Tense for Distance Worksheet: I Was Wondering, I'd Hoped

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NAME

DATE

Remember

Form	Example
Past continuous for tentative requests	I was wondering if you could lend me your car.
Past simple / continuous of hope, want, think	We were hoping you'd join us. I thought you might like this.
Past perfect for disappointed expectations	I'd hoped to finish by now.
would / might / could + modal softeners	Would you mind if I left early? It might be better to wait.

Typical mistakes

× Learners often say	✓ Say instead
I wonder you can help me.	I was wondering if you could help me.
I was hoping that you help me.	I was hoping (that) you could / would help me.
Would you mind to open the window?	Would you mind opening the window?

1. Rewrite

Make each sentence more polite and tentative, starting with the words given.

1. Can you help me with this report? → I was wondering _____
2. We want to leave early. → We were hoping _____
3. Give me a discount. → I was wondering whether _____
4. I expected a better result. → I'd hoped _____
5. Close the window. → Would you mind _____
6. This is a bad idea. → I'm not sure it would _____
7. Do you want to come? → I thought you _____
8. Can I ask you something? → Could I _____

2. Choose

Circle the more tactful option.

1. (I want / I was hoping) to speak to the manager.
2. (Did you want / Do you want) to see the menu, sir?
3. (I'd hoped / I hope) you would call me yesterday.
4. (Would it be / Is it) possible to change my booking?
5. (I was thinking / I think) we could try a different approach.
6. (You're wrong. / I'm not sure that's quite right.)
7. (Would you mind / Do you mind to) waiting a moment?
8. (I wondered / I wonder) if you had a minute.

3. Correct the mistakes

Each sentence has one mistake. Write it correctly.

1. I was wondering if you can help me.
2. We were hoping that you will join us.
3. Would you mind to wait here?
4. I had hoped finishing by Friday.
5. I was wondering could you call me back.
6. Did you wanted anything else?

Writing

Write a polite email to a colleague asking for a favour, with one gentle complaint (6 sentences). Use at least four distancing structures.

Speaking

- Ask your teacher or partner for a big favour as politely as possible.
- Complain about a hotel room without sounding rude.
- When do people in your culture use indirect language?
- Disagree politely with this statement: ‘English grammar is easy.’

Answer key

1. Rewrite: 1 I was wondering if you could help me with this report. · 2 We were hoping to leave early. · 3 I was wondering whether you might be able to give me a discount. · 4 I’d hoped for a better result. · 5 Would you mind closing the window? · 6 I’m not sure it would be a good idea. · 7 I thought you might like to come. · 8 Could I possibly ask you something?

2. Choose: 1 I was hoping · 2 Did you want · 3 I’d hoped · 4 Would it be · 5 I was thinking · 6 I’m not sure that’s quite right. · 7 Would you mind · 8 I wondered

3. Correct the mistakes: 1 I was wondering if you could help me. · 2 We were hoping that you would join us. · 3 Would you mind waiting here? · 4 I had hoped to finish by Friday. · 5 I was wondering if you could call me back. · 6 Did you want anything else?

Writing, model answer: Hi Martin, I hope you had a good weekend. I was wondering if you might have time to look at my presentation before Thursday. I was hoping to get some feedback on the second half in particular. I’d also hoped we could agree the final figures last week, but I know you were very busy. Would you mind sending them to me by Wednesday? Thanks so much, I really appreciate it.