

Activity Type

Grammar and Speaking Game: matching, forming sentences from prompts (group work)

Focus

Past modals of deduction: *must, could, might, can't* + perfect infinitive

Aim

To play a pelmanism game where you speculate on situations using past modals of deduction and try to match cards together.

Preparation

Make one copy of the sentence cards and speculation cards for each group of three or four and cut as indicated. Keep the two sets of cards separate.

Level

Intermediate (B1)

Time

25 minutes

Introduction

In this past modals of deduction game, students speculate on situations using past modals of deduction and try to match sentences and situations together.

Procedure

Divide the students into groups of three or four. Give each group a set of numbered sentence cards and a set of lettered speculation cards.

Ask the students to shuffle each set of cards and spread them out face-down on the table in two sets.

Explain that there is one speculation card that matches with each sentence and that each time a student turns over a sentence card they must speculate on the situation using a past modal of deduction before trying to find the matching card.

Students then take it in turns to turn over a sentence card, e.g. 'Oh no! Where's my car?' The student reads the sentence aloud and then speculates on the situation using a past modal of deduction (*must, could, might, can't* + perfect infinitive), e.g. 'It might have been towed away'.

The student then turns over a speculation card. If the two cards match (e.g. 'Someone must have stolen it.'), the student keeps the two cards and has another turn.

If not, the two cards are turned back over, keeping them in the same place. It's then the next student's turn to play.

If students are unsure whether two cards match, they can ask you to adjudicate.

Students try to remember the position of the cards and continue playing until all the cards have been matched.

The student with the most pairs of matching cards at the end of the game is the winner.

Afterwards, review the correct answers with the class by reading each sentence aloud and seeing if the students can remember the correct response.

Answer key

1 p	5 c	9 o	13 e
2 i	6 m	10 a	14 l
3 d	7 h	11 f	15 n
4 k	8 b	12 j	16 g

Note: This resource can be edited using a PDF editor.

The Deductions Game



1. Look at her diamond ring.	2. Jane is looking very happy.	3. I went skydiving at the weekend.	4. Logan was in a serious car accident, but he's OK.
5. Harry has bought a new computer.	6. Max has got paint on his hands.	7. Although the English test was easy, Isabella failed it.	8. Oh no! Where's my car?
9. Emma arrived late for work again yesterday.	10. I think Craig stole some money from the safe.	11. Jennifer left the cinema crying.	12. Look! Tom's T-shirt is inside out.
13. Do you know who sent me these flowers?	14. I saw Ava in the mall yesterday.	15. Liam hasn't been answering his phone all day.	16. Katie looks very tired.
a. It can't have been him. He doesn't know the combination.	b. Someone must have stolen it.	c. He must have received a pay rise at work.	d. That must have been very exciting.
e. It must have been Elijah. He told me he has a crush on you.	f. She might have seen a sad film.	g. She must have had a hard day.	h. She can't have studied very hard.
i. She must have had some good news.	j. He might have been in a hurry.	k. That's lucky. He could have been killed.	l. It can't have been her. She's on holiday in Italy at the moment.
m. He might have been redecorating his house.	n. He might have left it at home.	o. Her boss can't have been very happy.	p. It must have cost a fortune.