

MILESTONES

Although this activity is intended for students to use the second conditional specifically, it can be adapted to practice any grammar point where students ask numerous follow-up questions to create a natural conversation. Unchanged, students practice discussing life-changing events, or **Milestones**, in this activity.

Step One: The teacher provides an example of a milestone in his life. It should consist of the milestone itself and then a reason for its importance. For example:

I came to Japan after graduating university. It changed my life because it was the first time to live abroad. It was a different culture and a different language that I had to learn.

Step Two: Students take several minutes to think of three milestones in their lives. The milestones don't need to be in any particular order, but each should represent life-changing events. Reasons should also be provided. **Note:** If the teacher wishes to spend less time on this activity, then students may think of only one milestone to discuss.

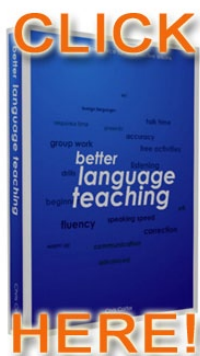
Step Three: Students get into pairs and talk about their milestones. Each partner asks additional questions to gather more information, thus making the conversation more rounded and fulfilling. The pairs should talk for fifteen minutes.

Step Four: The teacher now asks, "How would your life be different if you had never...?" The teacher provides an example based on his earlier milestone.

If I hadn't come to Japan, I would never have become a teacher. I would never have met my wife, so I would probably be married to someone else!

Step Five: Students receive several minutes to think of how their lives would be different had their previously discussed milestones never happened. Students string together as many different subsequent events as possible.

Step Six: Students get into the same pairs and talk about how their lives would be different. Again, to provide a rich and interesting discussion, as well as to improve talk time among the pairs, students ask one another follow-up questions.



If you liked this idea and want others, then take a look at my ebook, [Better Language Teaching](#). There are **100 activities** with more than **75 variations** for flexible, fun learning.

Have great classes!

Chris Cotter