

4B

Yes, I can!

G ability and possibility: *can, could, be able to*

V -ed / -ing adjectives

P sentence stress

Can you play the piano?

No, but I'd love to be able to.

1 GRAMMAR ability and possibility

a Look at the list of skills. With a partner, find...

- two that you can do.
- two that you can't do.
- two that you *could* do when you were ten years old.
- two that you *couldn't* do when you were ten years old.

change a car wheel **do yoga** dance salsa
knit or sew play a musical instrument **play tennis**
 ride a bike **run 5 km** **sing well** **ski** swim
 take good photos type fast **use an Excel spreadsheet**

b **4.12** Look at the photos. Listen and complete the conversations.



c Look at conversations 1 and 2 in b again. Complete the sentences.

- You can't use _____ in the infinitive or present perfect.
- Be able to* means the same as _____.

d **G** p.139 Grammar Bank 4B

e Look at the topics. Choose two or three and think about what you could say about them.

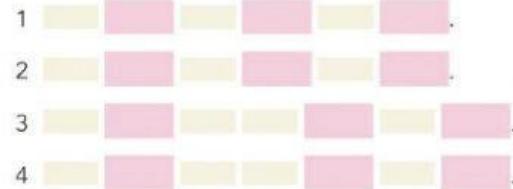
- something that you would like to be able to do
- something you've tried to learn, but have never been able to do well
- something you learned to do after a lot of effort
- something you can do, but you'd like to be able to do better
- something you think all young people should be able to do before they leave school

f Work with a partner. Tell him or her about the things you chose in e. Give reasons or explanations for each one.

I'd like to be able to ski, but I don't think I'll ever learn, because I don't live near the mountains.

2 PRONUNCIATION sentence stress

a **4.15** Listen to four sentences. Write the stressed words in the pink boxes.



b Look at the stressed words and try to remember the unstressed words. Then listen again to check and write them in.

c Listen again and repeat the sentences. Copy the rhythm.

d **4.16** Listen and make new sentences with the verbs or verb phrases you hear.

- 1) *I'd love to be able to ski.*
ride a horse *I'd love to be able to ride a horse.*
- 2) *We won't be able to come.*
park *We won't be able to park.*

3 LISTENING

a Read the text. Do you believe Malcolm Gladwell or Josh Kaufman?

Learn a new skill in 20 hours

It was Malcolm Gladwell, the popular writer on modern psychology, who popularized the idea that it takes 10,000 hours of practice to really master a new skill, such as playing the piano. But in this non-stop world, who has that kind of time? In his book *The First 20 Hours*, Josh Kaufman tells you how to learn any new skill really quickly. By completing just 20 hours of focused practice, you'll be able to go from knowing absolutely nothing to performing well. But is it really possible? Matt Rudd, a *Sunday Times* journalist, decided to give it a try.

b Read about Matt's past experience of learning the trumpet. Why do you think he gave up so fast?

Matt Rudd learns the trumpet

I haven't played a musical instrument for years. Five years ago, I got a trumpet for my birthday and I tried to learn it, but I gave up after seven minutes, and it ended up in the garage. So here I am, a beginner again.



c ④4.17 Listen and match the sounds with the music words in **bold**.

- three different **musical instruments** playing together
- five **notes** from C to G
- a **high note** and a **low note**
- an **octave**
- a **tune**
- somebody **busking**

d ④4.18 Now listen to Matt talking about his experience. Choose the best summary.

- 1 He didn't learn anything at all.
- 2 He learned something, but not enough.
- 3 He learned a lot.

e Listen again. For each **stage**, **circle** the correct word or phrase.

1 hour

He feels **optimistic** / **pessimistic**.

2 hours

He feels **pleased** / **unhappy** with his progress.

5 hours

He thinks the online trumpet teacher is **annoying** / **great**.

9 hours

He's **frustrated** by how little he can play / He's happy because he can play **simple** tunes.

14 hours

He's really **enjoying** himself / He's **depressed** and wants to give up.

15 hours

Matilda Lloyd tells him he's doing **well** / **badly**.

17 hours

He feels **optimistic** again / **disappointed**.

20 hours

He thinks he'll probably give up / He thinks he'll be able to **improve**.

f Do you think Matt will continue learning the trumpet. Why (not)?

4 SPEAKING

Work in small groups. Answer the question below for the different skills.

How well do you think you'd be able to do these things after learning for 20 hours?

play a musical instrument

speak a new language

draw a portrait **drive**

design and build a website

take professional-quality photos

cook a three-course meal

dance the tango

ski or windsurf

give first aid

5 VOCABULARY

-ed / -ing adjectives

a Complete the sentences with *annoyed* or *annoying*.

- 1 Matt thought the online trumpet teacher was _____.
- 2 Matt was _____ because he could only play simple tunes.



-ed and -ing adjectives

Many adjectives for feelings have two possible forms, ending in -ed or -ing, e.g. *annoyed* and *annoying*.

We use the adjective ending in -ed for the person who has the feeling, e.g. Matt. We use the adjective ending in -ing for the person or situation that produces the feeling, e.g. the trumpet teacher.

b Read the information box. Then complete the adjectives with -ed or -ing.

- 1 What music do you listen to if you feel **depress**_____?
- 2 What do you think is the most **excit**_____ sport to watch?
- 3 What's the most **amaz**_____ scenery you've ever seen?
- 4 Have you ever been **disappoint**_____ by a birthday present?
- 5 Which do you find more **tir**_____, clothes shopping or food shopping?
- 6 What's the most **embarrass**_____ thing that's ever happened to you?
- 7 Are you **frighten**_____ of heights?
- 8 Do you usually feel very **tir**_____ in the morning?
- 9 What's the most **bor**_____ film you've ever seen?
- 10 Do you ever get **frustrat**_____ by technology?

c  4.19 Listen and check. Underline the stressed syllable in the adjectives.

d Ask and answer the questions in b with a partner. Ask for more information.

6 READING & SPEAKING

- a How long have you been learning English? Has anyone ever given you a useful tip which has helped you learn?
- b Read some tips on a forum for learning English outside class. Do you do any of these things?



Does anyone have any good tips for practising English outside class? I'm a B1 level (I think – I hope!) and I'm studying in Colombia...

Nelson, Medellín

Comments

1



One very easy thing you can do is to change the language to English on your phone, laptop, or tablet. That way, you're reading English every day and you learn a lot of vocabulary without really noticing – for example, the things you see on your screen. I've found it really helpful.

Sara, Brazil

2



My tip is to do things that you already like doing, but in English. So, for example, if you're interested in a sport or in photography, read about it in English. If you like the cinema, watch films in English with subtitles. I'm interested in jazz, so I read magazines and articles online in English. For me, it's better than reading books.

Marc, Switzerland

3



The thing that really helped me to improve my English was having an Australian boyfriend. He didn't speak any Hungarian, so we spoke English all the time, and I improved really quickly. So my tip is: try to find an English-speaking boyfriend or girlfriend!

Ágnes, Hungary

4



I think that learning vocabulary is very important, so I got a vocabulary app for my phone. It has a lot of useful words, all in categories, but it also lets me add my own words and phrases, too. The best thing is that I can test myself whenever I get a quiet moment, like on the bus, and it just takes a couple of minutes.

Vasily, Russia

5



My tip is to learn to sing songs in English. First, I find the words online and try to understand them. Then I go to YouTube and sing along with the singer and try to copy the way he or she sings – fantastic for your pronunciation. Then, when I can do it well, I get a karaoke version of the song and I sing it. It's fun, and my English has improved.

Sandra, Italy

6



Practise saying things in your head. It could be anything – you could describe your job or your holiday plans, or talk about yourself or your family, or what's happening in the news. Then, when you really need to speak English, it's easier, because you've done it in your head. (I do this on the way to my English class every week.)

Marta, Mexico

c Read the tips again and match them to something that you think the person has learned to say in English.



d Look at two sentences with **reflexive pronouns** from the tips in b. How do you say them in your language? Then read the information box.

1 I can test **myself** whenever I get a quiet moment.
2 ...talk about **yourself** or your family...

Reflexive pronouns

We use reflexive pronouns (*myself, yourself, etc.*) when the object of a verb is the same as the subject. We can also use reflexive pronouns to emphasize the subject of an action, e.g. *I painted the kitchen myself.*

e Which subject pronouns do these words go with?

themselves herself ourselves yourselves
himself itself

f ④.20 Listen and say the sentences with different pronouns.

1 **She's cut herself. You...** **You've cut yourself.**

g Talk to a partner.

- Which of the tips in b do you think are the best for learning English? Are there any you don't think would work for you?
- Are there any tips that you could easily put into practice?
- What other things do you do to improve your English outside class (e.g. visit chat websites, listen to audiobooks)?

7 VIDEO LISTENING

a Do you know anybody who speaks two or more languages well? Which languages do they speak? How did they learn them?



b You're going to watch an interview with Alex Rawlings, who speaks 11 languages. Match greetings 1–11 to the languages. Then watch Part 1 and check.

1 Afrikaans	French	Italian
2 Catalan	German	Russian
3 Dutch	Greek	Spanish
4 English	Hebrew	

c Now watch Part 2. Why does Alex mention...?

- 1 a completely new adventure
- 2 Greek and German
- 3 Chinese and Slovene
- 4 British and Irish languages, a recent trip to Wales
- 5 Russian
- 6 YouTube; vocabulary and grammar

d Watch Part 3 and answer the questions.

- 1 Why do people sometimes fail to learn a language?
- 2 Why did Alex find Afrikaans easy to learn?
- 3 Why do the British and Americans find it difficult to learn foreign languages?
- 4 Complete Alex's tips:
You never _____ learning a language.
Try to spend _____ a day on the language you are learning.