

## Tutorial 7: Modality

### Activity one

#### **Self evaluation – entry test**

■ **Choose the most appropriate term.**

- |  |                             |                    |
|--|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| 1. X-rays are potentially dangerous and ..... be used on pregnant women.   | a. will not                 | b. could not       |
| 2. In 1555, Nostradamus predicted the end of the world for AD 3797. Most people think this is .....  | c. might not                | d. should not      |
| 3. If there is a reduction of the area of the habitat, a forest ..... lose up to 50% of its species.   | a. expected                 | b. feasible        |
| 4. The best acoustic qualities require natural sound. That is why, ideally, recording studios ..... be designed to have a normal degree of echo.           | c. unlikely                 | d. doubtless       |
| 5. An intoxicated person is 4.5 times as ..... to die in a motor-vehicle accident as the statistical mean.   | a. ought to                 | b. must            |
| 6. Most scientists now agree that the extinction of the dinosaurs ..... caused by an asteroid impact.  | c. may                      | d. expects to      |
| 7. It ..... be realised that the conventional segregation of zoology and botany is meaningless as many lower organisms are neither plants nor animals.     | a. may                      | b. might           |
| 8. As oil becomes scarcer, there ..... be an increase in prices.   | c. could                    | d. ought to        |
| 9. The estimation of the total number of species that exist in the world varies enormously. Some say there ..... be 100 million, others suggest 5 million. | a. possible                 | b. expected        |
| → <i>In the following example all the answers are correct. Explain the different meanings.</i>   | c. feasible                 | d. likely          |
| 10. The computer has crashed, it ..... due to a short circuit.   | a. is expected to have been | b. must have been  |
|  | c. would have been          | d. might have been |
|  | a. should                   | b. may             |
|  | c. will                     | d. could           |
|  | a. expects to               | b. will doubtless  |
|  | c. might                    | d. can             |
|  | a. can                      | b. should          |
|  | c. would                    | d. might           |
|  | a. must have been           | b. may have been   |
|  | c. could have been          | d. is              |

### Activity two:

#### **THE POWER OF THE RISING SUN**

Not only do fossil fuels threaten the biosphere, but in time, they will inevitably run out. Governments are, at last, beginning to take much more seriously the need to replace them by alternative forms of energy.

■ **Read the text and then match the modal forms (in bold) with the most appropriate description:**

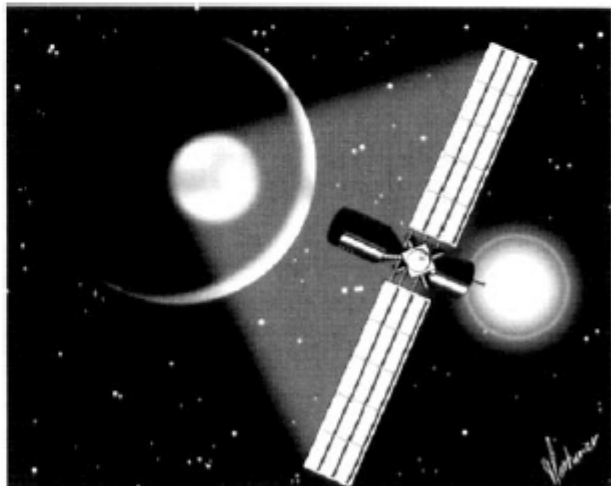
- (a) **IT IS NOT TO BE EXCLUDED, THERE IS SOME CHANCE OF THIS** ▪ (b) **THIS SEEMS TO BE THE ONLY POSSIBLE EXPLANATION** ▪ (c) **IT IS FEASIBLE** ▪ (d) **IT IS CERTAIN** ▪ (e) **PERHAPS** ▪ (f) **IT IS A TECHNICALLY ACCEPTABLE HYPOTHESIS** ▪ (g) **IN PRINCIPLE**

Faced with the problem of ensuring future energy supplies, the Japanese Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI) plans to launch a geostationary orbiting solar power station to collect solar energy to be transmitted back to Earth. They believe that operations **can** start by 2040.

The Space Solar Power System **will** be placed in orbit at an altitude of 36,000 km and weigh 20,000 tonnes. It is to be equipped with 2 solar panels, 3 km in length and 1 km wide and will be capable of generating 1 gigawatt of energy. The energy will be converted into microwaves before being beamed back to ground-based receiving antennae. It is estimated that the total cost of the enterprise **should** be in the region of 1.8 billion euros.

There are several advantages of producing energy in space. Exposure to solar energy is uninterrupted and, as there is no cloud or atmospheric dust, the intensity of solar radiation is 8 times as great as on Earth. In addition, solar power stations will help reduce the emission of greenhouse gases from fossil fuels.

Nevertheless, a certain number of questions have been raised concerning the project. First and foremost is the problem of cost. Preliminary estimations suggest that the huge investment means that the cost per kWh **could** be three times as high as the current cost of conventional power sources in Japan. There are also concerns that such high power densities on ground stations **may** lead to health problems. Although the plan is to locate the receiving station in remote, mountainous regions, Molly Macauley, author of a NASA report on the subject, believes that the long term effects of such high power densities **might** well pose a problem.



What is significant, however, is that Japan is willing to spend such enormous sums of money on such a futuristic project. This is a clear indication that the government **must** now be taking the issue of future energy supplies and environmental problems very seriously indeed.

### Activity Three:

A. Write 3 sentences referring to the **present** and 3 sentences referring to the **past** using the modals (see photos on the next page):

SHOULD / OUGHT TO • COULD • MIGHT • MUST • CAN • MAY

Example:

photo (a) → She **ought to** take his pulse. (present)

photo (b) → The sea level **must** have gone down. (past)



(a) Medical emergency in space – simulation



(b) Abandoned boat



(c) Asbestos decontamination



(d) Cellular phones



(e) Travelling in Mongolia