

GRAMMAR 1

Modals of Deduction and Possibility

1 Read the sentences below. Do they express *deduction* (D), *possibility* (P) or *impossibility* (I)?

- a ☐ There must be something alive inside his bag.
- b ☐ It can't be a person.
- c ☐ It might be an animal.
- d ☐ He may be an animal smuggler.
- e ☐ It could be a dangerous snake.

- 2** Look at the sentences in activity 1 again. Complete the rules with the words in the box.

can't isn't true it is possible
might must believe

- a** We use the modal verbs *may*, _____ and *could* + base form of a verb when we think _____ that something is true.
- b** _____ + base form of a verb is used when we _____ something is true.
- c** _____ + base form of a verb is used when we are sure something _____.

- 3** Match the deductions to their meanings.

a He must be a smuggler.

b He might be a smuggler.

c He can't be a smuggler.

☐ I'm certain he's not a smuggler.

☐ I think it's possible he's a smuggler.

☐ I'm certain he's a smuggler.

4 Read sentences a-f and match them with the deductions.

a She speaks French and has a French passport.

b She used to live in Paris.

c Joanne hates dogs! A dog bit her when she was a child.

d I think Sheila likes dogs, but I'm not sure.

e I think I saw him on television yesterday.

f He's in that new movie we saw last week!

☐ That can't be Joanne's dog.

☐ He must be a famous actor.

☐ She may be French.

☐ He might be an actor.

☐ She must be French.

☐ That could be Sheila's dog.

5 Choose the correct words.



- a** He **must** / **can't** be guilty. He's never committed a crime in his life!
- b** There **could** / **must** be a dog in that bag. It's moving.
- c** You **must** / **can't** be hungry. It's four o'clock and you haven't had lunch.
- d** He **might** / **can't** be American. He speaks English.
- e** Ask John. He **can't** / **might** know the answer.
- f** This movie's terrible. You **might** / **can't** like it.

- 6** Look at the pictures of stolen items. Then complete the sentences with the most appropriate modal verb.



- a** The speaker _____ be Jane's.
She never listens to music.
- b** The sunglasses _____ be Pete's.
Jane never wears them.
- c** The money _____ be Jane's, but
it _____ be Pete's too.
- d** The camera _____ be Pete's. He
doesn't have one.
- e** The e-book reader _____ be
Pete's or Jane's. They both love reading.
- f** The earrings _____ be Jane's.
She bought a pair like those last year.