



The Subjunctive Form

Challenge: Do you think you can use the subjunctive verb form in your formal writing?

Giving Advice

What would you suggest for these problems?



I've got a terrible cough. I just can't get rid of it!

Oh no! I've forgotten my lunch AGAIN!



Did anyone begin their suggestion with the phrase, "If I were you, I would..."?

Well done; you're using the subjunctive verb form!

Strange New Verbs

Huh? The subjunctive verb form? What's that?

Have a look at these sentences, can you see anything unusual about the verbs?

If John **were** to get an A on his test, I would be very surprised.

Were I a little bit taller, I would be able to reach the shelf.

I would run if I **were** younger.

If I **were** him, I'd try a lot harder at school.

Strange New Verbs

Wouldn't we usually say them like this?

If John **got** an A on his test, I would be very surprised.

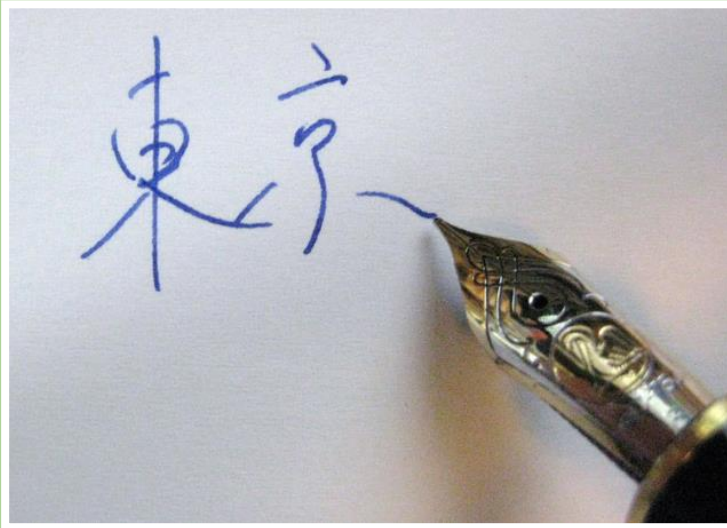
If I **was** a little bit taller, I would be able to reach the shelf.

I would run if I **was** younger.

If I **was** him, I'd try a lot harder at school.

Subjunctive Verbs

The **subjunctive verb** form can be used to show that we don't think the situation is really possible.



Japanese **isn't** going to be taught here.

I'm **not** going to cool down anytime soon!



Subjunctive Verbs

The **subjunctive verb** form structure is really quite simple:

For all verbs except the past of 'be', you use the same as the **infinitive** (basic) form.

be (past)

I **were**
you **were**
he, she, it **were**
we **were**
you **were**
they **were**

be (present)

I **be**
you **be**
he, she, it **be**
we **be**
you **be**
they **be**

all other verbs (past and present)

I **work**
you **work**
he, she, it **works**
we **work**
you **work**
they **work**

Subjunctive Verbs

Actually, it's even easier because the subjunctive doesn't change according to the person (I, you, he/she/it, etc.)



You don't always notice this, because it sometimes sounds like the normal verb.

OK, that's what it is, but what is it for?

The subjunctive verb form isn't common in everyday speech.

However, it is often used after **formal verbs** such as **require, demand, suggest, propose**.

The governors propose **that** class 5 **learn** maths all day.

The Queen demands **that** all children **be** taught to curtsy.

Mrs Smith requires **that** James Brown **go** to her office now.

Might I suggest **that** your son **wait** outside until we have finished our chat?

Other Uses

The subjunctive verb form is also used after **formal expressions**, such as **it is desirable/necessary/vital/essential**.

It is desirable **that** the whole class **be** here early for the trip.

Is it necessary **that** you **eat** all your chocolate right now?

It is vital **that** each child **bring** their own water bottle to school.

It is essential **that** Magda **take** her hay fever medicine daily.



twinkl