

Modals can • could

Grandpa **could** play football when was young.
played



He **can't** play football now.
plays

Sandy **couldn't** play the flute last year.
played



She **can** play the flute now.
plays

can't = cannot
couldn't = could not

Practice

A Fill in the blanks with 'can', 'can't', 'could' or 'couldn't' and the verbs given.

brush paint finish speak swim get finish tie

1 Look! Uncle Jim _____
beautiful pictures.



2 My little sister _____
her teeth by herself.



3 Danny _____ very fast.
He always wins races.



4 When I was four years old, I _____
dressed by myself.



5 Jacky _____ his
shoelaces by himself last year.



6 Amy _____ English
when she was three.



7 I _____ the test yesterday.
It was very difficult.



8 There is too much food. The boys _____
it.



Date: _____

Practice

B Write sentences with 'when'. Put in 'could' or 'couldn't'. Use the correct form of the verb 'be'. Follow the example.

- 1 the stairs climb four they be

Bob and Joyce could climb the stairs when they were four.



- 2 he ten cook be

Ken _____



- 3 four her name she spell be

Paula _____



- 4 he ride six a bicycle be

Ricky _____



- 5 seven the guitar he play be

Sam _____



Grammar in Context

Aunt Kate and Helen are in the park. Complete what they say with 'when' and the correct form of the words given. Follow the example.

'Be careful, Helen,' says Aunt Kate. 'You ① _____ can't swim _____ (can / swim).

You ② _____ (be) only five.'

'③ _____ (can) you swim ④ _____ you ⑤ _____ (be) five,

Aunt Kate?' asks Helen. 'I ⑥ _____ (can) swim when I was five. But I

⑦ _____ (can / play) tennis and badminton,' says Aunt Kate. 'I

⑧ _____ (learn) to swim ⑨ _____ I ⑩ _____ (be) ten.

I even ⑪ _____ (enter) some competitions!'

'I ⑫ _____ (can / play) tennis but

I ⑬ _____ (can / play) badminton. Let's

play badminton together,' says Helen happily.

