3rd Conditional

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This is Mike. Mike is 70 years old. This is his retirement party.

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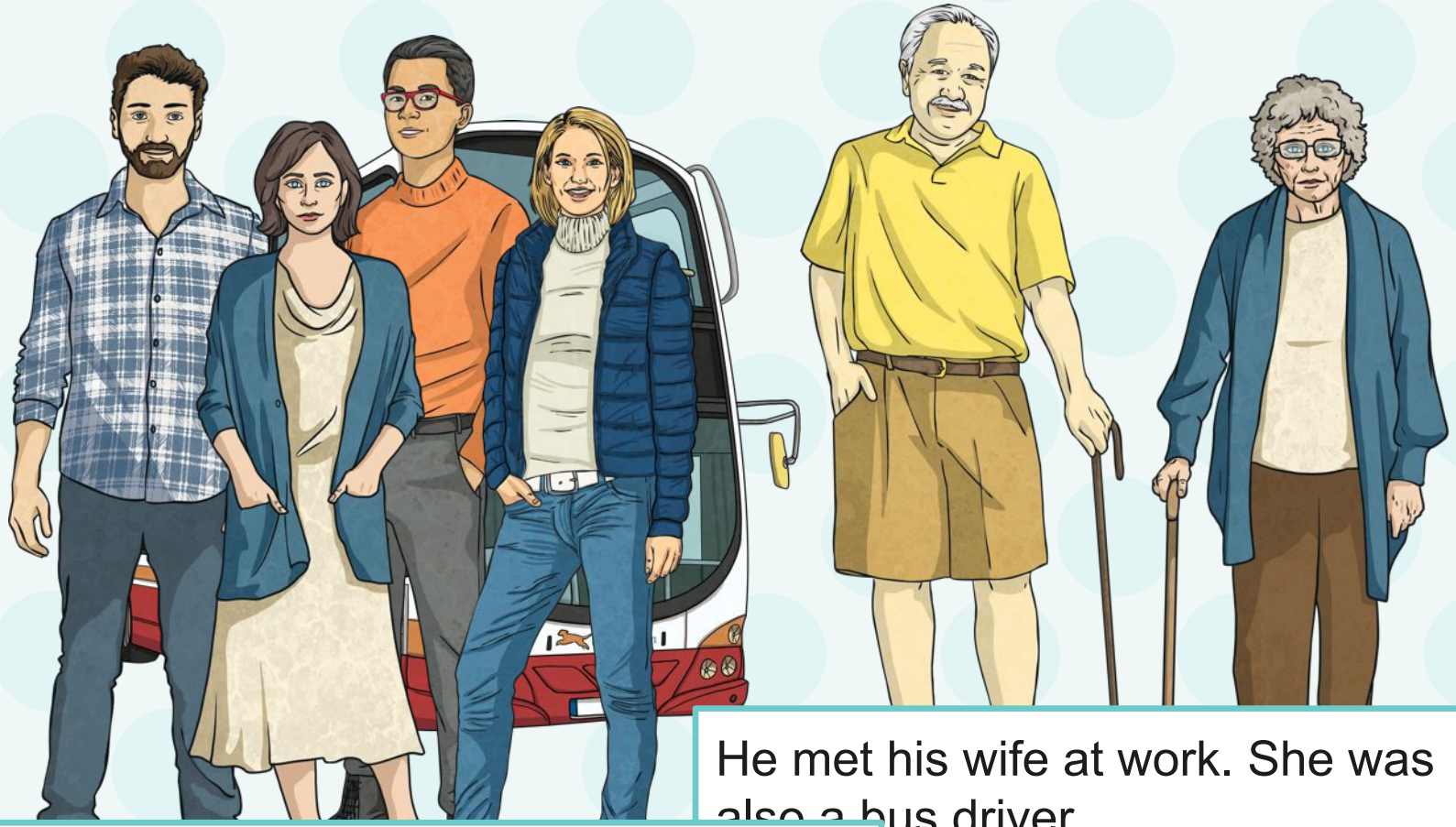
Mike was a bus driver for 50 years!



He met his wife at work. She was also a bus driver.

They have four children together.

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Mike was a bus driver because his dad was a bus driver.
But he always had a secret dream job.

Can you guess what it was?

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Mike wanted to be a firefighter! Is it possible for him to be a firefighter now?

No! He’s too old.

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Age 70, Mike is thinking about what his life would have been like as a firefighter….

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See sentence

Is Mike imagining a present or a past situation?

Is he imagining a real or imaginary situation?

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See sentence

Is Mike imagining a present or a past situation?

Is he imagining a real or imaginary situation?

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See sentence

Did Mike rescue animals?

Was is possible now, or in the past?

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See sentence

Is Mike thinking about the past or the present?

Is Mike thinking about something imaginary, or something real?

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See sentence

Is Mike thinking about the past or the present?

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See sentence

Is Mike thinking about the past or the present?

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But then Mike remembers something important...

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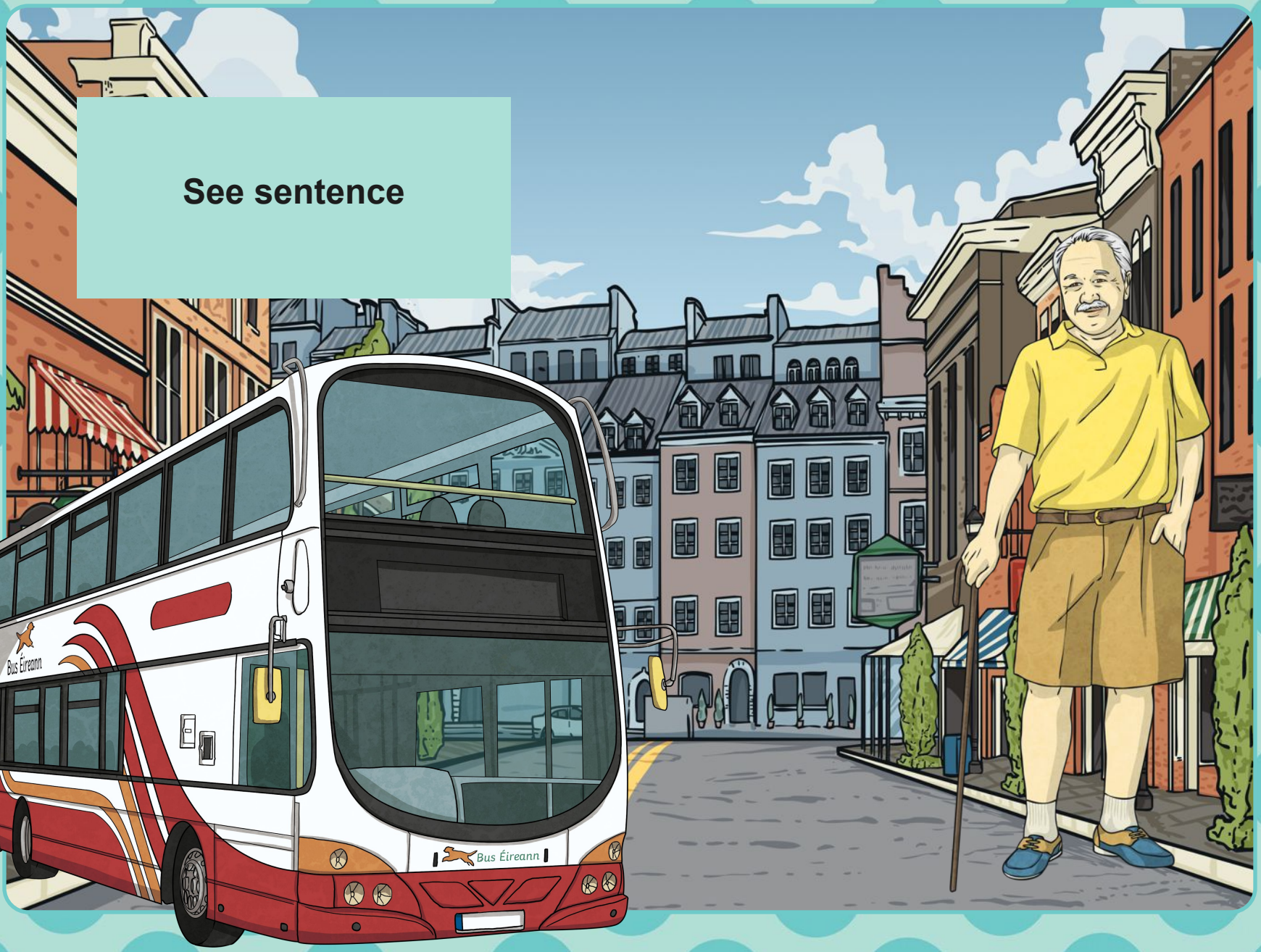
See sentence
Bus Éireann
Bus Éireann

Mike hugged his wife and had a great retirement party.

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Can you remember the sentences?

“If I had been a firefighter, I would have worn a firefighter’s uniform.”

“If I had been a firefighter, I would have rescued people.”

“If I had been a firefighter, I would have helped animals.”

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Can you remember the sentences?

“If I had been a firefighter, I would have used a water hose.”

“If I had been a firefighter, I would have got an award.”

“If I had been a firefighter, I would have driven a fire truck.”

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Can you remember the sentences?

“If I had been a firefighter, I wouldn’t have met my wife!”

Help!

“If I had been a firefighter, I wouldn’t have had my children.”

Help!

“If I had been a firefighter, I wouldn’t have travelled the city in my bus.”

Help!

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“If I had been a firefighter, I would have driven a fire truck.”

Meaning:
This is the 3rd conditional. We use it to talk about an imaginary past situation: something that didn’t happen.

Form:

if + past perfect **would + have + past participle**
If I had been a firefighter, I would have driven a fire truck.

would + have + past participle **if + past perfect**
I would have driven a fire truck if I had been a firefighter.

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“If I had been a firefighter, I would have driven a fire truck.”

Pronunciation:

- had = ‘d.
- ‘would have’ sounds like ‘would’uv’.

Negative and question forms:

- If I **hadn’t** been a firefighter, I **wouldn’t** have met my wife.
- If you hadn’t been a firefighter, **would you have** met your wife?
- **What would you have** done if you hadn’t been a firefighter?

Extra points: When do we use a comma in the 3rd conditional form?

We use a comma between clauses when ‘If’ is at the beginning of the sentence. When ‘if’ is in the middle of the two clauses, no comma is needed.

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Use your ideas to complete these sentences. Be creative!

1. If I had been born 100 years ago,…
2. If I had been born in the times of the dinosaurs,…
3. If we had never discovered antibiotics…
4. If my grandparents had never met,...
5. If we had never invented cars,...
6. If my parents had named me something different,...
7. If I had never studied English,...
8. If humans had never been to the moon,...
9. If Captain Cook hadn’t travelled to Australia,...

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