

CONDITIONALS & INFINITY OF PURPOSE: LIFE ABOARD THE SPACE STATION

Conditionals are always fun grammar to learn in class. The ability to use them to discuss unreal situations gives students a chance to discuss creative topics and ideas. The second conditional is usually constructed with:

If clause + simple past + would/could/might + base form of verb

For example:

If I traveled to the U.S., I would go to New York.

However, conditionals can be richer and more complex if we combine them with infinity of purpose. This to + verb + grammar structure is often used to answer the question “why.”

I traveled to the U.S. – Why did you travel to the U.S.?

I traveled to the U.S. to visit the Statue of Liberty.

Combining conditionals and infinity of purpose can provide students the form and structure to create complex sentences that express complete ideas.

If I traveled to the U.S., I would go to New York to visit the Statue of Liberty.

In this week’s Teacher’s Corner we’ll use both the second conditional and infinity of purpose to express complete ideas in a single sentence. Specifically, we’ll practice how to use these two grammatical structures to write a letter for a job. Which job? Astronaut!

LEVEL

Intermediate and above

LANGUAGE FOCUS

- Writing (primary focus)
- Speaking (secondary focus)

GOAL

Students will use the second conditional and infinity of purpose to discuss what they would do as an astronaut.

MATERIALS

- Teacher: whiteboard or chalkboard; markers or chalk; tape
- Computer with Internet connection (if possible), projector
- Students: pencils or pens, writing paper

PREPARATION

- Print out the photos in Appendix A.
- Print out one copy of the worksheet If I Were An Astronaut for each student.
- If your classroom has a computer and Internet connection, open this video before class to allow time for it to load – [Life Aboard the ISS](#).
 - Note: If your classroom does not have computer access, instead of playing the video, print out the images to show to the class.

PROCEDURES

Part 1: If I were an astronaut

1. Begin the activity by playing the video: Life Aboard the ISS.
 - a. If a computer and Internet are not available, show the pictures in Appendix A.
2. After watching the video, place the students in pairs or small groups.
 - a. Ask the students: Do you want to be an astronaut? If you were an astronaut, what would you do?
 - b. Have them talk with their partner about their decision. Have each pair/small group create a list of things they would do as an astronaut.
3. While students work in groups, on the board draw the following table:

If I were an astronaut, I ...		
Would	Could	Might

4. Next, take a vote by show of hands and ask how many students want to be astronauts.
 - a. Ask the students: What would you do if you were an astronaut? Write some of their ideas on the board. For example:
 - i. Fly around in space
 - ii. Take pictures of the Earth
 - iii. Travel to the Moon
5. Use the ideas the students generated and place them in the table above. For example:

If I were an astronaut, I ...		
Would	Could	Might
-Take pictures of Earth -Be away from home for a long time	-See my country from space -Make new discoveries	-Go to the Moon -Meet a space alien!

6. Fill in the chart with ideas to help students see the differences between would, could, and might.
 - a. Would – an action they can do as an astronaut
 - b. Could – a possibility
 - c. Might – a possibility with a small chance of occurring
7. Take one of the ideas from the chart and write it out as a full sentence on the board.
 - a. For example: If I were an astronaut, I could make new discoveries.
8. Ask the class: Why do you want to make new discoveries?

- a. Elicit ideas from the class. Choose several ideas to finish the sentence.
 - i. For example: If I were an astronaut, I could make new discoveries to help people on Earth.
 - ii. For example: If I were an astronaut, I would take pictures of Earth to show to my friends back home.
9. Have students return to the list they created in step two and have them write their ideas out in the complete sentence structure:
 - a. If I were an astronaut, I would/could, might _____ to (verb) _____.

Part 2: Astronauts Wanted!

1. Give each student a copy of the If I Were An Astronaut worksheet. Inform the students that the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) is the agency that sends astronauts to space. NASA often hires new astronauts.
2. Read the instructions as a class.
 - a. In this activity, students should circle all of the conditional and infinitive of purpose grammar structures they can find.
3. Once students have finished, check the answers as a class.
4. Tell the students that today they are going to write a letter to NASA describing why they would be a great astronaut, just like the one in the worksheet.
5. Using their list of ideas they generated in Part 1, have the students write letters explaining why they would make a great astronaut.
 - a. Students should list why they want to be an astronaut and why they would be a great choice.
6. Once students have completed their letter, encourage them to share it with the class by reading it aloud.
 - a. Students could also post their letters on the walls of the classroom for others to read as a fun reading activity.

If your students have access to the Internet, encourage them to learn more by visiting the following websites:

[Space Station Camera](#)

This website broadcasts a live camera feed from the International Space Station (ISS). The cameras show Earth as the space station passes overhead.

[ISS Website](#)

NASA is home to the International Space Station, which contains facts and figures about the ISS and the astronauts who have lived there.

[ISS Fact Book](#)

This book has information about all experiments conducted on the ISS. This writing may be too advanced for most students, but the book contains many pictures, charts, and maps for students to investigate.

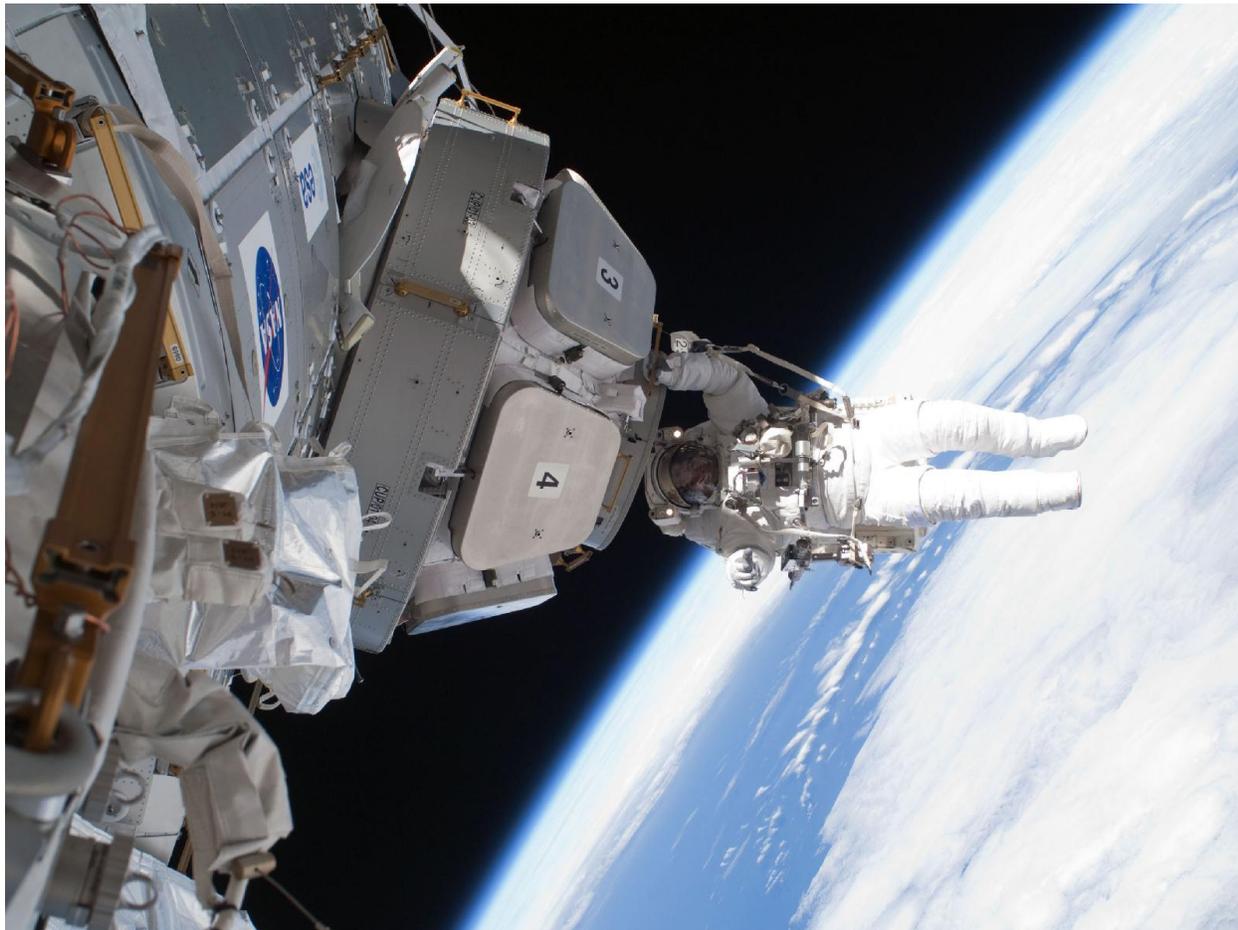
IF I WERE AN ASTRONAUT

Read the letter below. Circle the conditional and infinitive of purpose grammar structures you can find. Then write your own letter to NASA!

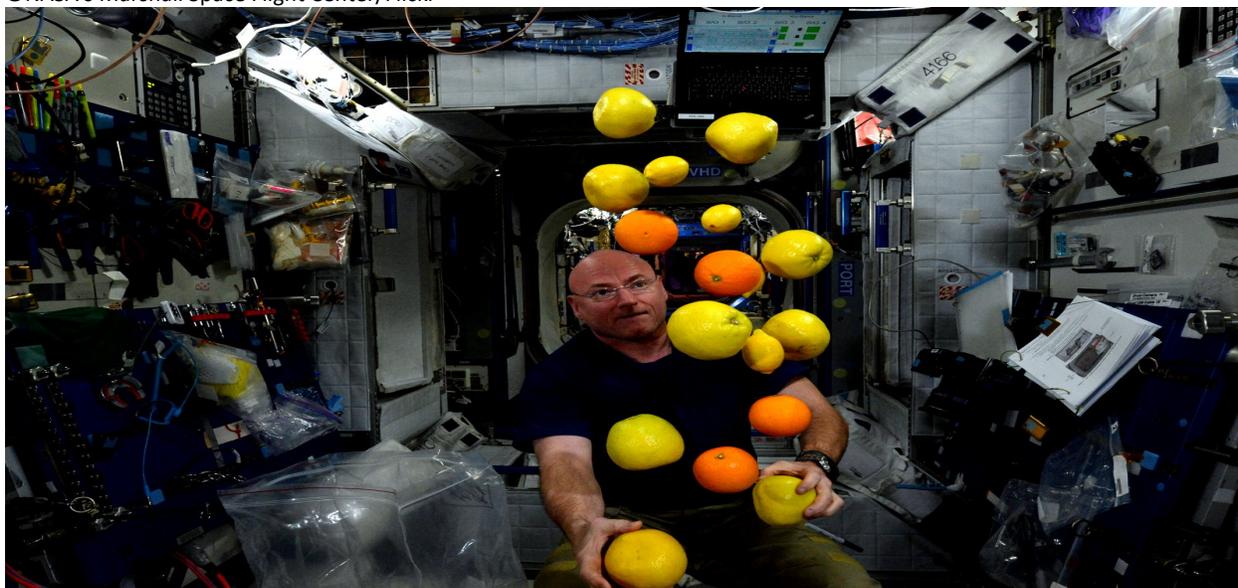
Dear NASA,

I am writing to be considered for your astronaut program. If I were an astronaut, I could take pictures of space to share with people on Earth. I am great at taking pictures, and my photos might help others to get interested in space. Maybe those people will become astronauts too! Also, if I were an astronaut, I would be the first person from my country in space. I would speak to students in my country to encourage them to study science. Finally, if I were an astronaut I would speak English with other astronauts to improve communication between countries. This would create friendships between nations and help to create world peace.

APPENDIX A – LIFE ABOARD THE INTERNATIONAL SPACE STATION



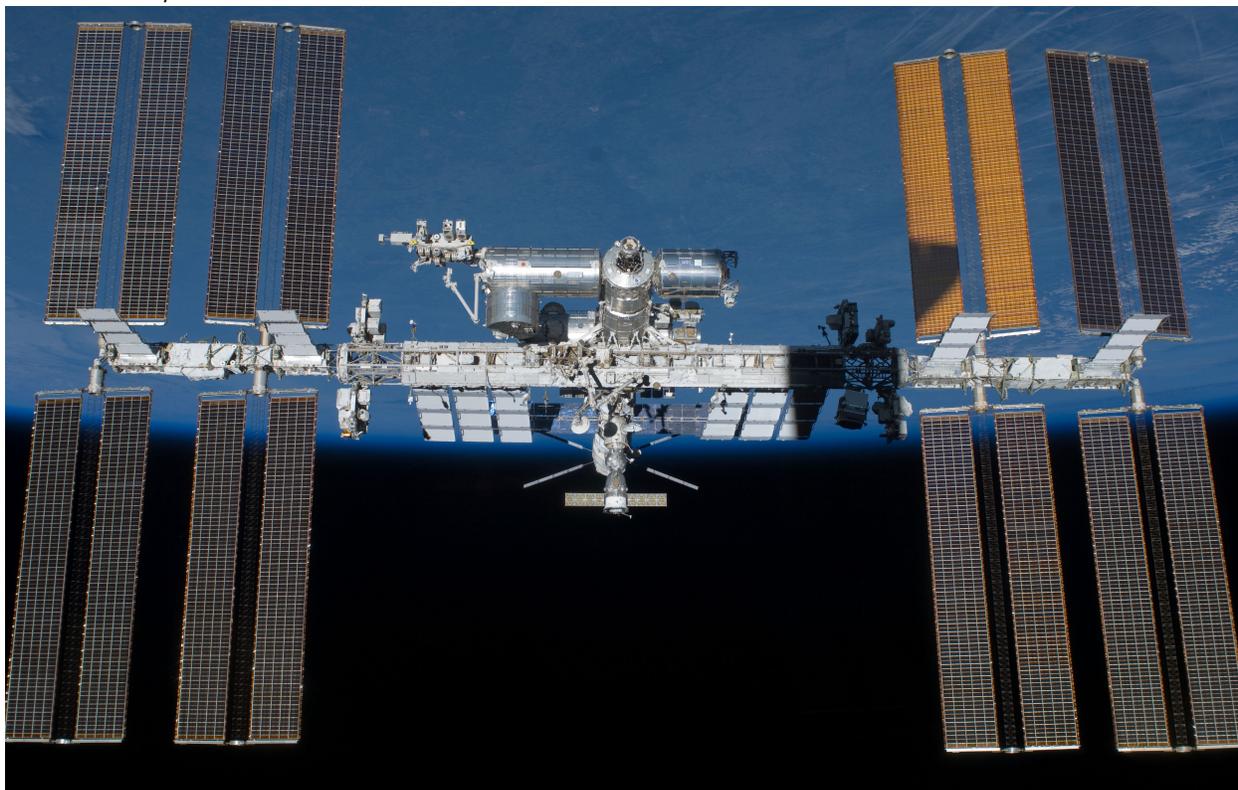
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