

## Modal Auxiliary Verbs | Could

*Could* functions in one of three different ways in a sentence:

### Functions of the word *Could*:

A: It can replace can and give the phrase a more conditional tone

**EXAMPLE:** Could you help me?

B: It can be the past tense of can

**EXAMPLE:** I could have left early last night.

C: It can function in the same way as might or may, suggesting that something is a possibility.

**EXAMPLE:** We could win the lottery if we bought a ticket.

The negative of can is *could not* or the contraction *couldn't*.

**Directions:** Read each sentence. Is can used (A) to give the sentence a conditional tone, (B) to be the past tense of can, or (C) to suggest possibility? Write the letter of the correct answer on the line.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. You could have gone to college if you had applied.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. You could share your lunch, you know.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Mom could be at home by now.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Last year I couldn't roller skate.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. A generation ago, my whole family could speak Spanish.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. We could have found a parking space if we had been earlier.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. I couldn't write when I was two.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. When we play, could you be the bad guy?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Fran could have won if she'd tried harder.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. We could raise chickens if we learned how.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. I could have been a teacher if I had gone to college.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Could you please pass the butter?
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Phoebe couldn't make it last night.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Karen tried but she couldn't make it work.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. He couldn't believe a man had actually walked on the moon.

I wanted to be in one of those sentences so bad I could taste it!

