



MODALS OF POSSIBILITY & DEDUCTION

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1. The Missing Phone

Read the situation.

Maria can't find her phone.

She remembers having it at breakfast.

Now it isn't in her bag.

What could have happened?

Complete the sentences.

1. She might have _____.
2. She could have _____.
3. She might have _____.
4. She can't have _____.

Compare your ideas with a partner.

2. What do you think?

Read each situation and make a deduction.

1. Your friend arrives late. He looks stressed.

He might have _____.

2. Your colleague isn't at work. His phone is switched off.

He could have _____.

3. Your friend has a headache. She was studying until 2 a.m.

She must have _____.

4. The classroom is empty. The lesson finished 30 minutes ago.

The students must have _____.

3. The Mystery Evening

Read the information.

At 7:00 p.m., David was at home.

At 8:00 p.m., his house was empty.

At 9:00 p.m., he sent his friend a message:

- "I'm having dinner downtown."

His car was still outside his house.

Make deductions.

1. David might have _____.
2. He could have _____.
3. He must have _____.
4. He can't have _____.

There may be more than one good answer.

REAL ENGLISH BOX

Instead of always saying:

"I think maybe..."

Try:

He might have...

She could have...

They must have...

He can't have...

And when you are less certain:

Maybe he...

I'm not sure, but she might...

These sound natural in everyday conversations.

4. Detective Conversation

Work with a partner.

Situation: Your friend was supposed to meet you at 7:00.

It is now 8:00.

You don't know what happened.

Discuss the possibilities.

Use:

- "He might have..."
- "He could have..."
- "He must have..."
- "He can't have..."



Ask follow-up questions:

"Why do you think that?"

"What makes you think that?"

"What else could have happened?"

5. How certain are you?

Choose one situation:

A friend hasn't replied to your message.

Give:

One possible explanation:

One stronger explanation:

One explanation you think is impossible:

Now explain your ideas to your partner.

Teacher's Key

Sections 1–5 are open speaking activities.

Accept logical, grammatically correct answers.

Possible answers:

1. The Missing Phone

- She might have left it at the restaurant.
- She could have put it somewhere else.
- She might have left it at work.
- She can't have taken it with her if it is still at home.

2. What do you think?

1. He might have missed the bus / had a problem.
2. He could have forgotten about work / lost his phone.
3. She must have been studying too late.
4. The students must have gone home.

3. The Mystery Evening

Possible answers include:

- David might have walked downtown.
- He could have taken a taxi.
- He must have left the house somehow.
- He can't have driven his car downtown if the car is still outside.