Worksheet 14

Modals in the past and future

1 Read the things Sandy could and couldn’t do when he was ten. Write sentences about Sandy.
When Sandy was ten …

1 Swim ✓
   He could swim. / He was able to swim.

2 Ride a bike ✓
   He .................................

3 Play the guitar ✗
   He .................................

4 Speak French ✗
   He .................................

5 Play tennis ✓
   He .................................

6 Solve difficult maths problems ✓
   He .................................

2 Choose the correct modal verb to complete each sentence.

1 When I was young I couldn’t / didn’t manage to swim.
2 I could / managed to play the piano when I was five.
3 I could / managed to pass my exams last year.
4 I could / was able to answer all the questions in the exam.
5 I didn’t have to study / needn’t have studied English at school.
6 You really couldn’t have / needn’t have done that, but thanks anyway.
7 In the future everyone will have to / won’t be able to learn Chinese.

3 Complete the sentences with the correct form of the verbs in brackets.

When I was at school we (1) __________ (need to) wear a uniform, but in the future most children
(2) __________ (not have to) wear one.

We (3) __________ (able to) stay at home until we were six or seven, but in the future children
(4) __________ (need to) start school when they are about four.

When we were young we (5) __________ (not able to) use the Internet to help us study, but in the
future all children (6) __________ (able to) study at home using their computers.

In the past we (7) __________ (not need to) worry if we (8) __________ (not able to) use a computer
very well, but nowadays people (9) __________ (not able to) get a good job unless they can use a
computer well.