunteer had a *changeable/metamorphic/profound* **impact** on my outlook on life.

b Find at least three more adjective + noun collocations in the article.



Go to your app for more vocabulary and practice.

Language focus

5 4.4 Listen to part of a meeting. Choose the correct alternatives.

- 1 The main purpose of the project is to *encourage intergenerational communication/improve buildings and natural environments*.
- 2 The main challenge facing the project is that *some participants steal from others/there's a shortage of mentors*.
- 3 Alison agrees to provide *the full amount to fund the project/a document containing a provisional offer*.



6 a Look at five extracts from the meeting. In what way are they different from regular zero and 1st conditional sentences?

- 1 If you'd like to come in and sit down, we can start when you're ready.
- 2 If they didn't have children, then at least they had a network of friends and relatives living nearby.
- 3 It'll really help our negotiations if we've already got 50% from you.
- 4 If they won't help, then you'll have to find another partner.
- 5 If it'll help your negotiations, we'd be happy to put up the 50%.

b Read the language focus box. Why are these different structures used?

Real conditionals

Real conditionals refer to real or likely situations. Two very common patterns are:

the zero conditional, which is often used to describe something that is always true (*if* + present, present).

*If people **have** a strong sense of duty to each other, society **improves**.*

the first conditional, to describe possible future events (*if* + present, will).

*If you **set** something up, people **will definitely help**.*

However, many other verb forms are also possible with these structures, e.g.:

Zero conditional for something that was always true in the past.

*If you **had** a problem, people **helped you/would help you**.*

First conditional featuring a past action with present/future result.

*If they've **worked** with older people before, they'll **know** how to help.*

We usually don't use *if* and *will* in the same clause.

However, we can use *if* + *will* to talk about promises, predictions and willingness/refusals.

*If you'll **give us the money**, we'll **run the project by ourselves**.*

*If you **won't help me**, I **don't know who will**. (= if you refuse to help me)*

In real conditionals, *if* + *would* is mainly used for polite requests and offers (e.g. *if you'd like/if you wouldn't mind*).

*If you'd **like to follow me**, I'll **show you your room**. (= if you want)*

7 a **4.5 Listen to three more extracts from the meeting and answer questions a–d.**

- 1 So, if you'd like to tell us more about your project ...
- 2 If you could say a few words about why they're so isolated from society ...
- 3 If you'll just bear with me a moment, ...

- a Are the phrases offers or requests?
- b What do you notice about their intonation?
- c Why doesn't the speaker finish the sentences?
- d What would be a suitable reply?

b Work in pairs. Practise saying and responding to the extracts.

8 a Rewrite the sentences using the word(s) in brackets.

- 1 I can't help you if you refuse to tell me your name. (won't)
- 2 Maybe he has had a bad experience, and he doesn't want to try again. (If)
- 3 When I was a child, my grandfather used to fix anything that was broken in our house. (if anything/would)
- 4 I can lend you my car but you need to promise to take care of it. (you'll)
- 5 Would you like to cook? If so, we can stay at home. (you'd)

b Work in pairs. Think of reasons for the situations and possible consequences.

- 1 young people who refuse to go to school
If they had a bad time at school, they ...
If they won't go to school, they ...
- 2 older people who are isolated in society
- 3 young people who can't find work

Go to page 152 or your app for more information and practice.

Speaking

PREPARE

9 Work in groups. You're going to plan a project to help people in your community. Discuss the questions.

- 1 Who will you try to help?
- 2 What challenges do these people face? How might your project help them?
- 3 What do you need from the council? What benefits can you offer to the community?
- 4 What will happen if the council refuses to help?

SPEAK

10 Work in different groups. You are going to take part in a meeting with a committee of the local council. Try to persuade them to support your project (e.g. by providing money).