

## The subjunctive verb helpsheet

The **subjunctive verb form** is used to express a wish, obligation or desire. For example: I wish I **were** able to teleport.

When we use the **simple past tense** of the verb 'to be', we use either '**was**' or '**were**' depending on the noun or pronoun carrying out the action.

For example:

She **was** tired.

I **was** tired.

Singular nouns, singular pronouns and single subjects use 'was'.

They **were** tired.

Jo and Ky **were** tired.

Plural nouns, plural pronouns and multiple subjects use 'were'.

When we are discussing hypothetical situations, wishes or desires, we use the **subjunctive form**.

I **was** rich.



simple past tense

I wish I **were** rich.



subjunctive form

In the sentence 'I wish I **were** rich', '**were**' has been used with a single subject.

To form the **subjunctive**, we use '**were**' whether there is one subject or multiple subjects.

For example:

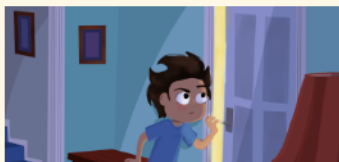
If a sentence is not expressing a hypothetical situation, wish or desire, we use the **past tense** verb form '**was**' for a single subject.

For example:

The child **was** creeping through the house.



The boy **was** tired.



When we have multiple subjects or a plural noun, we use the past tense verb form 'were'.

For example:

The children were hiding in the cave.



Lily and Lucy were happy.



Jim has written the sentence below.

If I were to go on holiday, I would go to America.

He says,



I have used the subjunctive form correctly in my sentence.

Is Jim correct? Explain your answer.

Jim is correct because he has used 'were' to talk about a wish he has. He hasn't been on holiday, but if he went, he hopes that he will be able to visit America.

Use each word below to create four sentences that are written in the subjunctive form.

parrot

call

astronaut

rich

Various answers, for example:

I wouldn't teach the parrot to talk if I were you.

If I were an astronaut, I would enjoy floating around in space.

I would be happy if you were to call me on Sunday.

Mum says that she would buy an enormous mansion for my whole family to live in if she were rich.