

Modal Verbs for Possibility

may / might / could

NAME _____

DATE _____

KEY RULE:

may / might / could = possible (not certain) | might have + pp = past possibility

1 Choose might, may or could

EASY

Choose the best modal for possibility.

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. She ____ be at the library. (uncertain) | 2. It ____ rain later, so bring umbrella. |
| 3. He ____ not have seen your message. | 4. There's a chance we ____ finish early. |
| 5. She ____ be right. I hadn't thought of it. | 6. Don't call, they ____ be sleeping. |
| 7. The meeting ____ start late. We'll see. | 8. I ____ come to the party, not sure yet. |
| 9. No answer. She ____ have left already. | 10. Keys ____ be in kitchen, I left them there. |

2 Possibility vs Certainty

MEDIUM

Choose the modal matching the certainty level.

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|---|---|
| 1. He's late again. He ____ have missed bus. (possible) | 2. She knows topic well. She ____ pass. (certain) |
| 3. Undecided: I ____ go, I ____ not. (50/50) | 4. No light on. They ____ be out. (fairly possible) |
| 5. Roads icy. Journey ____ take longer. (possible) | 6. Don't worry, it ____ not be (possible) |
| 7. She practises daily. She ____ win. (likely) | 8. Left my phone. It ____ be in my bag. (possible) |
| 9. They said 6pm. They ____ arrive any minute. | 10. Difficult exam. Some students ____ fail. |

3 Write might / may / could + verb

HARD

Write the possibility phrase.

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|--|--|
| 1. Not sure about tomorrow: I ____ (come). | 2. Not answering: she ____ (be) busy. |
| 3. Take coat, it ____ (get) cold later. | 4. He ____ (not/know) about the change. |
| 5. Chance they ____ (cancel) the event. | 6. She ____ (be) at home, try calling. |
| 7. Test ____ (not/be) thought. | 8. I left keys inside: I ____ (lock) myself out. |
| 9. Road closed: there ____ (be) an accident. | 10. Traffic bad: they ____ (arrive) late. |

4

Choose the correct interpretation

HARDER

What does the sentence mean?

1. 'She might be at work.' This means:

3. 'It may not rain tomorrow.' This means:

5. 'This could be a problem.' This means:

7. Which is LEAST certain?

9. 'It may have been a mistake.' Refers to:

2. 'He could have taken wrong train.' This means:

4. 'They might not know.' This means:

6. Which is MORE certain?

8. 'You could be right.' Speaker thinks:

10. Best way to say 50% chance of rain:

Answer Key

Check your answers below

1 Exercise 1 Possibility modals

1 might

2 could

3 may

4 could

5 might

6 may

7 could

8 might

9 may

10 could

2 Exercise 2 Certainty levels

1 might have

2 will

3 might / might not

4 may

5 could

6 might

7 should

8 could

9 should

10 might

3 Exercise 3 Possibility phrases

1 might come

2 may be

3 could get

4 might not know

5 might cancel

6 could be

7 may not be

8 might have locked

9 could be

10 might arrive

4 Exercise 4 Meanings

1 It's possible she's at work

2 It's possible he took wrong train

3 There's a chance it won't rain

4 It's possible they don't know

5 It's possible this will cause a problem

6 She will probably come

7 She might be there

8 Possibly you are right

9 A possible past event

10 It might rain