

**Problems, problems, problems, ...**

Here are some letters to the advice column of a magazine. What answers do you have? In groups, decide on your answers.

1. I'm 50 years old and very unhappy. My husband only watches television and goes to the pub. Our children have left home and we have enough money to go on holiday and do nice things, but my husband doesn't want to. What can I do?

3. I think my son drinks too much alcohol. He drinks two glasses of beer on Saturday and Sunday. I don't drink alcohol at all, so I think this is too much. He has a good job and works very hard. Should I tell him to stop drinking? He's thirty-seven years old.

4. My daughter is twenty-three and hasn't got a boyfriend. She says she doesn't want to get married. I'm fifty and I'd like to have grandchildren soon. What can I do?

2. I am having an affair\* with my boss. He says he loves me. I'm married and have three children, who are nineteen, twenty-five and twenty-seven years old and he also has grown-up children. We have no problems at work because we don't see each other very often in the office. But now he's got a new job in America and says I should go with him. He wants to marry me. What should I do?

\*affair – Verhältnis

5. My teenage daughter is pregnant. She's seventeen and her boyfriend is eighteen. He doesn't want to have children or marry her. She wants to have the baby without a father. What can I say to my family and neighbours and friends?

Here are the answers to the letters. Which answer goes with which problem?

a) It's important to think about this very carefully and take your time. Maybe your boss can go to America first and you can see if you can live without him before you give up your life.

b) Let your daughter find her own boyfriends. She's not there to do what you want. She's still young.

c) Make new friends and start your own life. Find some voluntary work to do. Talk to your husband and try and find out what's wrong.

d) This is quite normal. Your son is not a small child, so don't worry about him!

e) Try and help your daughter with the baby. It's not important what other people say. The most important thing for your daughter and the baby is to be happy.

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*Preparation:*

For this activity it is important that the students get on well with each other. They will probably make lots of language mistakes in the discussion, but this is not important. The aim is to make suggestions and discuss problems (romantic or otherwise).

Copy the worksheet for each student or pair of students and make a spare copy. Cut up the problems and solutions from the spare copy.

*In class:*

Divide the students into four groups. Give one problem to each group. Ask students to discuss the problem and think of an answer. Then give each student in the group a different number.

Form new groups with the students who have the same number (cross-group reporting).

Students exchange information on the problems they had in the first group and discuss their solutions.

Now give each group one solution. They decide which problem it refers to and if they agree with it. Hand out the worksheet. Students match all the problems and solutions.

*Extension activity:*

Students think of more problems and solutions and write them down. These problems and solutions can be used for a new activity and discussion in the following lesson.

*Answers:*

1c, 2a, 3d, 4b, 5e