Life

Level 6 Unit 11b

Conditionals and inversion

RightorWrong.com Home Registration Sign In Help Quizzes Links Contact Us

How honest are you? part 3

Q 3 If you were to find a wallet on the street, would you hand it in to the police?

A Yes, I would, unless it had a lot of money in it!

B Yes, provided there was something that showed who the owner was, like a bank card or a driver's license.

C No, I'd keep it, so long as no one saw me pick it up.

Q 4 Were an advertising agency to offer you a part in an ad for a product you didn't actually like, would you accept the job?

A Yes, so long as I thought the product was harmless.

B No, I would never sell a product unless I really believed in it.

C Yes, provided the money was good enough!

Presentation

unless

Unless = if ... not or except if ...

I would never sell a product **unless** I really believed in it. (= If I didn't believe in it, I wouldn't sell it.)

I won't go unless you go too. (= I'll only go if you go.)

so/as long as, provided/providing

These expressions mean only if or on condition that: I would keep it, as long as no one saw me.

Provided/Providing are more formal than as/so long as: I would accept the job **provided** the money was good enough. (= only if the money was good enough)

If I were to ..., Were I to ..., Had I ...

In *if* clauses which talk about imaginary future situations, you can replace the simple past with *were* + *to* + infinitive to emphasize the improbability of the situation:

If I saw him ... \rightarrow If I were to see him ...

It is also possible to drop *if* and invert the order of the subject and *were*:

If I were to see him ... \Rightarrow Were I to see him ...

If you won ... \rightarrow Were you to win ...

Were I to is far less frequent than If I were to.

You cannot use *were* ... *to* ... to talk about imaginary present situations:

If I knew how to swim (but I don't) ... (not Were I to-know how to swim ...)

However, you can use inversion with the verb $to\ be\ +$ adjective to talk about imaginary present situations:

Were I rich, I'd live a life of luxury.

In *if* clauses which talk about imaginary past situations, you can drop *if* and reverse the order of *had* and the subject:

If I'd known ... \rightarrow Had I known ...

The inverted forms are more formal and distant than standard *if* clauses.



Level 6 Unit 11b

Exercises

Exercises

1	3	Write unless or as long as in the blanks. Then listen and check.
	1	A: Would you steal from a member of your own family?
		B: No, not I really, really had to.
	2	A: Can I borrow your bike?
		B: Yes, you bring it back before five.
	3	A: You know who the winner is, don't you? Go on, you can tell me.
		B: OK, but only you don't tell anyone else. It's supposed to be a secret.
	4	A: Would you like to sit by the window?
		B: Yes, please. you want to sit there, of course.
	5	A: Are you going out this afternoon?
		B: No, I don't think so, Paul calls me to play soccer.
	6	A: Would you jump from a flying airplane?
		B: Yes, I had a parachute!
2	Re	write the sentences using the word or words in bold.
	1	I'll get the bus if Glen can't take me in the car.
		unless
	2	Give me \$5.00 and I'll clean your car for you.
		provided
	3	We could go out to eat, or if you prefer, we could stay at home and order takeout.
		unless
	4	You can come in, but you have to leave before my parents get back.
	5	as long as I really didn't want to do it if Simon wasn't going to help me.
	5	unless
3	D	ewrite the if clause using were to or had.
J		
	1	If I'd known you were coming, I'd have made more food. Had I known
	2	If he found out about all your lies, you'd lose your job.
	3	If I lost my job, it'd be very hard to find another one in the same town.
	4	If we'd got here a little sooner, we'd have seen the start of the match.
	5	If I'd never met you, my life would have been very different.
	6	If we could start again, things would be so much better.

