WORKSHEET: MODALS OF DEDUCTION (PRESENT)

Level: B2 (Upper-Intermediate) | Grammar & Speculation Practice

Student Name: _____ **Date:** _____

Course/Class: _____ **Score / Grade:** _____

INSTRUCTIONS FOR STUDENTS:

1. Read the Grammar Briefing carefully before starting the exercises.
2. Complete Part 1 by marking each logical statement as True (T) or False (F).
3. Complete Part 2 by filling in the blanks with must, can't, or might/may/could.
4. Complete Part 3 by selecting the best option (A, B, or C) for each scenario.
5. Write all answers clearly in ink. Total time limit: 20 minutes.

Grammar Briefing: Modals of Deduction in the Present

When speculating or making logical deductions about present situations, use modal verbs based on your level of certainty:

- **must + base form / be -ing:** Strong positive certainty (~90-100%). You are almost sure something is true based on direct evidence. *Example: He has three sports cars. He must be very wealthy.*
- **might / may / could + base form:** Possibility or uncertainty (~50%). Something is possible, but you are not sure. *Example: She isn't answering. She might be in a meeting.*
- **can't + base form / be -ing:** Strong negative certainty (~90-100%). You are sure something is logically impossible. (Do NOT use mustn't for deduction). *Example: He left 5 minutes ago. He can't be at home already.*

Part 1: True or False (5 items)

Read each statement about modal rules and write True (T) or False (F) in the brackets provided.

1.1 [ ] We use mustn't when we are sure something is logically impossible in the present.

1.2 [ ] The verbs might, may, and could express roughly the same level of possibility (~50%) when speculating about present situations.

1.3 [ ] Can't is the logical negative opposite of must when making present deductions.

1.4 [ ] To deduce an action happening right now, we can use modal + be + -ing (e.g., He must be studying).

1.5 [ ] We can use can (e.g., She can be at work) to make a specific deduction about a present situation.

Part 2: Fill in the Blanks (5 items)

Complete each sentence using must, can't, or might / could / may based on the context provided in brackets.

2.1 Look at all those luxury sports cars parked outside his house. He _____ (be) extremely wealthy!

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2.2 Don't throw those documents away! They _____ (contain) important project details, but I need to double-check.

2.3 That _____ (be) Marco at the front door. He phoned me 5 minutes ago saying he was stuck in traffic on the other side of town.

2.4 Sarah isn't answering her desk phone. She _____ (have) lunch in the cafeteria, or she could be in a meeting.

2.5 Listen to that loud music coming from next door! Our neighbors _____ (have) a party right now.

Part 3: Multiple Choice (5 items)

Select the correct modal verb (A, B, or C) that best completes each scenario.

3.1 That man has been wandering around the lobby for 20 minutes looking at a map. He _____ lost.

A) must be B) can't be C) may not be

3.2 You've been running on the treadmill for two hours without a break! You _____ exhausted!

A) could be B) must be C) can't be

3.3 Take an umbrella with you. It doesn't look like rain right now, but the weather forecast said it _____ rain later.

A) must B) might C) can't

3.4 This painting _____ an original Picasso! The artist's signature is clearly forged and the canvas is brand new.

A) must be B) could be C) can't be

3.5 Where is Liam? He _____ working late tonight, but his phone is turned off, so I can't confirm.

A) may be B) must be C) can't be

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