

Would You Rather...? (BBC America, USA) "Death Row Dinner"

Introduction

"I'd rather be a sparrow than a snail..."

The lyric above is the first line of the song *El Condor Pasa* by Simon & Garfunkel. You can use the construction ***I would rather + infinitive (without to)*** as an alternative to ***I would prefer...*** *Would rather* is very common in spoken English and is often abbreviated to *'d rather*.

Be careful! You can only use *rather* in this way with *would*, do not use it in the present tense to mean *prefer*:

She prefers to drink coffee to tea.
CORRECT

~~She rather drinks coffee to tea.~~
INCORRECT

She would prefer to eat later.
CORRECT

She would rather eat later.
CORRECT

Practice

Put the verbs below in the sentences and discuss them with a partner once you have finished:

speak run go stay have be
work sleep go send have be

I'd rather _____ for a quiet meal on my birthday than _____ a big party.

I'd rather _____ to my friends on the phone than _____ an email.

If I went to visit a friend, I'd rather _____ in a hotel than _____ on their sofa.

I'd rather _____ a single child than _____ lots of siblings.

I'd rather _____ famous than _____ nine to five.

I'd _____ to the gym than _____ in the park.

Video

You are going to watch a video of the game show *Would You Rather...?*, in which comedians discuss some hypothetical situations. Watch for the first time and fill in the words of the topic they are discussing:

"Would you rather have _____ with all of your _____ at once or _____ guys on death row all having their _____ meal?"

Vocabulary

Match the difficult vocabulary to the meaning:

to pick up the tab

death row

"bat shit crazy"

ex

dude

to be at a crossroads

to have a difficult decision to make

very crazy

informal term for a man

a prison where people wait when they face the death sentence

to pay for everything in a restaurant or bar

an old girlfriend or boyfriend

Second Viewing

Watch the video again and match the views with the speaker:



Thinks the food would be delicious on death row.



Wouldn't be hungry if they had dinner with all their exes.



Thinks they'd hear some interesting stories if they had a meal with the guys on death row.

Thinks they are crazier than the guys on death row.

Wants to have dinner with the guys on death row because they wouldn't have to pay for it.

Conversation

You are going to discuss some of the other dilemmas from the programme. Remember to practice the *I'd rather... construction* (you can also use the second conditional if you have learned it).

"Would you rather have your life narrated by the movie trailer guy or a sports commentator?"

"Would you rather have Lindsay Lohan as your daughter or OJ Simpson as your father?"

"Would you rather lose \$358 dollars in the street or never see a rainbow again?"

"Would you rather dance instead of walk or sing instead of talk?"

"Would you rather involuntarily laugh when told about anyone's death or make a disgusted face when someone shows you a picture of their child?"