

Grammar: Exercise Sheet 4b — Modality (exam questions)

1. [2 points] In each of the following sets of sentences, one is different from all the others in that it expresses a different VALUE of modality. Put a cross next to the one which is different.
 1. a. Robert can't possibly have forgotten the third person singular present indicative of *convaincre*.
 b. Certainly Robert didn't forget the third person singular present indicative of *convaincre*.
 c. It's impossible for Robert to have forgotten the third person singular present indicative of *convaincre*.
 d. It's possible that Robert hasn't forgotten the third person singular present indicative of *convaincre*.
 e. Robert certainly hasn't forgotten the third person singular present indicative of *convaincre*.
 2. a. You aren't allowed to make nasty remarks about the teacher's French grammar.
 b. You mustn't make nasty remarks about the teacher's French grammar.
 c. You shouldn't make nasty remarks about the teacher's French grammar.
 d. It's not permitted to make nasty remarks about the teacher's French grammar.
 e. It's forbidden to make nasty remarks about the teacher's French grammar.
2. [8 points]
 - a. What type of modality was involved in 1.1 above?
 - b. What type of modality was involved in 1.2 above?
3. [4 points] Each of the following examples represents the same type of modality but has a different orientation. Rank the examples on a scale from 1 to 4 (1 = most subjective; 4 = most objective), writing the appropriate digit to the left of each example:
 - a. He was possibly buried alive.
 - b. He may have been buried alive.
 - d. It's possible that he was buried alive.
 - d. I suspect he was buried alive.
4. [4 points] Each of the following examples represents the same type of modality but has a different orientation. Rank the examples on a scale from 1 to 4 (1 = most subjective; 4 = most objective), writing the appropriate digit to the left of each example:
 - a. John's supposed to drive us.
 - b. It's expected that John drives us.
 - d. John should drive us.
 - c. I want John to drive us.
5. [16 points]
 - a. What TYPE of modality was involved in 3 above?
 - b. What TYPE of modality was involved in 4 above?
 - c. What VALUE of modality was involved in 3 above?
 - d. What VALUE of modality was involved in 4 above?
6. [16 points] List the four main types of modality, and construct one sentence to demonstrate each type, using the modal verb will to express the modality. (Note: Do not use the 'future' will!)
 - a. _____ :
 - b. _____ :
 - c. _____ :
 - d. _____ :