Would

We use *would* (*'d*) / *wouldn’t* when we imagine a situation or action (= we think of something that is not real):
- It *would be* nice to buy a new car, but we can’t afford it.
- I’d *love* to live by the ocean.
- A: Should I tell Chris what happened?
  B: No, I *wouldn’t say* anything.
  (= I wouldn’t say anything in your situation)

We use *would have* (done) when we imagine situations or actions in the past (= things that didn’t happen):
- They helped us a lot. I don’t know what we *would have done* without their help.
- I didn’t tell Sam what happened. He *wouldn’t have been* pleased.

Compare *would (do)* and *would have (done)*:
- I *would call* Sue, but I don’t have her number. (now)
- I *would have called* Sue, but I didn’t have her number. (past)
- I’m not going to invite them to the party. They *wouldn’t come* anyway.
- I didn’t invite them to the party. They *wouldn’t have come* anyway.

We often use *would* in sentences with *if* (see Units 36–38):
- I *would call* Sue if I had her number.
- I *would have called* Sue if I’d had her number.

Compare *will* (*’ll*) and *would* (*’d*):
- I’ll *stay* a little longer. I’ve got plenty of time.
- I’d *stay* a little longer, but I really have to go now. (so I can’t stay longer)
- I’ll *call* Sue. I’ve got her number.
- I’d *call* Sue, but I don’t have her number. (so I can’t call her)

Sometimes *would / wouldn’t* is the past of *will / won’t*.

Compare:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tom</strong>: I’ll call you on Sunday.</td>
<td>→ Tom said he’d call me on Sunday.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ann</strong>: I promise I won’t be late.</td>
<td>→ Ann promised that she wouldn’t be late.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Liz</strong>: Darn! The car won’t start.</td>
<td>→ Liz was annoyed because her car wouldn’t start.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Somebody *wouldn’t do* something = he/she refused to do it:
- I tried to warn him, but he *wouldn’t listen* to me. (= he refused to listen)
- The car *wouldn’t start*. (= it “refused” to start)

You can also use *would* when you talk about things that happened regularly in the past:
- When we were children, we lived by the ocean. In summer, if the weather was nice, we *would* all get up early and go for a swim. (= we did this regularly)
- Whenever Richard was angry, he *would* walk out of the room.

With this meaning, *would* is similar to *used to* (see Unit 17):
- Whenever Richard was angry, he *used to walk* out of the room.
34.1 Write sentences about yourself. Imagine things you would like or wouldn’t like.
1. (a place you’d love to live)  
   I'd love to live by the ocean.  
2. (a job you wouldn’t like to do)  
3. (something you would love to do)  
4. (something that would be nice to have)  
5. (a place you’d like to go to)  

34.2 Complete the sentences using would + the following verbs (in the correct form):
   be be -do- do enjoy enjoy have pass stop
   1. They helped us a lot. I don’t know what we would have done without their help.
   2. You should go and see the movie. You would  
   3. It’s too bad you couldn’t come to the concert yesterday. You would  
   4. Do you think I should apply for the job? What would you  
   5. I was in a hurry when I saw you. Otherwise, I would  
   6. We took a taxi home last night but got stuck in the traffic. It would  
   7. Why don’t you go and see Claire? She would  
   8. Why didn’t you take the exam? I’m sure you would  
   9. In an ideal world, everybody would enough to eat.

34.3 Each sentence on the right follows a sentence on the left. Which follows which?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Left</th>
<th>Right</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I’d like to go to Australia one day.</td>
<td>a) It wouldn’t have been very pleasant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I wouldn’t like to live on a busy street.</td>
<td>b) It would have been fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m sorry the trip was canceled.</td>
<td>c) It would be nice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m looking forward to going out tonight.</td>
<td>d) It won’t be much fun.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m glad we didn’t go out in the rain.</td>
<td>e) It wouldn’t be very pleasant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I’m not looking forward to the trip.</td>
<td>f) It will be fun.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

34.4 Write sentences using promised + would / wouldn’t.
   1. I wonder why Laura is late.  
      She promised she wouldn’t be late.  
   2. I wonder why Steve hasn’t called.  
      He promised  
   3. Why did you tell Jane what I said?  
      You wouldn’t tell her.  
   4. I’m surprised they didn’t wait for us.  
      They wouldn’t wait for us.  

34.5 Complete the sentences. Use wouldn’t + a suitable verb.
   1. I tried to warn him, but he  
      wouldn’t listen  
   2. I asked Amanda what had happened, but she  
   3. Paul was very angry about what I’d said and  
      wouldn’t speak  
   4. Martina insisted on carrying all her luggage.  
      She  

34.6 These sentences are about things that happened many times in the past. Complete the sentences using would + the following:
   forget help shake share walk
   1. Whenever Richard was angry, he  
      would walk  
   2. We used to live next to railroad tracks. Every time a train went by, the  
   3. George was a very kind man. He  
   4. Brenda was always very generous. She didn’t have much, but she  
   5. You could never rely on Joe. It didn’t matter how many times you reminded him to do
      something, he  

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