



GRAMMAR

Ability in the past: *could*, *was/were able to*, *managed to*, *succeeded in*

- 6 Read the examples from the article on page 52 and then complete the rule with *managed*, *succeeded*, *could*, and *couldn't*.

- Many of the people there couldn't even switch on a computer without help.
- After [...] a few basic IT lessons, they were able to use the computer confidently.
- The outcomes of the project were amazing: 89-year-old Sheila [...] managed to create a YouTube cooking tutorial.
- 93-year-old Marilyn succeeded in making a rap video.

RULE: To talk about ability generally in the past we use ⁵ _____ / *couldn't*.

To talk about ability at specific moments in the past, we use *was/were able to* (⁶ _____ *to* + infinitive, or ⁷ _____ *in* + gerund).

To talk about a lack of ability at specific moments in the past, we use ⁸ _____ / *wasn't* (*weren't*) *able to*.

- 7 Choose the correct answers.

- Her mobile phone broke a week ago. She ____ to access any social networks since then.
A couldn't
B hasn't been able
C hasn't succeeded
- He was so moved by the award he received that he ____ continue with his speech.
A wasn't able to B succeeded in C could
- He played football again for the first time after his injury, but he only ____ play for 20 minutes.
A could
B managed to
C succeeded in
- She had to ask several people until she finally ____ in finding some help.
A managed B succeeded C could
- My little brother ____ to walk when he was ten months old.
A could
B was able
C succeeded
- I tried to climb that mountain once, but I ____ to get to the top because of the bad weather.
A couldn't
B didn't succeed
C didn't manage

- 8 Complete the text with one word for each gap.

When I was eight, my older brother introduced me to a game on his mobile called Geometry Dash. He was brilliant. He ¹ _____ complete all the levels. He let me have a go. It was simple. You had to make a little block jump over things by tapping the screen. At first I was terrible. I ² _____ even jump over the first obstacle. But I kept trying and after about three hours I ³ _____ to complete the first level. I spent the rest of the day playing it and by the end of it I was ⁴ _____ to do the first three levels. That night in bed, I ⁵ _____ sleep because I kept on playing Geometry Dash in my head!



- 9 **WRITING** Write a short text about some things you *couldn't* do when you were younger, but that you *can* do now.

When I was really little, I couldn't ride a bike, but I was able to do it by the time I was five.

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SPEAKING



- You're going to talk about an elderly person who has qualities that you admire. Make notes on why you admire this person.
- Which of the qualities you have written down would you like to have in your own life?
- What could you do to develop those qualities?
- Discuss your ideas with a partner.