Grammar in context

Conditionals

1 Look at the sentences and answer the questions.

a The scientists hope that if they do the same thing with mosquitoes in the wild, the malaria-carrying mosquito population will die out.

b Would we miss them if they disappeared?

c If a person lives in an area with these mosquitoes, they are at risk of contracting malaria.

d If their efforts had continued, they would have been able to eradicate the disease.

1 How do we make zero, first, second and third conditionals?

2 Why do we use each one?

3 What type of conditional is each sentence a–d?

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Complete the conditional sentences with the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1 If he had come to school yesterday, he .... (do) the exam.

2 If I .... (be) better at sport, I'd play more.

3 If I .... (not see) you tonight, I'll see you tomorrow.

4 If my sister gets a cold, I usually .... (catch) it, too.

5 If it's warm this afternoon, I .... (walk) home.

6 If I .... (see) him yesterday, I'd have given him the message.

7 If he had a part-time job, he .... (not be able) to do all his homework.

2 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs given.

1 If the press hadn't found out about this story, it .... (not appear) in the newspapers.

2 If research .... (be) useful, people want to know about it.

3 If they .... (not be) scientists, they wouldn't know how to carry out these experiments.

4 If they repeat the experiment, they .... (get) the same results next time.

5 If the experiment .... (not be) successful, they wouldn't have published the results.

6 If they achieve their aim, it .... (help) a lot of people.

7 If they did experiments on some types of animal, it .... (be) illegal.

8 If it .... (not be) for past pioneers, their research wouldn't have been possible.

3 Rewrite these sentences using conditionals.

1 My brother must get good marks because he wants to study medicine next year.
   If my brother gets good marks, he …

2 I didn't know you were at home last night. I wanted to call you for help with my homework.

3 You must water plants as without water, they die.

4 It's a pity scientists don't have more funding. They need it to do more research.

5 I'm glad I read this article. I hadn't heard about this breakthrough before.

6 I think you like sci-fi so you'll enjoy this film.

7 People tend to believe stories that they read in the newspapers.

8 I'm not a scientist because I don't want to do research on animals.

Zero conditional

FORM	USE
If + present simple, … present simple *If you don't water plants, they die.*	We use the zero conditional to talk about situations that are generally or always true.

First conditional

FORM	USE
If + present simple, … will + infinitive *If you eat junk food, you will put on weight.*	We use the first conditional to talk about possible and probable situations in the future, and their consequences.

Second conditional

FORM	USE
If + past simple, … would/wouldn't + infinitive *If I had a beard, I'd look older.*	We use the second conditional to talk about imaginary or improbable situations and their consequences. The imaginary or improbable sentences are in the present or future, not in the past.

Third conditional

FORM	USE
If + past perfect, … would/wouldn't have + past participle *If I had studied, I would have passed the exam.*	We use the third conditional to talk about imaginary or impossible situations in the past and their consequences. The situations are impossible because we cannot change them now that they have happened.

1.   Translate (16):

Kdybych byl tebou, zůstal bych doma, když prší.

Když prší, je mokro.

Nepůjdeme ven, pokud bude pršet.

Kdyby bývalo nepršelo, nezůstali bychom doma.

2. Complete the sentences with the 0, 1 or 2 conditional (14)

If I _____ (be) you, I _____ (buy) a car.

If Peter _____ (play), I _____ (not play) too.

I _____ (help) if I _____ (know) myself what to do.

John _____ (be) sad if you _____ (not come) tomorrow.

If there _____ (be) problems, please _____ (contact) the headmaster.

Sam and Paul _____ (sing) together if they stop arguing.

I would cry during the test if the teacher _____ (not look).

3   Complete the conditional sentences with correct tense (20):

If I won the lottery, I _____ (buy) a new car.

If he had not come, it _____ (be) difficult.

I will go to if you also _____ (come).

Let's play football if it _____ (not rain) tomorrow.

If we _____ (lose), we will go to the pub!

If I _____ (be) you, I _____ (start) playing basketball.

When it _____ (be) below 0 degrees of Celsia, the water _____ (freeze).

We _____ (won) if he had not missed the matched.

4   Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs given. (20)

1   If we'd arrived earlier, we _____ (get) better seats.

2   I wouldn't have made so many mistakes if I _____ (revise) more.

3   If they _____ (be) more careful, the disaster would never have happened.

4   If I _____ (know) you were in town, I would have arranged to meet for a coffee.

5   He _____ (not become) Prime Minister if his parents hadn't encouraged him.