Can these ever be right?





What looks wrong with these?

I were a teacher

he sit still

she run the race again

Could they ever be right?



Subjunctive Form

The subjunctive is a verb form that is used quite rarely in very formal language.

It expresses something **desired** or **imagined**.

We use it about events that somebody:

- **wants** to happen
- **anticipates** will happen
- **imagines** happening



We will learn about two ways to use the subjunctive:

Requests and **If…were pattern**

Subjunctive Form

If I were a teacher, I would be kind.

We insisted that he sit still.

She requested that she run the race again.



Requests

Look at these requests.
What do you notice?

We ask that students walk in school.

I demand that he answer my question.

We request that doorways be kept clear.

The Head insists that everyone write in pen.

I suggest that he listen carefully to me.

Verbs in **simple form** (*walk, answer, be*)

Request Verbs

ask
command
demand
insist
request
suggest

The word ***that*** joins the parts of the sentence.

Verbs – simple form

Verbs usually change (inflect) according to who is doing them (person)

*I walk…**you** walk…**he/she/it** walks…**they** walk*

…and when they happen (**tense**).

*I **walk**…I **walked***

Most verbs do not change very much but *irregular verbs* do.

Verb: to be *I **am**…you **are**…he/she/it **is**…they **are***

Verb: to be *I **was**…you **were**…he/she/it **was**…they **were***

The **simple form** of a verb is the infinitive, without the word ‘to’.

walk…answer…be

In our subjunctive sentences, verbs appear in **simple form.**
The ending does not change according to person.

If…were

Look at these sentences.
What do you notice?

*I would go **if** I were younger.*

***If** he were not so mean, he would buy one.*

*I **wish** the computer were working.*

***Suppose** she were here. What would you say?*

*She acts **as if** she were the Queen.*

Always *were* whoever it's about. (Instead of ***was***). Formal sounding.

if
as if
wish
suppose

The sentences are about something desired or imagined.

We use the subjunctive in formal language.

Subjunctive form – very formal

Formal: use ‘were’

I would go if I were younger.

I’d tell her if I were you.

It’s not as if I were always late!

Suppose she were here – what would you say then?

I wish that I weren’t so slow!

Give the same information less formally

Informal: use ‘was’

If I was younger, I would go.

We don’t say, “if I was you’ even when speaking informally!

It’s not as if I was always late!

Suppose she was right here – what would you say then?

I wish that I wasn’t so slow!