

## Modal verbs: *must, can't, could, may, and might*

**1a** Complete the sentences with the words in the box. Use each word once only.

can't   could   might   must

- 1 It \_\_\_\_\_ be Colin. I'm certain it's him.
- 2 It \_\_\_\_\_ be Colin, but it \_\_\_\_\_ also be John.
- 3 It \_\_\_\_\_ be Colin because he doesn't speak French.

**b** Which sentences (1–3) show that something is:

**a** possible    **b** impossible    **c** certain

**2** Read these sentences. Write *P* if the sentence shows something is possible, *C* if it shows something is certain, or *I* if it shows something is impossible.

- 1 It can't be ice because it isn't cold.
- 2 Jack might be at home because the lights are on.
- 3 You must be tired because you've been working hard all day.
- 4 **A** Whose keys are these?   
**B** They must be John's. He lost his keys earlier.
- 5 **A** Who's that at the door?   
**B** It can't be Paul because he's at work.
- 6 I'm sorry. I might be late because the traffic is really bad.

**3** Choose the correct word.

- |       |  |       |  |
|-------|--|-------|--|
| HOST  | What's the capital city of South Africa? Is it Cape Town, Pretoria, or Johannesburg?   | PAUL  | Well, it <b>(5)</b> <i>could / can't</i> be the Amazon because that's in South America.  |
| PAUL  | Hm, that's difficult. What do you think, John?   | JOHN  | And I think the Mississippi is shorter than the Missouri, so it <b>(6)</b> <i>can't / must</i> be that.  |
| JOHN  | I don't know. It <b>(1)</b> <i>could / must</i> be Cape Town.  | PAUL  | I don't think it's the Yukon. Is that in the U.S.?   |
| DIANA | No, it <b>(2)</b> <i>can't / must</i> be Cape Town because that's on the coast, and I'm sure the capital city isn't on the coast.                        | DIANA | Yes, it is. So it <b>(7)</b> <i>could / can't</i> be the Missouri or the Yukon.  |
| PAUL  | Yes, you're right. So it <b>(3)</b> <i>can't / could</i> be Pretoria or Johannesburg.  | PAUL  | Can we ask for another clue?   |
| JOHN  | Can we have a clue?  | HOST  | Yes, the river goes to the Gulf of Mexico.   |
| HOST  | Yes, OK. It isn't Johannesburg.  | DIANA | Then it <b>(8)</b> <i>can't / must</i> be the Yukon River because the Missouri goes into the Mississippi, which flows into the Gulf of Mexico. |
| PAUL  | Then it <b>(4)</b> <i>could / must</i> be Pretoria.  |       |  |
| HOST  | That's right. Here's your next question. Which is the longest river in the United States? Is it the Mississippi, the Amazon, the Missouri, or the Yukon? |       |  |