

Book: Interchange 3

Level: 9th

Unit: 13

Objective: Using modals to express different degrees of certainty.

Modals for Degrees of Certainty

Past Modals of Possibility (may / might / could have)

We use may, might, and could when something is possible, but we don't know for sure.

Subject + may (not) / might (not) / could + have + past participle + rest

e.g.

Catherine has been smiling all day.

She may have woken up in a good mood today.

She might have gotten a raise.

She could have gotten the promotion she was hoping for.

Past Modals of Certainty (must / couldn't have)

We use must, must not have, and couldn't have when we are certain or almost certain.

Subject + must (not) / couldn't + have + past participle + rest

e.g.

Catherine has been smiling all day.

She must have received great news.

She must not have started working, yet.

She couldn't have found out we're planning a surprise birthday party for her.

Practice

Read each situation and write an explanation using the words given. Use past modals for degrees of certainty.

- 1- Laura is crying while talking on the phone. (may / bad news)
- 2- George looks tired today. (might not / sleep well)
- 3- Tony came late to class today. (couldn't / oversleep)
- 4- Ivette looks worried and tense. (could / an argument with her boss)
- 5- Carla said she didn't have the homework. (couldn't / forget to do it)
- 6- Andy is very happy today. (may / a 100 on the English test)
- 7- Richard has the flu. (must / get wet from yesterday's rain)
- 8- Mark didn't show up to class. (couldn't / Sunday)
- 9- Marian got a 50 on the test. (must not / understand the subject)
- 10- The cafeteria was closed this morning. (couldn't / forget to open)

