Cambridge Grammar

Unit 14: Modals (3)

Read the theory and solve the activities.

1 **Complete the article with *can, can't, could, couldn't* or the correct form of *be able to*. Sometimes there are two possible answers.**



THE MATHS GENIUS

Rhiannon Kennedy speaks to Nick Evans about her amazing talent.

'One day when I was four years old, my father was telling my mother how much money he'd spent and while he was talking I added it all up. They didn't believe that I (1) could do that because I (2) _____ read or write. I'm now at university and I (3) _____ still add up complicated sums in my head. I did a maths exam once which I finished so quickly that I (4) _____ eat a meal in the canteen before the others had finished.

'Next year we have to write essays and I'm not sure whether I (5) _____ do that because I (6) _____ (*never*) spell very well. I would like (7) _____ use my mathematical skill in a job but I haven't decided what yet. I (8) _____ be a maths teacher – I'd enjoy the maths but I'm not sure about the children! I entered a maths quiz show on TV once but when they asked me the questions I (9) _____ think of the answers because I was just too nervous. So I (10) _____ imagine myself as a TV star. I (11) _____ always get work in a supermarket when the tills break down, I suppose!'

2 **Read about what has happened on a camping trip.**



Two teenage boys are camping with their families near a lake. One day they find an old boat and decide to row out to an uninhabited island. They explore the island until suddenly they realise it's getting dark. They run to find the boat, but it's gone.

Here are some of the things their families say when they don't come back. Decide if each sentence refers to the present, past or future.

1 There can't be much to eat on the island. present
2 People may have seen them rowing across the lake. _____
3 They could be stuck there for days. _____
4 Someone in a fishing boat might see them. _____
5 They must have forgotten how late it was. _____
6 They must be getting scared. _____
7 There may be a cave or hut they can shelter in. _____
8 The boat could have sunk. _____
9 Someone may have taken the boat. _____
10 They can't have tied the boat up properly. _____

Now write the number of each sentence next to the correct meaning, A or B.

A I feel certain about this. 1, _____ B I think this is possible. _____

3 **Complete these sentences with a modal verb and the correct form of the verb in brackets.**

1 Jenny's brother can't be (*be*) a doctor because he's only 18.
2 Samantha said she'd go for a swim as soon as she reached the seaside so she _____ (*swim*) in the sea right now.
3 I can't think what's happened to Annie. She left home hours ago so she _____ (*be*) here by now.
4 These football boots don't fit me any more. My feet _____ (*grow*).
5 My neighbour remembers when there were fields here instead of houses so he _____ (*be*) very old.
6 Alan _____ (*forget*) that it was my birthday yesterday because it's the same as his!

LIVEWORKSHEETS

4 Complete these dialogues with a modal verb and the correct form of the verb in brackets.

1 A: I can't get the TV to record any programmes.
B: You must be doing (*do*) something wrong.
A: OK. Where are the instructions?

2 A: I don't seem to have my wallet.
B: Did you forget to bring it?
A: No, I _____ (*leave*) it at home because I had it when I paid for my train ticket.

3 A: I sent Camilla a text an hour ago but she hasn't got back to me yet.
B: She _____ (*not see*) it if she's at work today.

4 A: I found this watch in the changing rooms.
B: It _____ (*be*) Peter's. I think he's got one like that.

5 A: I don't really like James. Why did you invite him?
B: Well, you don't have to talk to him and he _____ (*not come*) anyway. He said he wasn't sure what his plans were.

6 A: Did your team win their match yesterday?
B: Yes, we did! We _____ (*lose*) really, but their best player hurt herself in the first five minutes so they only had ten players. She _____ (*be*) furious with herself!
A: That was lucky for you, though.

5 Read this police report about a stolen painting.

Crime report

Theft:
The Celebration by James Patrone – a 17th century painting, 15 x 20 centimetres, worth £150,000

Location:
Sidcombe Art Gallery

Time:
between 6.00 and 7.30 on Friday evening

Suspects (all have keys to the art gallery):

The caretaker, Sam Willis
Sam, who has worked at the gallery for 32 years, locked up at 6.30 as usual after the cleaners had left.

A cleaner, Sandra Thompson
Sandra cleaned the offices and the galleries with two other cleaners. They finished at 6.00 and had a chat in the cloakroom before leaving together at 6.15. She says the picture was still there at 6.00.

The shop manager, Sophie Christie
Sophie closed the museum shop at 5.30, but had to stay and wait for a delivery. The driver got delayed in the traffic and arrived at 6.05. He left straight away and Sophie said she left at about 6.15 but nobody saw her leave the building.

The director, William Rees
William was on the phone in his office between 6.00 and 7.00. He says he left the gallery at 7.15 but nobody saw him leave.

A research student, Daniel Foreman
When the gallery shut at 5.30 Daniel begged the caretaker to let him stay a bit longer to finish his work. The caretaker saw him coming out of the toilets at 6.30 and told him to leave. He bought an expensive car on Saturday.

The cloakroom attendant, Josie McCartney
The cloakroom closed at 5.30 and Josie tidied up. She was just leaving when the cleaners arrived and she stopped to have a chat with them. They all left together at 6.15.

Who had the opportunity to steal the painting? Complete these sentences using *must have, can't have, couldn't have, might have, may have* and *could have*. Use each structure once.

1 Sam Willis might have stolen the painting because he was there until 6.30.
2 Sandra Thompson _____ the painting because _____.
3 Sophie Christie _____ the painting because _____.
4 William Rees _____ the painting because _____.
5 Daniel Foreman _____ the painting because _____.
6 Josie McCartney _____ the painting because _____.

LIVEWORKSHEETS