

B2-C1 English Worksheet

School Reunions: Reconnecting with Old Friends and Facing the Past

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Article

School reunions promise the chance to look back on shared experiences and catch up with people we once saw daily. Yet anticipation can be mixed with apprehension. Classmates who were inseparable may drift apart, and some feel reluctant to turn up when invitations arrive. They worry that they will not measure up to old friends' apparent success. Others welcome the opportunity to break the ice with classmates they barely knew. The atmosphere can be tentative: an awkward introduction, a forgotten name or a casual question about careers may revive old assumptions.

A recent Guardian feature describes a man who attended his 20-year reunion hoping to make amends for failing to defend a schoolmate who had been bullied. His apology was sincere, but the conversation left him uneasy when the former classmate ended up comforting him. The episode illustrates how complicated it can be to bring up painful memories. For some, an evening of nostalgic stories is meaningful; for others, it can expose resentment and humiliating experiences they have spent years trying to leave behind. Experts advise preparation rather than expecting a gathering to resolve every unfinished conflict.

Reunions can also distort perspective. A room full of former pupils may seem like a contest over jobs, marriages and money, even though these comparisons reveal little about personal happiness. It can be tempting to brush off uncomfortable feelings or judge others through the labels they had at sixteen. Yet people change, and hearing an unexpected story may challenge old impressions. Attending is a choice: one person may decline, while another can reconnect and eventually move on from an old regret. The best encounters do not require anyone to prove success; they let former classmates meet as adults.

True/False

Decide if each statement is True (T) or False (F).

No.	Statement	T / F
1	For some people, reunion invitations trigger anxiety about social comparisons.	
2	Everyone who receives a reunion invitation is eager to attend.	
3	The man in the article regretted failing to intervene when a pupil was bullied.	
4	The former pupil ended up reassuring the man during their difficult conversation.	
5	The writer says career achievement is a reliable measure of happiness.	
6	Returning to school automatically resolves years of resentment.	
7	Attendees may discover that their old impressions no longer fit.	
8	People who decline a reunion are portrayed as making a mistake.	

Phrase Match

Match each phrase (1-10) to the correct definition (A-J).

Phrases (1-10)	Definitions (A-J)
1. look back on	A. gradually become less close to someone
2. catch up with	B. introduce a subject for discussion
3. drift apart	C. reach a standard expected by others
4. turn up	D. remember and think about past experiences
5. break the ice	E. leave an experience behind and focus on the future
6. bring up	F. make people feel more relaxed when they first meet
7. make amends	G. dismiss something without giving it proper attention
8. measure up	H. exchange news after spending time apart
9. brush off	I. take action to put right a past wrong
10. move on	J. arrive or appear at an event

Synonym Match

Match each word (1-10) to a synonym (A-J).

Words (1-10)	Synonyms (A-J)
1. apprehension	A. presumptions
2. tentative	B. significant
3. awkward	C. viewpoint
4. assumptions	D. uncomfortable
5. sincere	E. bitterness
6. reluctant	F. hesitant
7. meaningful	G. ultimately
8. resentment	H. unwilling
9. perspective	I. anxiety
10. eventually	J. genuine

Use the New Language

Choose 5 words or phrases and write your own sentences.

No.	Your sentence
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	

Discussion Questions

Student A	Student B
1. Would you turn up to a reunion, or would you rather leave school in the past?	1. Can a reunion offer genuine closure, or is it more likely to reopen old wounds?
2. Which school memory still makes you laugh or feel embarrassed?	2. How does comparing careers, relationships and money distort our sense of success?
3. Have you ever caught up with somebody after years apart?	3. Should people try to make amends decades after standing by during bullying?
4. Which teacher shaped your outlook, for better or worse?	4. What responsibility do schools have for the long-term impact of bullying?
5. Did you feel any pressure to measure up to classmates?	5. Has social media reduced the value of meeting old classmates in person?
6. Have you ever changed your opinion of somebody you knew when younger?	6. How far do people change after leaving school, and how should we recognise that change?
7. How would you break the ice if you forgot a former classmate's name?	7. Are teenage friendships more influential than relationships formed later in life?
8. What would surprise your teenage self most about your life now?	8. What would an inclusive reunion look like for people who had difficult school years?

Answer Key

True/False	1=T, 2=F, 3=T, 4=T, 5=F, 6=F, 7=T, 8=F
Phrase Match	1=D, 2=H, 3=A, 4=J, 5=F, 6=B, 7=I, 8=C, 9=G, 10=E
Synonym Match	1=I, 2=F, 3=D, 4=A, 5=J, 6=H, 7=B, 8=E, 9=C, 10=G

Example Sentences With the Phrases

No.	Example sentence
1	Looking at old photos can help people look back on their school years.
2	We met at a cafe to catch up with classmates we had not seen for decades.
3	Friends can drift apart after moving to different cities.
4	Several former pupils decided to turn up despite feeling nervous.
5	A shared memory helped break the ice at the reunion.
6	It is sensible to bring up sensitive memories privately.
7	He wanted to make amends for the way he had treated a schoolmate.
8	Nobody needs to measure up to someone else's idea of success.
9	She refused to brush off her friend's concerns about the event.
10	Speaking openly helped him move on from an old regret.