

Grade 8 - English FAL

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Week 5: 6 – 10 July 2020

Important definitions you should keep in mind:

- **Singular** - refers to one person / animal / thing, etc.
- **Plural** - refers to more than one person / animal / thing, etc.

When you are asked to decide whether you should use “was” or “were” in a sentence the singular/plural rule that you use to determine if you should use “is” or “are” is also applicable when you do “was or were” as well as “has” or “have”. This week we will focus on was/were so keep the rule from last week in mind when going through these notes as well as when you complete the activity.



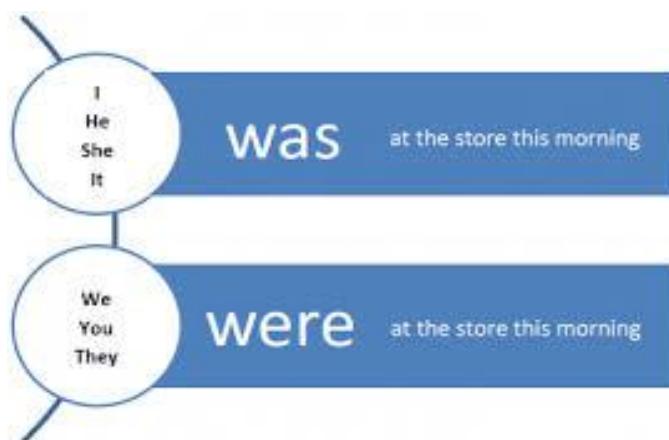
Choosing whether to use “was” or “were” in a sentence.

The common rule that determines how you use “was” and “were” is called the singular and plural rule. The rule states that if the NOUN/SUBJECT is singular (there is only one) you use **WAS**.

Examples of singular nouns – I, he, she, it, etc.

If the NOUN/SUBJECT is plural (more than one), you use **WERE**.
Examples of plural nouns- you, your, yours, we, they, us, etc.

Important: If the noun/subject is “you”, ALWAYS USE WERE!



HOWEVER, like any rule there are EXCEPTIONS (This means they do not follow the general rules mentioned above. You must know these by heart, thus YOU MUST STUDY them in order to be able to recognize them.)

The exceptions to the above mentioned rules are when you face something called a **SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD**.

WHAT IS A SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD?

Whenever you have a sentence and the words that are used form UNREAL or HYPOTHETICAL statements. (It is thus made up of phrases such as I wish, If I, If he, He acts as if, etc.) **YOU ALWAYS USE WERE!**

For example,

- I wish I weren't so shy.
- I wish it were warmer outside.
- If I were taller, I could dunk a basketball.
- If John were a rich man, he could drive a fancy car.
- He acts as if he were the one in charge.
- John spends money as if he were a millionaire.

All of the above sentences use the verb **were** because they aren't true; they do not describe reality.

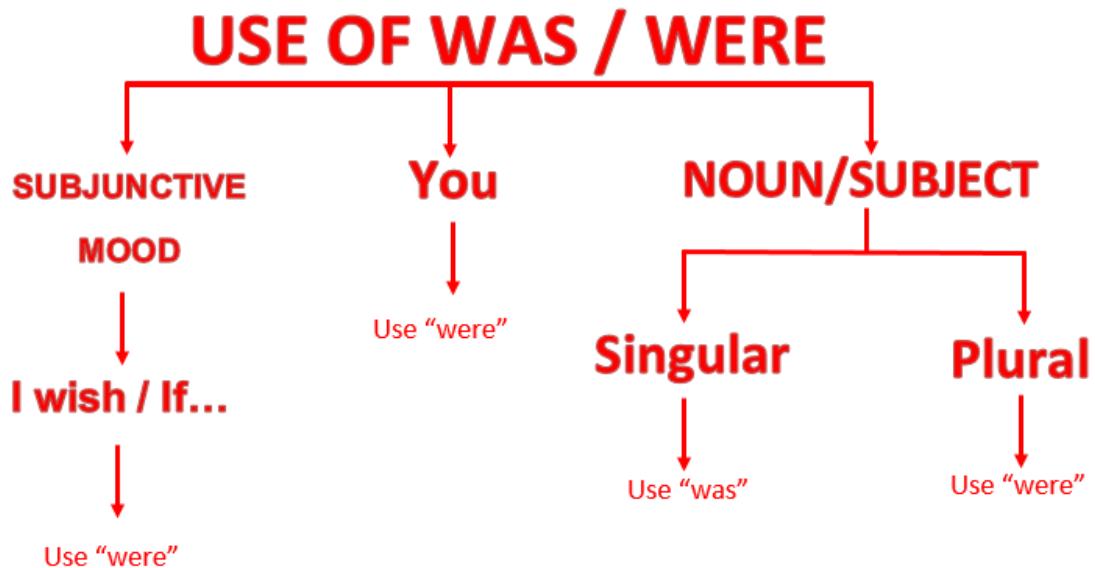
In the first two sentences, I am talking about things I wish would happen.

In the third and fourth sentences, I am talking about situations that would happen if I were taller and if John were rich, speaking hypothetically.

And the fifth and sixth sentences are examples of unreal statements.

- *Examples with steps to follow on next page.*

- The diagram/poster to follow summarizes the info above. I find it useful as it is like a “cheat sheet” to easily finding most of your answers.



Example 1:

He _____ about to eat dinner.

Step 1: Identify / find the NOUN/SUBJECT in the sentence.

He _____ about to eat dinner.

NOUN/SUBJECT

Step 2: Is the noun/subject singular or plural?

-There is only ONE (He) - thus **SINGULAR**

Step 3: Apply the rule to the specific sentence to decide whether to use “was” or “were”

The rule states that if the NOUN/SUBJECT is singular (there is only one) you use **WAS**.
If the NOUN/SUBJECT is plural (more than one), you use **WERE**.

ANSWER = He was about to eat dinner

Example 2:

They _____ nowhere to be seen.

Step 1: Identify / find the NOUN/SUBJECT in the sentence.

They _____ nowhere to be seen.

NOUN/SUBJECT

Step 2: Is the noun/subject singular or plural?

There is MORE THAN ONE - thus **PLURAL**

Step 3: Apply the rule to the specific sentence to decide whether to use "was" or "were"

The rule states that if the NOUN/SUBJECT is singular (there is only one) you use **WAS**.
If the NOUN/SUBJECT is plural (more than one), you use **WERE**.

ANSWER = They were nowhere to be seen

Example 3: VERY IMPORTANT!

I wish I _____ there to help you.

Step 1: Identify / find the NOUN/SUBJECT in the sentence.

I wish I _____ there to help you.

NOUN/SUBJECT

Step 2: Is the noun/subject singular or plural?

There is ONLY ONE - thus **SINGULAR**

HOWEVER the fact the sentence has the words "I wish" before the subject/noun means it is a SUBJUNCTIVE MOOD !! Thus making this example an EXCEPTION to the normal rule.

Step 3: Apply the rule you learnt about subjunctive mood.

Whenever you have a sentence and the words that are used form UNREAL or HYPOTHETICAL statements. (It is thus made up of phrases such as I wish, If I, If he, He acts as if, etc.) **YOU ALWAYS USE WERE!**

ANSWER = I wish I were there to help you.

A FEW MORE EXAMPLES:

- I was driving to the park.
- You were drinking some water.
- She was at the roller rink.
- It was a great time.
- We were in the right spot.
- If I were you, I would not do it.
- If I were a wealthy man, I wouldn't have to work hard.

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HOMEWORK:

10 July 2020

Fill in was or were in the following worksheet:

1. She _____ really sad yesterday.
2. We _____ at the zoo all day.
3. Tom and Sarah _____ both absent on the day we wrote the test.
4. I wish I _____ a little taller so I could reach the top shelf with ease.
5. They sent us the invites to the party when you _____on tour.
6. I _____ in London in 2012.
7. Our teacher _____ very tired yesterday.
8. Did I not ask you who _____ not in class?
9. He _____ born in May.
10. Tom and Bill _____ best friends.
11. We _____ playing cards and watching movies.
12. We went to the waterpark. It _____ incredible!
13. Jane _____ in the hospital.
14. My dad _____ in the post office.
15. If I _____ rich, I would buy the car.