Present and past modal structures

1 Choose the correct sentence (A or B) to describe each situation.

1 I fed the cat after I got back from school in the evening. I didn't know that my sister had fed it thirty minutes earlier.
A I didn't need to feed the cat.
B I needn't have fed the cat.
2 When I got back from school, I saw a note on the table from my sister, saying that she had fed the cat thirty minutes earlier.
A I didn't need to feed the cat.
B I needn't have fed the cat.
3 I didn't listen to her advice, and that was a mistake.
A I should have listened to her advice.
B I ought to listen to her advice.
4 They didn't live far away, so it wasn't necessary for us to take a taxi.
A We didn't have to take a taxi.
B We needn't have taken a taxi.
5 I think it would be best if you went to the party.
A You had better not go there.
B You had better go there.
6 You didn't ask for the exact address and now we don't know where to go.
A You ought to have asked for the address.
B You ought not to have asked for the address.
7 Never make this mistake again – it's very important.
A You ought to make this mistake again.
B You mustn't make this mistake again.
8 It wasn't a good idea to give him my contact details.
A I should have given them to him.
B I shouldn't have given them to him.
9 You won't regret putting effort into this – it's the best advice I can give you.
A You'd better put some effort into this.
B You'd better not put any effort into this.
10 It would be better if you washed your hair less often.
A You ought not to wash your hair so often.
B You ought to wash your hair more often.
11 I didn't apply for that job and now I regret it.
A I ought to apply for that job.
B I should have applied for that job.
12 It's very important that you take these symptoms seriously.
A You must ignore these symptoms.
B You mustn't ignore these symptoms.
13 She left the house early so she had a lot of time to get to the station on time.
A She didn't need to hurry to the station.
B She needn't have hurried to the station.
14 She hurried to the station but the train was delayed and she had to wait there for two more hours.
A She didn't need to hurry to the station.
B She needn't have hurried to the station.
15 It's very important that you aren't late.
A You ought not to have been late.
B You had better not be late.
16 The teacher told us the first lesson the next day was going to be cancelled.
A We didn't have to come to the first lesson.
B We needn't have come to the first lesson.

LIVEWORKSHEETS

2 Complete the second sentence so it has a similar meaning to the first. Use the word in capitals.

1 It's a shame she didn't stay at home. SHOULD

She _____ at home.

2 I don't think it's a good idea for you to be late tonight. OUGHT

You _____late tonight.

3 We called the police but it turned out to be unnecessary. HAVE

We _____ the police.

4 It's a good idea for you to see a doctor about your back. HAD

You _____ a doctor about your back.

5 It wasn't necessary for me to go to school that day, so I stayed at home. HAVE

I_____ to school that day, so I stayed at home.

6 It's very important that you don't forget her name. MUST

You _____ her name.

7 It would have been better if you had spent less money. TO

You _____ less money.

8 It wasn't necessary for you to prepare anything (so I'm glad you didn't). NEED

You _____ anything.

9 It's not a good idea for you to spend all of that money. SHOULDN'T

You _____ all that money.

10 It would have been better if you had told me. TO

You _____ me.

11 They're not allowed to stay out that late. MUSTN'T

They _____ that late.

12 I think you should ask your parents for permission. BETTER

You _____ your parents for permission.

13 It would have been better if you had talked to her. SHOULD

You _____ to her.

14 I bought some bread and then realised Mum had bought some too. NEEDN'T

I _____ bread.



LIVEWORKSHEETS