

The Subjunctive and Formal Structures – Test 1



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Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____ Score: / 30

Choose the one correct option (A–D) for each question.

Part 1: The mandative subjunctive

Choose the correct form after verbs, nouns and adjectives of demand, necessity and recommendation.

- The committee insisted that every applicant _____ a full portfolio by Friday.
A to submit B submit C submitting D had submit
- It is essential that the samples _____ at a constant temperature.
A are storing B be storing C to be stored D be stored
- The doctor recommended that Ms Okafor _____ any strenuous exercise for a month.
A doesn't do B not do C not to do D won't do
- Choose the correct sentence.
A The board demanded him to resign immediately.
B The board demanded for him resign immediately.
C The board demanded that he resign immediately.
D The board demanded that he resigning immediately.
- The landlord has asked that tenants _____ their bins out before 7 a.m.
A should put B would put C must to put D are put
- We propose that the meeting _____ until all members are present.
A does not start B not starts C won't start D not start
- Find the error: It is vital that every passenger not to unfasten their seatbelt while the sign is illuminated.
A It is vital B that every passenger
C not to unfasten D is illuminated
- Her lawyer requested that she _____ to answer any further questions.
A not being required B not be required C not been required D not to be required
- Was it really necessary that the ceremony _____ cancelled?
A is being B been C be D to be
- Which verb CANNOT complete the sentence? The manager _____ that all staff be informed of the changes.
A suggested B wanted C urged D stipulated

Part 2: The were-subjunctive and the unreal past

Choose the correct form to express hypothetical, unreal or regretted situations.

- If I _____ in your position, I would ask for a second opinion.
A would be B am C were D had

12. She talks about the project as though she _____ in charge of it, but she's only an intern.
A were **B** is being **C** has been **D** would
13. I'd rather you _____ my colleagues about the promotion until it's official.
A wouldn't tell **B** didn't tell **C** not to tell **D** hadn't to tell
14. It's high time the council _____ something about the potholes on this road.
A does **B** will do **C** has done **D** did
15. I wish I _____ the contract more carefully before I signed it.
A read **B** had read **C** would read **D** have read
16. If only he _____ interrupting people – it makes meetings so tense.
A will stop **B** would stop **C** has stopped **D** is stopping
17. Suppose your flight _____ cancelled – what would you do?
A will be **B** is being **C** were **D** has
18. She'd sooner _____ than apologise to him.
A resign **B** resigned **C** to resign **D** resigning
19. Find the error: I wish you would have told me earlier about the delay.
A I wish **B** would have told **C** earlier **D** about the delay
20. Had it not been for her quick thinking, the situation _____ much worse.
A was **B** will have been **C** would had been **D** would have been

Part 3: Inversion and formulaic subjunctives

Choose the correct option to complete these formal structures and fixed expressions.

21. _____ you require any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.
A Would **B** Should **C** Had **D** Were
22. _____ the government to raise taxes, consumer spending would probably fall.
A Should **B** Had **C** If **D** Were
23. _____ known about the traffic, we would have left much earlier.
A Had we **B** If we **C** Should we have **D** Were we
24. _____ for the volunteers, the festival could never have taken place.
A If it had not **B** Had it not been **C** Were it not been **D** Hadn't it been
25. She spoke quietly lest she _____ the sleeping baby.
A woke **B** would to wake **C** wake **D** waking
26. We will finish this project on time, come what _____.
A might **B** will **C** may **D** can
27. The proposal has some flaws. _____, it is still the best option we have.
A Be it as that may **B** Be that as it may **C** As it may be that **D** May it be that
28. Choose the correct sentence.
A Shouldn't you wish to receive further emails, click here.
B Should not you wish to receive further emails, click here.
C Should you don't wish to receive further emails, click here.
D Should you not wish to receive further emails, click here.

29. If she _____ to refuse, we would need to find another speaker at short notice.

A would

B were

C should be

D has

30. Far be it from me _____ you how to run your business, but those prices seem very high.

A telling

B tell

C to tell

D that I tell

Answer key – The Subjunctive and Formal Structures – Test 1

1 B	2 D	3 B	4 C	5 A	6 D	7 C	8 B	9 C	10 B
11 C	12 A	13 B	14 D	15 B	16 B	17 C	18 A	19 B	20 D
21 B	22 D	23 A	24 B	25 C	26 C	27 B	28 D	29 B	30 C

Explanations

- B** – After 'insist that', the mandative subjunctive uses the base form of the verb.
- D** – The passive subjunctive is 'be + past participle', and the samples are acted upon, so 'be stored' is needed.
- B** – The negative subjunctive is formed with 'not' + base form, without an auxiliary.
- C** – 'Demand' is followed by 'that + subjunctive', not by an object + infinitive.
- A** – 'Should + base form' is a common British alternative to the mandative subjunctive.
- D** – After 'propose that', the negative subjunctive is 'not' + base form.
- C** – The subjunctive uses the bare base form, so it should be 'not unfasten', without 'to'.
- B** – The negative passive subjunctive is 'not be + past participle'.
- C** – 'It is necessary that' takes the subjunctive, and the subjunctive stays the same in questions: 'be cancelled'.
- B** – 'Want' is not followed by a 'that'-clause; we say 'wanted all staff to be informed'.
- C** – Unreal present conditions use the past form, and 'were' is the formal choice for all persons.
- A** – 'As though' + 'were' shows that the comparison is untrue.
- B** – 'Would rather' + a different subject takes the past simple to refer to the present or future.
- D** – 'It's (high) time' + subject is followed by the past simple to say that something should already be happening.
- B** – Regrets about the past use 'wish' + past perfect.
- B** – 'If only/wish + would' expresses irritation at someone's behaviour and a desire for it to change.
- C** – 'Suppose' with a hypothetical result ('would') takes the unreal past, so 'were'.
- A** – When the subject stays the same, 'would sooner' is followed by the bare infinitive.
- B** – Past regrets after 'wish' need the past perfect: 'had told'.
- D** – A past unreal condition is followed by 'would have + past participle'.
- B** – Inverted 'Should + subject + base form' is a formal way of saying 'If you require'.
- D** – 'Were + subject + to-infinitive' is the inverted form of 'If the government were to raise'.
- A** – 'Had + subject + past participle' replaces 'If we had known' in a third conditional.
- B** – The negative inverted form is 'Had it not been for'; contractions are not used in inverted conditionals.
- C** – 'Lest' is followed by the subjunctive (base form) or 'should' + base form.
- C** – 'Come what may' is a fixed subjunctive expression meaning 'whatever happens'.
- B** – 'Be that as it may' is a fixed formal expression meaning 'nevertheless'.
- D** – In negative inverted conditionals, 'not' follows the subject: 'Should you not wish'.
- B** – 'If + subject + were to + infinitive' presents a future event as unlikely or hypothetical.
- C** – The fixed expression 'Far be it from me' is followed by a to-infinitive.

Notes for teachers: Use this test after teaching the mandative subjunctive and inversion, or as a diagnostic before C1 exam preparation. It targets typical advanced errors such as 'demand him to', 'that he not to be', 'I wish you would have', 'Hadn't it been' and 'would rather + present'. As follow-up, ask students to rewrite formal letters or notices using inversion ('Should you...') and mandative structures, and to compare formal and informal versions of the same message.