

Could



Listen and repeat.



Amadeus Mozart **could** play the piano when he was four.



Albert Einstein **couldn't** spell.

Could is the past simple of the verb 'can'.

Affirmative	Negative
I/You could swim	I/You could not (couldn't) swim
He/She/It could swim	He/She/It could not (couldn't) swim
We/You/They could swim	We/You/They could not (couldn't) swim

Interrogative	Short answers
Could I/you swim?	Yes, I/you could. – No, I/you couldn't.
Could he/she/it swim?	Yes, he/she/it could. – No, he/she/it couldn't.
Could we/you/they swim?	Yes, we/you/they could. – No, we/you/they couldn't.

5 Look at the pictures. Complete the sentences with **could** or **couldn't**.

- What could Amy do when she was nine?

- She ... **could** ... swim.
- She climb.
- She sing.
- She read.
- She ride a horse.
- She play the piano.



6 What happened yesterday? Match and write sentences.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 1 Kelly / be tired | a she / not go to school |
| 2 Harry / have a toothache | b he / not come to the birthday party |
| 3 The supermarket / not be open | c she / not water the plants |
| 4 Isabel / be ill | d we / not go out and play |
| 5 Tom / be away | e he / not eat his food |
| 6 There / be a lot of rain | f Jim / not go shopping |

- 1 *Kelly was tired, so she couldn't water the plants.*
- 2
- 3
- 4
- 5
- 6

7 What could/couldn't you do when you were five? Put a tick (✓) or a cross (X). Tell the class.

- | | | | |
|--|--|---|--------------------------------|
| • swim ☐ | • play computer games ☐ | • speak English ☐ | • run ☐ |
| • count to 20 ☐ | • sing ☐ | • read and write ☐ | |
| • climb ☐ | • ride a bike ☐ | • dance ☐ | |

When I was five I couldn't swim but I could play computer games.



Writing Activity

Write what you could/couldn't do when you were five.

When I was five I

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