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Implied Conditionals: But For, Without, and Otherwise

Hard | C2 | Proficiency | Adverb | Clause | Complex sentence | Conditional sentence | Infinitive | Modal verb | Negation | Participle | Past tense | Phrase | Preposition | Subject | Subjunctive mood | Verb | Verb mood | Passive voice | Verb tense | Perfect tense

1. Help the adventurer document her near-disaster in the Amazon rainforest. Select ALL the prepositional phrases that correctly and logically complete this implied conditional sentence.

_____ the sudden intervention of the local guides, our expedition would have ended in absolute tragedy.

Select all that apply.

A) But for
B) Without
C) Save for
D) Were it not for
E) Due to

2. Complete the excerpt from a highly dramatic celebrity chef's memoir by choosing the correct phrase for each blank. Pay attention to the hidden conditions!

"Without my grandmother's secret recipe, my culinary empire _____ before it even began. Indeed, a less experienced chef _____ at the terrifying sight of the six-foot flambé, but I simply grabbed a marshmallow."

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

A) crumbled
B) would have crumbled
C) will crumble

Blank 2

A) would have panicked
B) panicked
C) panics

3. Read the historian's dramatic account of a 19th-century Arctic expedition. Select ALL the clauses that logically and grammatically complete the sentence, keeping in mind the implied past unreal condition created by the adverb "otherwise."

_____; otherwise, they would have perished in the blizzard.

Select all that apply.

A) The explorers must have found a hidden ice cave
B) They were incredibly lucky to stumble upon an abandoned trapper's cabin
C) The guides had wisely brought a supply of emergency thermal blankets
D) The team has packed extra rations for the journey
E) They failed to secure any meaningful shelter from the wind

4. Help the lead detective finalize her official case notes by selecting the correct verb forms for these implied conditionals.

But for the sudden power outage, the security cameras _____ the thief red-handed.
Given a second chance, the suspect _____ the country, so we must revoke his bail immediately.

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

A) would have caught
B) would catch
C) had caught

Blank 2

- **A)** would probably flee
- **B)** will probably flee
- **C)** would have probably fled

5. Help the notoriously grumpy food critic finalize his scathing magazine review. Select ALL the sentences that correctly use an **implied conditional** (expressing a hypothetical past situation *without* using an "if" clause).

Select all that apply.

- **A)** A more attentive waiter would have noticed my empty water glass.
- **B)** But for the exquisite chocolate soufflé, the entire evening would have been a total disaster.
- **C)** Without that distracting live band, we might actually have enjoyed our conversation.
- **D)** If the chef had properly seasoned the risotto, it might have been edible.
- **E)** The manager apologized profusely; otherwise, I will leave the establishment immediately.

6. Choose the correct verb phrase to complete the food critic's warning.

A less resilient food critic _____ directly to the hospital after taking a single bite of that mysterious stew.

Select one.

- **A)** had been sent
- **B)** would be sent
- **C)** was sent
- **D)** would have been sent

7. Complete the master chef's harsh (but fair!) critique of a culinary disaster by choosing the correct verb phrases.

To look at this weeping monstrosity of a cake, one _____ you baked it in a sauna.
I was genuinely hoping to see you succeed yesterday; otherwise, I _____ you during the appetizer round.

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** would assume
- **B)** will assume
- **C)** would have assumed

Blank 2

- **A)** would have eliminated
- **B)** would eliminate
- **C)** had eliminated

8. Complete the mad scientist's angry letter to the research committee.

_____ an unlimited budget, Dr. Von Doom would undoubtedly have built his moon-destroying laser by Tuesday.

Select one.

- **A)** Providing
- **B)** Supposing
- **C)** Given
- **D)** Assuming

9. Help Detective Paws complete her incident report regarding the world's clumsiest cat burglar. Choose the correct verb phrases to complete the implied conditionals.

"But for that tragically timed sneeze, the suspect _____ unnoticed into the night. Furthermore, he foolishly wore tap shoes to a heist; otherwise, his footsteps _____ entirely silent."

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** escaped
- **B)** would have escaped
- **C)** will escape

Blank 2

- **A)** might have remained
- **B)** remained
- **C)** will remain

10. Complete the knight's rather dramatic diary entry.

But for his newly polished fireproof armor, Sir Reginald _____ essentially a piece of burnt toast right now.

Select one.

- **A)** would have been
- **B)** would be
- **C)** will be
- **D)** had been