

MODAL VERBS - MEANINGS

Do the sentences in each pair have the same or different meaning?

A Could she be an engineer?

B Do you think she's an engineer?

Same

Different

A Perhaps we will buy some new computers for the office.

B We may buy some new computers for the office.

Same

Different

A We are visiting our main client next week.

B We might visit our main client next week.

Same

Different

A She can't be his daughter.

B I'm sure she isn't his daughter.

Same

Different

A They might not get the contract until the spring.

B They won't get the contract until the spring.

Same

Different

A He must be upset.

B Perhaps he's upset.

Same

Different

A She should be there on time.

B I think she'll be there on time.

Same

Different

Choose the best meaning for each sentence, A or B.

1. Sally might have taken the children to the park.

A I'm sure this happened.

B I'm not sure this happened.

2. It must have been a wonderful party!

A I went to the party.

B I didn't go to the party.

3. Ellen can't have been there.

A I'm sure about this.

B I'm not sure about this.

4. Check your computer. They should have sent the email yesterday.

A I think they sent an email.

B I don't think they sent an email.

5. That's a pity. They might not have known about it.

A They didn't know about it.

B I don't know whether they knew about it or not.

6. The bus is late. You'd better take a taxi.

A Taxis are better than buses.

B I think you should take a taxi.

7. We'd better not swim here.

A It's dangerous.

B It's better than the other swimming pool.

8. You should have phoned your mother.

A You phoned her this morning.

B You didn't phone her this morning.

9. The government should reduce taxes.

A I think taxes aren't high enough.

B I think taxes are too high.

10. You ought to put on some sunscreen.

A We went to the beach yesterday.

B We're going to the beach.

11. I must look for a better job.

A I think this is important for my future.

B My boss told me to do this.