

Wednesday 24th February

Using was and were

We was going to go to the park after lunch but it started raining heavily.

We were going to go to the park after lunch but it started raining heavily.

Read both of these sentences aloud. Which do you think is correct? Can you explain why it is correct?

'was' and 'were' are the past tenses of the verb 'to be'.

It is important to be careful when choosing the correct form of the verb for the subject of a sentence.

What is the 'past tense'?

What is a verb?

What do we mean by 'the subject of a sentence'?

one person

past tense

In the singular past form, the correct use of 'was' and 'were' is:

I was I was happy living there.

You were You were always so kind to me.

He was He was the best runner in the school.

She was She was the first woman in space.

It was It was unusual to see Emily crying.

What do you notice?

more than one

In the plural past form, the correct use of 'was' and 'were' is:

We were We were all poorly last week.

You were You were brilliant, Class 4!

They were They were stuck on the bus for hours.



NOT They was stuck on the bus for hours.

Once we have learnt the key differences between singular and plural, using the correct word in our writing becomes easier.

'was' or 'were'?

Singular

I was
You were
He was
She was
It was

Plural

We were
You were
They were

Watch out for...

'were' used in the **past subjunctive**.

Sometimes you might see 'I were' and 'he were' instead of 'I was', 'he was', 'it was' etc. This form of the verb is used to show **fantasy** or **hypothetical situations** which are unlikely to happen.

For example:

1. If **I were** more confident, I would be an actor.
2. I wish **she weren't** so lazy!
3. If only **it were** the holidays already!
4. He behaves as if **he were** the most important.

Top Tip!

In formal British English, the presence of the words '**if**' and '**wish**' are a clue that the past subjunctive form of the verb (I were, he were) should be used.

Can you write your own example of a sentence in the past subjunctive?

Which is the correct use of 'was'?

a) We was good at sport.

b) She was kind.

c) They was a great class.

d) I wish I wasn't lazy.

Which is the correct use of 'were'?

a) She were hungry.

b) I were late for school.

c) He were unhappy.

d) I wish I were queen.

Copy these sentences into your book, inserting the correct words in the gaps.

'was' or 'were'?

a) When he got home he _____ very tired.

b) I wish I _____ fitter!

c) They _____ the best of friends.

d) He _____ a successful chef.

How did you do?

'was' or 'were'?

a) When he got home he was very tired.

b) I wish I were fitter!

c) They were the best of friends.

d) He was a successful chef.

Independent Task

Complete the bronze, silver or gold activity. Make sure that you are writing in full sentences where you need to and taking care over all of your spellings.

Gold

Bronze

Using 'was' and 'were'

1. Complete the following sentences using 'was' and 'were' correctly.

- a) Julie knew that she _____ going to be last in the race.
- b) Noah told his mum he _____ not going to walk the dog.
- c) If I _____ in charge, I'd make the holidays longer!
- d) I _____ really excited about visiting my new class.
- e) We _____ all looking forward to the party.

2. Complete these sentence openings with your own ideas.

- a) If only I were taller _____
- b) I wish I were old enough to _____
- c) If he were here, we could _____

3. Rewrite this text message correctly.

Tell Mum I'm late I were going to meet her at 5 she were going to wait for me we was going to go to Gran's see you soon



Silver

Using 'was' and 'were'

1. Complete the following sentences using 'was' and 'were' correctly.

- a) Julie knew that she _____ going to be last in the race.
- b) Noah told his mum he _____ not going to walk the dog.
- c) If I _____ in charge, I'd make the holidays longer!
- d) I _____ really excited about visiting my new class.
- e) We _____ all looking forward to the party.

2. Complete these sentence openings with your own ideas.

- a) If only I _____
- b) I wish I _____
- c) If he _____

3. Rewrite this text message correctly.

Hi Dad I were going to be back at 6 but saw Danny, he were on his way to the park with the team they was all saying come with us so I went I hope you wasn't waiting for me.



Using 'was' and 'were'

Singular

I was
You were
He was
She was
It was

Plural

We were
You were
They were

1. Write a sentence for each use of 'was'/'were' in the singular past.

2. Write a sentence for each use of 'were' in the plural past.

3. Complete these sentences using the past subjunctive form, using 'I were', 'he were' etc.

- a) If only I _____
- b) I wish I _____
- c) If he _____

4. Rewrite this text message correctly.

Hi Mum I am in town I were going to get a magazine but I saw Penny she were on her way to the cafe so I went to hope you don't mind cos I were supposed to be back home by now if you was not busy you could have come too :)

