

WRITING SYNTHESIS: Lesson 20 - I had no choice

Working Mothers, Patricia Vaz Case Study, & Past Habits Grammar

Objective: Analyze working mothers' challenges, character feelings, and language functions (past habit, disapproval)

Track: Secondary Level

1. Core Content: Patricia Vaz Narrative

This lesson explores the struggles and emotional conflicts of working mothers balancing career success and family life [cite: 1]:

A. Key Narrative Details

- **Background:** Patricia Vaz was the 1994 Businesswoman of the year, heading British Telecom's pay phones division [cite: 1].
- **The Motivation:** She returned to work when her son Donovan was two because they needed the money ("I had no choice") [cite: 1].
- **The Conflict:** She faced societal guilt and disapproval from colleagues ("How could you"), and felt bad about missing moments with her son [cite: 1].
- **Positive Outcome:** Her absence encouraged Donovan to become very self-sufficient (making his own snacks, managing homework) [cite: 1].

2. Language Functions & Grammar

- **"How could you":** Expresses disapproval [cite: 1].
- **"He would make himself beans on toast":** Expresses a past habit (using 'would' for repeated past actions) [cite: 1].