Mixed Conditionals:
Inverted Conditionals: Had, Were & Should

Fill in the blank with the correct option.

1. ___ the ambassador been informed earlier, the diplomatic crisis could have been averted.
   a) Had
   b) Were
   c) Should
   d) If

2. Had the researchers ___ the anomaly sooner, the study's conclusions would have been different.
   a) notice
   b) to notice
   c) noticing
   d) noticed

3. Had it not been for the paramedics' swift response, the patient ___.
   a) may not survive
   b) might not have survived
   c) might not survive
   d) will not have survived

4. ___ the company to merge with its main competitor, thousands of jobs would be at risk.
   a) Had
   b) Should
   c) Were
   d) If

5. Were the board ___ a new chairperson next month, the company's strategic direction could change completely.
   a) to appoint
   b) appointing
   c) appointed
   d) appoints

6. Were I in your position, I ___ the offer without hesitation.
   a) would have accepted
   b) will accept
   c) accepted
   d) would accept

7. Should you ___ any further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our office.
   a) required
   b) require
   c) requiring
   d) to require

8. Should the need ___, the emergency team will be deployed within the hour.
   a) arises
   b) arose
   c) arise
   d) arising

9. Had the city invested in public transport decades ago, residents ___ such severe traffic congestion today.
   a) would not face
   b) would not have faced
   c) will not face
   d) had not faced

10. Had she not dropped out of university, she ___ better career prospects at the moment.
    a) would have had
    b) will have
    c) has
    d) would have

11. Had the government acted on the scientists' warnings years ago, the country ___ in a much stronger position now.
 a) would have been
 b) would be
 c) will be
 d) were

12. Were he not so risk-averse, he ___ in the startup when he had the chance last year.
 a) would invest
 b) had invested
 c) would have invested
 d) invested

13. Were it not for her fear of flying, she ___ the international conference in Tokyo last spring.
 a) would have attended
 b) would attend
 c) will attend
 d) had attended

14. ___ it not for the generous scholarship, many talented students would be unable to attend this university.
 a) Had
 b) Was
 c) Should
 d) Were

15. Had it not been ___ the firefighters' courage, the entire building would have been destroyed.
 a) to
 b) for
 c) by
 d) with

16. The contract states: '___ any dispute arise between the parties, it shall be resolved through binding arbitration.'
 a) Would
 b) Had
 c) Should
 d) Were

17. Even ___ the company offered me double my current salary, I would not consider working there again.
 a) if
 b) provided
 c) so long as
 d) but for

18. ___ the challenges that lay ahead, the CEO would never have accepted the position two years ago.
 a) Were she to foresee
 b) Should she foresee
 c) Had she foresee
 d) Had she foreseen

19. ___ the board approved the merger last quarter, the company's share price would have soared.
 a) Should
 b) Had
 c) Were
 d) If

20. The surgeon performed the emergency operation immediately; ___, the patient would not have survived the night.
 a) however
 b) furthermore
 c) otherwise
 d) therefore

Answers

1. a) Had

2. d) noticed

3. b) might not have survived

4. c) Were

5. a) to appoint

6. d) would accept

7. b) require

8. c) arise

9. a) would not face

10. d) would have

11. b) would be

12. c) would have invested

13. a) would have attended

14. d) Were

15. b) for

16. c) Should

17. a) if

18. d) Had she foreseen

19. b) Had

20. c) otherwise

Explanations

1. "Had" (a)

This is an inverted third conditional. In formal English, you can remove 'if' and invert the subject and auxiliary: 'Had the ambassador been informed' = 'If the ambassador had been informed.' 'Were' and 'Should' don't work with 'been + past participle' here, and 'If' alone would need 'had' after the subject.

2. "noticed" (d)

In inverted third conditionals, 'Had + subject' replaces 'If + subject + had.' The structure requires a past participle: 'Had the researchers noticed' = 'If the researchers had noticed.' The base form, infinitive, and gerund cannot follow 'Had + subject' in this structure.

3. "might not have survived" (b)

'Had it not been for' is an inverted form of 'If it had not been for,' creating a third conditional about a past event. The result clause needs 'would/could/might + have + past participle.' 'May not survive' and 'might not survive' refer to the present/future, and 'will not have survived' uses the wrong modal for unreal past.

4. "Were" (c)

This is an inverted second conditional: 'Were + subject + to + infinitive.' 'Were the company to merge' = 'If the company were to merge' — a formal way to express a hypothetical present/future situation. 'Had' requires a past participle (not 'to merge'), 'Should' doesn't take 'to,' and 'If' alone needs a finite verb after the subject.

5. "to appoint" (a)

The inverted second conditional structure is 'Were + subject + to + base verb.' 'Were the board to appoint' = 'If the board were to appoint.' After 'Were + subject,' only 'to + base verb' completes the inverted conditional correctly.

6. "would accept" (d)

'Were I in your position' is an inverted second conditional (= 'If I were in your position'), describing a present hypothetical. The result uses 'would + base verb.' 'Would have accepted' is third conditional (past unreal), 'will accept' is for real conditions, and 'accepted' is past simple without conditional meaning.

7. "require" (b)

This is an inverted first conditional: 'Should + subject + base verb' = 'If + subject + present simple.' 'Should you require' = 'If you require.' This formal structure is common in business correspondence. After 'Should + subject,' only the base form of the verb is correct.

8. "arise" (c)

'Should + subject + base verb' is the inverted first conditional. 'Should the need arise' = 'If the need arises.' Note that while the standard form uses 'arises' (third person -s), the inverted form with 'Should' requires the base form 'arise' without -s.

9. "would not face" (a)

This is an inverted mixed conditional (Type 3→2): 'Had + past participle' (past cause) with 'would + base verb' (present result). The word 'today' confirms the result is about the present. 'Would not have faced' would be pure third conditional (past result), not matching 'today.'

10. "would have" (d)

This is a mixed conditional (Type 3→2) with inversion. Here, 'would have' means 'would possess' — it is NOT the start of 'would have + past participle.' The phrase 'at the moment' confirms we are talking about the present. Compare: 'she would have better prospects' (possess them now) vs. 'she would have had better prospects' (possess them in the past).

11. "would be" (b)

Inverted mixed conditional (Type 3→2). 'Had the government acted' (past cause) + 'would be' (present result). The word 'now' signals a present result. 'Would have been' would be pure third conditional (past result), contradicting 'now.'

12. "would have invested" (c)

This is an inverted mixed conditional (Type 2→3): 'Were + subject + adjective' (present personality) + 'would have + past participle' (past consequence). His risk-averse nature is a present trait, but 'last year' places the consequence in the past. 'Would invest' is second conditional (present/future), not matching 'last year.'

13. "would have attended" (a)

Inverted mixed conditional (Type 2→3) using 'Were it not for' (= 'If it were not for'). Her fear of flying is a present/ongoing condition, but 'last spring' indicates a past consequence, requiring 'would have + past participle.'

14. "Were" (d)

'Were it not for' is the inverted form of 'If it were not for,' expressing a present unreal condition. 'Had' would need 'been' ('Had it not been for' — for past situations). Formal English requires the subjunctive 'were,' not 'was,' in unreal conditionals. 'Should' doesn't fit this structure.

15. "for" (b)

'Had it not been for' is a fixed expression meaning 'If it had not been for' or 'Without.' The preposition 'for' is the only correct choice. This is the past version of 'Were it not for.'

16. "Should" (c)

This is an inverted first conditional in formal legal language. 'Should any dispute arise' = 'If any dispute arises.' 'Would' cannot form inverted conditionals. 'Had' + base form 'arise' is incorrect (it needs a past participle). 'Were' would need 'to arise' after it.

17. "if" (a)

'Even if' is a fixed expression meaning 'even in the hypothetical case that,' emphasising that the result would not change. You cannot substitute 'provided,' 'so long as,' or 'but for' after 'even' — only 'if' (and 'though') combine with 'even' in this way.

18. "Had she foreseen" (d)

The result clause 'would never have accepted... two years ago' is about the past, requiring a third conditional. The inverted form is 'Had + subject + past participle.' 'Had she foreseen' = 'If she had foreseen.' 'Had she foresee' is wrong because 'Had' requires a past participle, not a base form. 'Were she to foresee' (2nd) and 'Should she foresee' (1st) don't match the past context.

19. "Had" (b)

'Last quarter' and 'would have soared' indicate a third conditional about the past. The inverted form is 'Had + subject + past participle.' Here 'approved' serves as the past participle. 'Should' requires a base form (first conditional). 'Were' requires 'to + base form' (second conditional). 'If' alone cannot precede past simple + 'would have' — it would need 'If the board had approved.'

20. "otherwise" (c)

'Otherwise' functions as an implied conditional: 'if the surgeon had not performed the operation.' It connects a factual statement to its hypothetical alternative consequence. 'However' introduces contrast, 'furthermore' adds information, and 'therefore' shows cause and effect — none create the conditional meaning needed here.