

Modal Verbs of Deduction Exercise

Check through the different uses.

TYPE	USE	MODAL VERBS	EXAMPLE
1	to express possibilities for the future	COULD, MAY, MIGHT	It may rain tomorrow.
2	to express certainty	CAN'T, COULDN'T, MUST	She can't be Irish.
3	for possible explanations	COULD, MAY, MIGHT	She could be Scottish.

Look at the following phrases and write in which type you think they are. Then use one of the modal verbs in brackets to fill the gaps.

TYPE

- 1 They (may/must)..... be away for the weekend but I'm not sure.
- 2 He (can/could)..... be French, judging by his accent.
- 3 They (can't/may)..... still be out!
- 4 With luck, tomorrow (can't/could)..... be a sunny day.
- 5 You (can/might)..... be right but I'm going to check anyway.
- 6 The exam (can't/might)..... be easy. You never know.
- 7 It (may/can't)..... be true about a sauropod dinosaur living in Lake Télé in the Congo. It's impossible.
- 8 Dave reckons she's from The States but I think she (can't/might)..... be from Scandinavia.
- 9 I (can't/might)..... go to the party but I'm not sure yet.
- 10 This (must/could)..... be the right answer but we'll have to check with your teacher to make sure.
- 11 She (can't/could)..... steal things from shops. She's rich and famous.
- 12 I really think Real Madrid (can't/could)..... lose the final of the King's Cup.
- 13 She's been revising 10 hours a day for 3 weeks. She (could/must)..... be exhausted.
- 14 Nobody's answering. They (can't/must)..... be out.
- 15 He (can't/may)..... be from the USA. He doesn't speak English.

Answers

- 1 TYPE 1 They may be away for the weekend but I'm not sure.
- 2 TYPE 3 He could be French, judging by his accent.
- 3 TYPE 2 They can't still be out!
- 4 TYPE 1 With luck, tomorrow could be a sunny day.
- 5 TYPE 3 You might be right but I'm going to check anyway.
- 6 TYPE 1 The exam might be easy. You never know.
- 7 TYPE 2 It can't be true about a dinosaur living in Lake Télé in the Congo. It's impossible.
- 8 TYPE 3 Dave reckons she's from The States but I think she might be from Scandinavia.
- 9 TYPE 1 I might go to the party but I'm not sure yet.
- 10 TYPE 3 This could be the right answer but we'll have to check with your teacher to make sure.
- 11 TYPE 2 She can't steal things from shops. She's rich and famous.
- 12 TYPE 1 I really think Real Madrid could lose the final of the King's Cup.
- 13 TYPE 2 She's been revising 10 hours a day for 3 weeks. She must be exhausted.
- 14 TYPE 2 Nobody's answering. They must be out.
- 15 TYPE 2 He can't be from the USA. He doesn't speak English.