

What is the Modal Verb Could?

Worksheet

Could expresses past ability ('I could run as a child'), polite requests ('Could you help?'), and conditional possibility ('If I studied, I could pass').

Questions

1. 'She could speak German as a child.' This means...

- A) She can now
- B) She was able to then
- C) She might in future
- D) She should learn it

2. Which is more polite?

- A) Can you help?
- B) Could you help?
- C) Both the same
- D) Neither polite

3. 'Could I go to the party?' is...

- A) Past ability
- B) Polite request
- C) Obligation
- D) Advice

4. Negative of 'could': 'I ___ find my keys.'

- A) couldn't
- B) could not
- C) Both correct
- D) can't

5. When I was young, I could climb that tree.

6. Could you pass the salt?

7. If you studied hard, you could pass the exam.

8. Define: Is 'could' the past of 'can'?

9. Define: Example of 'could' for a polite request?

10. Define: 'Could not' or 'couldn't'?

Answer Key

1. B) She was able to then — 'Could' shows past ability; she may not have that ability now.
2. B) Could you help? — 'Could' is slightly more formal and polite.
3. B) Polite request — A polite way to ask permission.
4. C) Both correct — Both 'couldn't' and 'could not' are correct.
5. 'Could' here expresses past ability. Meaning: I was able to climb it then, but perhaps not now.
6. 'Could' is a polite request. More polite than 'Can you pass the salt?'
7. 'Could' expresses conditional possibility. If the condition is met, the result is possible.
8. Yes, but 'could' also works for requests and conditionals in the present.
9. 'Could you help me?' — more polite than 'Can you?'
10. Both are correct. 'Couldn't' is informal.

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