

# English in Action

## Unit 5: Modals, Semi-modals, Be able to

### A Complete each sentence by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1 *Were you able to/Could you repair your DVD player when it broke down last week?*
- 2 *Would/May you explain how this program works, please?*
- 3 *You may/might come into work late tomorrow if you have a doctor's appointment early in the morning.*
- 4 *Sue's looking for the battery charger, but she couldn't/hasn't been able to find it yet.*
- 5 *They couldn't/wouldn't understand why the experiment had failed.*
- 6 *You can't/aren't be able to use that laptop; it's not yours!*
- 7 *Are you able to/Could you get me some ink for my printer, please?*
- 8 *Could/Would you mind lending me your mobile for a moment?*
- 9 *George was happy because he had been able to/could get a discount on his new 42" television.*
- 10 *Might/May I have a look at your video camera, Paul?*

### B Complete each short dialogue by choosing the correct alternative.

- 1 Jennie: Jeremy's upstairs reading his electronics magazine.  
Wendy: He can/must be really interested in technology if he prefers to stay in on such a lovely day.
- 2 Dave: What was Mike doing yesterday afternoon?  
Simon: Well, he mustn't/can't have been using his computer because it's still being repaired.
- 3 Mark: When is Debbie going to help me organise my files?  
Stephen: She might/must have some time tomorrow evening, but I'm not sure.
- 4 Ray: Why did Erica spend all morning in the laboratory?  
Stephanie: She can/must have been completing the experiment she started the day before.
- 5 Ron: Here are the results from the tests we did.  
Professor: These can't/mustn't be right. Are you sure you used the correct sample?

### C Use between two and five words, including the word given to complete the second sentence so that it has a similar meaning to the first sentence.

- 1 It's possible that you won't be able to watch the programme on free internet television. MIGHT  
You ..... watch the programme on free internet television.
- 2 I'm certain they were doing research into genetics at that time. HAVE  
They ..... research into genetics at that time.
- 3 There is a possibility that some scientists didn't understand the consequences of the discovery. MAY  
Some scientists ..... the consequences of the discovery.
- 4 I'm sure they aren't thinking of ending the space programme. BE  
They ..... of ending the space programme.
- 5 There's no doubt that she was able to gain access to top secret files. MUST  
She ..... to gain access to top secret files.