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The Were-Subjunctive in Conditionals

Hard | C1 | Advanced | Clause | Conditional sentence | Infinitive | Inversion | Modal verb | Negation | Subjunctive mood | Verb mood | Verb tense | Word order | Idiom

1. Complete the supervillain's dramatic monologue.

"Fools! ____ to press this shiny red button, your entire beloved city would instantly turn into a giant wheel of cheddar cheese!"

Select one.

- **A)** If I was
- **B)** Were I
- **C)** Was I
- **D)** Had I

2. Complete the panicked passenger's text message to their family.

If the captain _____ actually paying attention to the radar, our ship _____ not be heading straight for that massive iceberg. I honestly wish I _____ taken the train instead!

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** was
- **B)** is
- **C)** were

Blank 2

- **A)** will
- **B)** shall
- **C)** would

Blank 3

- **A)** have
- **B)** was
- **C)** had

3. A time traveler is trying to warn a historical king without breaking the space-time continuum. Select ALL the sentences where the time traveler uses the formal subjunctive mood correctly.

Select all that apply.

- **A)** If the neighboring kingdom were to attack tomorrow, your defenses would crumble.
- **B)** Suppose your majesty were betrayed by a close friend; how would you react?
- **C)** Were the new treaty to be signed, the war will end immediately.
- **D)** Was the royal advisor to resign, who would take his place?

4. Help the eccentric billionaire's lawyer finish drafting this unusual will.

"In the highly unlikely event of my disappearance, if my pet llama, Reginald, ____ to inherit my vast fortune, the global stock market would surely collapse."

Select one.

- **A)** is
- **B)** would
- **C)** were
- **D)** did

5. Complete the eccentric detective's dramatic speech to his loyal assistant. Select ALL the grammatically correct options that apply.

"I would surely be rotting in a damp cell right now, _____ your brilliant deduction!"

Select all that apply.

- **A)** were it not for
- **B)** if it were not for
- **C)** was it not for
- **D)** if it would not be for

6. Help the estate lawyer complete his rather dramatic case notes. Pay close attention to the formal, hypothetical conditional structures!

_____ the eccentric billionaire to suddenly change his will, his ungrateful heirs _____ absolutely furious. Furthermore, _____ not for his loyal pet parrot who physically guards the safe, the relatives might have stolen the inheritance already!

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** Were
- **B)** Was
- **C)** Had

Blank 2

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

Blank 3

- **A)** were it
- **B)** was it
- **C)** if it was

7. Choose the correct phrase to complete the knight's thank-you card to his dragon.

"Dear Ignis, if it ____ for your excellent fire-breathing skills, we would still be freezing in that terribly drafty castle."

Select one.

- **A)** were not
- **B)** was not
- **C)** had not been
- **D)** would not be

8. Complete the frustrated marketing director's email about the company's disastrous new beverage. Watch out for mixed conditionals and formal hypothetical scenarios!

If the CEO _____ a reasonable person by nature, she _____ to our warnings before launching the disastrous "Meat-Flavored Water" campaign last month. Furthermore, _____ she to propose a "Broccoli Soda" at tomorrow's meeting, I _____ on the spot!

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** were
- **B)** was
- **C)** has been

Blank 2

- **A)** would have listened
- **B)** would listen
- **C)** will listen

Blank 3

- **A)** were
- **B)** was
- **C)** if

Blank 4

- **A)** would resign
- **B)** will resign
- **C)** had resigned

9. Help the lawyer draft the eccentric billionaire's ridiculous contingency plan.

The beloved penguin _____ undoubtedly inherit the entire estate, _____ the billionaire to mysteriously vanish on Mars. In fact, the bird would already be the company's CEO right now, if it _____ not eaten the previous set of legal documents.

Choose the correct option for each gap.

Blank 1

- **A)** will
- **B)** can
- **C)** would

Blank 2

- **A)** was
- **B)** has
- **C)** were

Blank 3

- **A)** has
- **B)** was
- **C)** had

10. Help the anxious co-pilot review the emergency protocols. Select ALL the phrases that grammatically complete the hypothetical scenario.

"_____, the entire crew would need to evacuate to the escape pods immediately."

Select all that apply.

- **A)** Were the main engine to fail
- **B)** If the main engine were to fail
- **C)** Was the main engine to fail
- **D)** If the main engine would fail