Modal Verbs

Essential knowledge

Useful expressions: permission
Vocabulary: action words, yes/no questions
Language conventions: word order in a sentence, verb tenses (present indicative)

MATERIALS NEEDED

Highlighter

1 Can I...?

Activate prior knowledge by having the students give examples of how they ask for permission to do certain things in the classroom: Can I please open a window? Can I go see the secretary, please? Can we go to the lab now? Write their ideas on the board and ask what verb is used in each example. Underline or highlight the word can.

Note: May is used in more formal and written situations; can is more common in spoken English and informal situations.

Brainstorm for other ideas of what is and is not permitted in various school situations. Write the students’ suggestions in two columns on the board: We can and We can’t. Go over the information in the Grammar box.

1A People, places and permission

Explain that students are to find the correct verbs and to also identify the situation.

1 Students use RS 31 to complete Activity 1A.

2 Students complete the activity cooperatively by pooling their personal knowledge and resources.

Note: The answers provided correspond to RS 31.
**1B Signs**

The notion of permission is extended here using common signs. Explain the activity using the example, then have the students write down the message each illustration conveys. Coach L1 students, making sure they use the modal *can*.

**Extension**

For further practice, use RS 32 for more signs and messages of permission or prohibition.

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**1C My sign**

Have the students observe the two signs and read the messages they convey. Ask the class for ideas to create their own signs. The content can be realistic and closely connected to everyday situations (You can't bring food inside. You can't run in the hall). Or it can be funny and more personal (I can't eat cookies with my braces. We can't have food fights in the cafeteria.). Students can use RS 33 to draw their signs. When the signs are complete, have the students share their pictures. Instead of having the students explain their own signs, make it the observer's task to interpret the picture. The artist helps and corrects as needed.
2B Animal facts

Ask the class what different animals can do, and write their answers on the board: A dog can catch a frisbee. A horse can jump over a fence. Explain that they will do an activity to discover what exploits other animals can do. First the students identify the animal pictures using the Info box, then they use these animal names to complete the descriptive sentences. Depending on student ability, this activity can be done with teacher guidance, in pairs, in teams or for homework.

Extension

Ask the class what talents they have and invite them to share their ideas. This can be done informally in a team or whole-class exchange, or it can be a more formal assignment where the students draw a picture and write a short sentence describing their special talent (on small sheets half the size of letter-sized paper). The results can be compiled, published in a mini-book and kept in the class library.

2C Rock, Paper, Scissors

Play Rock, Paper, Scissors to reinforce the use of can in a whole-group interactive game. Students play one match with each partner. A match consists of three games. The student who wins two or all three games wins the match. Remind the class that they can't declare themselves the winner for a game until they have explained to their partner why they won, referring to the language in the Info box. Play a demonstration game if necessary or have two volunteers play in front of the class. Show the students how to mark their score sheets. Checks are placed in the game boxes, the points are tallied, and finally the name of the winner (or me) is written on the bottom line.

Extension

Students who have won all three matches are invited to participate in a playoff to determine the class champion. Proceed as in an elimination series to declare the winner.
4 You should

Explain how to give advice using the modal verb *should*, as outlined in the Grammar box. This includes making recommendations or suggestions. Have the students highlight the main verbs to help them understand the sentence structure.

4A Match

Have the students scan the activity to identify any unfamiliar words. Record their responses and explain the new vocabulary. Show the class how to complete the activity by doing the first match-up. They may continue with a partner or in teams. Correct together.

4B What do you suggest?

Students use the language models provided in the previous activity and in the Grammar box to write their advice for three new situations. Go over sentence structure and word order as needed. Ask the class to volunteer answers and note all their ideas to encourage participation. Explain that there are several suggestions possible for each situation.

Notes

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