8.2 Grammar

Modal verbs for ability

GRAMMAR Modal verbs for ability

Present
She can/can't paint.
They're able to/aren't able to read quickly.

Past
I could/couldn't follow the plot.
Jack was/wasn't able to go to the library.
He managed/didn't manage to read the book in a day.

Future
I'll be/won't be able to finish this today.

Questions
Can/Could he paint? No, he can't/couldn't.
Is/Was she able to read quickly? Yes, she is/was.
Will you be able to read more books? No, I won't.
Did he manage to finish the book? Yes, he did.

Use
We use *could* to describe general ability in the past.
We use *managed to* to describe specific achievements in the past.

1 ● Match the sentence halves.

1 [c] I couldn't
2 [ ] Sheila can
3 [ ] Unfortunately, Keith won't
4 [ ] Will you be able
5 [ ] We can't
6 [ ] I managed

a read in five languages!
b offer you a place at our college, I'm afraid.
c ~~understand the French film – they all spoke very fast.~~
d to find the book you wanted.
e to finish the book this week?
f be able to come to the party.

2 ● Choose the correct option.

1 (Were) / *Did* you able to ride a bike when you were five?
2 Ben and Eve won't *be able* / *able* to come to the play.
3 Can you *write* / *to write* poetry?
4 I managed *to read* / *reading* fifteen books over the summer!
5 The theatre was so full of people that I *couldn't* / *could* see the stage.
6 I started writing a novel, but I didn't *manage* / *manage to* finish it.

3 ●● Choose the word or phrase which does NOT fit each sentence.

1 ___ to speak to your mum last night?
a Did you manage b Were you able
(c) Could you

2 I ___ post that package for you – sorry.
a can't b managed to
c won't be able to

3 I ___ read when I was three, but only slowly.
a can b could
c was able to

4 I ___ drive, but I'm taking lessons.
a can't b 'm not able to
c managed to

5 The book was difficult to follow, but I ___ finish it.
a couldn't b was able to
c managed to

4 ●●● Complete the text with one word in each gap.

Thank you, Ms Palmer!

When I was younger, I wasn't very good at anything. I couldn't swim, I wasn't [1]*able* to read very well and I [2]_____n't ride a bike on my own until I was twelve! People used to ask me things like, '[3]_____ you say "thank you" in French?' and I just looked down and felt embarrassed. The problem was I just didn't have any confidence. I [4]_____ able to do these things if I really tried, but I didn't believe I could.

Then a new French teacher came to our school. Her name was Ms Palmer and she gave me lots of attention. She really encouraged me and said things like, 'If you [5]_____ to read this text, I'll let you play that French game on your tablet for ten minutes.' It worked, and not only did my French improve, but now I [6]_____ able to do lots of other things and I feel more confident too. Next year, I'm hoping I will [7]_____ able to learn Spanish and Italian too. Merci beaucoup, Ms Palmer!

On the Portal
Extra practice Activities Lesson 8.2
LIVEWORKSHEETS

8.4 Grammar

Modal verbs for obligation and prohibition

GRAMMAR **Modal verbs for obligation and prohibition**

Obligation

You must/have to read. *Do/Did/Will you have to read?*
They had to read. *Yes, I do/did/will.*
I will have to read.

Lack of obligation

You don't have to come. *She didn't have to come.*
He won't have to come.

Prohibition

You can't go.
You mustn't/aren't allowed to go.
I wasn't allowed to go.
He won't be allowed to go.
Are/Were you allowed to stay late?
Will you be allowed to stay late?

Must and *mustn't* don't have past or future forms. We use *had to* or *will have to* instead. In question forms, we usually use *have to*.

1 ● Decide if the meanings of the sentences are similar (S) or different (D).

1 You must do your homework tonight.
You have to do your homework tonight. S

2 Jake had to wear a shirt.
Jake was allowed to wear a shirt. ☐

3 It's important that they don't leave any litter.
They mustn't leave any litter. ☐

4 We won't have to pay for it.
It won't be necessary for us to pay for it. ☐

2 ●● Complete the text with the words below.

allowed aren't don't must mustn't

There's an unusual exhibition on at the art gallery in town. You [1] *don't* have to pay anything, but you can if you want to. The exhibition is interesting because you are [2] _____ to touch the pieces in the gallery. You can pick them up, throw them around, even break them! But you [3] _____ allowed to say bad things about them. At the end you can even write your opinion of the exhibition in a little book, but of course it [4] _____ be something positive. And you [5] _____ write more than three words. It's quite weird, but interesting, I think.

3 ●● Complete the second sentence with the word in bold so that it means the same as the first one. Use no more than five words.

1 I'll have to go to bed early tonight. **ALLOWED**
I *won't be allowed* to stay up late tonight.

2 To do this activity, you have to ask three other students the questions. **MUST**
To do this activity, you _____ three other students the questions.

3 They didn't have to leave. **WERE**
They _____ stay.

4 You mustn't talk during the presentation. **ALLOWED**
You _____ during the presentation.

5 Were you allowed to go out on your own when you were younger? **HAVE**
_____ go out with an adult when you were younger?

4 ●●● Complete the blog post with one word in each gap.

A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS

My last school was very unusual because there were almost no rules. We were [1] *allowed* to wear what we wanted (there was no uniform) and we did [2] _____ have to do any homework. In fact, we didn't [3] _____ to go to class if we didn't want to! But we [4] _____ to respect each other and no fighting or bullying was allowed.

My new school is completely the opposite. We [5] _____ do all our homework and if we don't do it, we [6] _____ to do double homework as a punishment. We [7] _____ not allowed to wear anything we want – we have [8] _____ wear a school uniform. But they are thinking about changing this rule next year, so we won't have [9] _____ wear specific clothes. But we will still [10] _____ to dress in smart clothes – we won't [11] _____ allowed to wear jeans and trainers, for example.

LIVEWORKSHEETS