

English in Action

Unit 5: Modals, Semi modals, Be able to

A Complete each sentence by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1 Were you able to/Could you repair your DVD player when it broke down last week?
- 2 Would/May you explain how this program works, please?
- 3 You may/might come into work late tomorrow if you have a doctor's appointment early in the morning.
- 4 Sue's looking for the battery charger, but she couldn't/hasn't been able to find it yet.
- 5 They couldn't/wouldn't understand why the experiment had failed.
- 6 You can't/aren't be able to use that laptop; it's not yours!
- 7 Are you able to/Could you get me some ink for my printer, please?
- 8 Could/Would you mind lending me your mobile for a moment?
- 9 George was happy because he had been able to/could get a discount on his new 42" television.
- 10 Might/May I have a look at your video camera, Paul?

B Complete each short dialogue by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1 Jennie: Jeremy's upstairs reading his electronics magazine.
Wendy: He can/must be really interested in technology if he prefers to stay in on such a lovely day.
- 2 Dave: What was Mike doing yesterday afternoon?
Simon: Well, he mustn't/can't have been using his computer because it's still being repaired.
- 3 Mark: When is Debbie going to help me organise my files?
Stephen: She might/must have some time tomorrow evening, but I'm not sure.
- 4 Ray: Why did Erica spend all morning in the laboratory?
Stephanie: She can/must have been completing the experiment she started the day before.
- 5 Ron: Here are the results from the tests we did.
Professor: These can't/mustn't be right. Are you sure you used the correct sample?

C Use between two and five words, including the word given to complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence.

- 1 It's possible that you won't be able to watch the programme on free internet television. MIGHT
You watch the programme on free internet television.
- 2 I'm certain they were doing research into genetics at that time. HAVE
They research into genetics at that time.
- 3 There is a possibility that some scientists didn't understand the consequences of the discovery. MAY
Some scientists the consequences of the discovery.
- 4 I'm sure they aren't thinking of ending the space programme. BE
They of ending the space programme.
- 5 There's no doubt that she was able to gain access to top secret files. MUST
She to gain access to top secret files.

