+49 511 4739339
james@englisch-lehrer.com · www.englisch-lehrer.com

C2 MODALS ≈ 27 MIN

Modal Remoteness — *practice on paper*

You know the distance model — now reinforce time, hypothetical situations, and politeness in fresh professional contexts.

Time distance locates later actions from a past viewpoint; distance from reality and **social distance** often make language less direct.

NAME _____ DATE _____

YOUR BUILD 1 · SORTING ○ 2 · FILL-IN ○ 3 · CORRECT ○ 4 · WRITE ○

BRICK 1 · SORT BY KIND OF DISTANCE · APPROX. 4 MIN ●○○

Sort each sentence. Put **time or reality distance** on the left and social distance for politeness or caution on the right.

He said he would join after lunch. | If we could delay, that would help.

Mira knew the board would object. | They said the draft would arrive Friday.

If we could test first, I would relax. | Could you send the signed copy?

I would suggest a shorter meeting. | The estimate might be right, pending a check.

Would you close the door? | Could you possibly wait until Monday?

TIME OR REALITY DISTANCE	SOCIAL DISTANCE

BRICK 2 · COMPLETE WITH THE RIGHT DISTANCE FORM · APPROX. 6 MIN ●●○

Complete with the right form. First choose between **time, a hypothetical situation, and social distance**.

01 Kai said he _____ email the figures later. (will)

02 If we _____ move the review, that would help. (can)

03 _____ you possibly share the agenda? (can)

04 I _____ suggest one final check. (will)

05 That _____ be the reason, but I need to verify. (may)

06 If I _____ the concern, I would explain it. (understand)

07 It would help if you _____ confirm the date. (can)

08 We _____ to finish the audit yesterday. (manage)

YOUR BUILD 1 · SORTING 2 · FILL-IN 3 · CORRECT 4 · WRITE

BRICK 3 · FIND AND CORRECT THE MISTAKE · APPROX. 7 MIN

Each sentence contains one error in form or intended register. Correct the whole sentence.

01 If Lena would know the budget, she would advise us.

02 I would be grateful if you would check the total.

03 I could complete the stock count yesterday, so it is ready.

04 She said she will call after the review.

05 The estimate must be accurate, but the source is unconfirmed.

06 If we could add one day, that will reduce the risk.

BRICK 4 · CONTROL DISTANCE AND REGISTER · APPROX. 8 MIN

Write one English sentence for each prompt. Choose would, could, or might to match **distance and register**.

01 Reported speech: give a later promise from a past viewpoint.

02 Hypothetical planning: connect an open condition with its result.

03 Request: make a diplomatic request to a client.

04 Meeting: make a careful suggestion and a claim that needs checking.

MINI-CHECK – CAN I DO THIS YET?

- [ ] I recognise time distance after a past reporting point.
- [ ] I distribute distance in hypothetical conditions without double would.
- [ ] I use could for requests that should often sound less direct.
- [ ] I use would and might for careful suggestions and claims when the register fits.

Still unsure? Identify time, reality, or social distance first, then check the intended directness.

Answer key

Check only when you have finished. Every answer comes with the **why** — the rule matters more than the result.

BRICK 1 · SORTING

01 He said he would join after lunch.
***Time or reality distance**: would follows the past report.*

02 If we could delay, that would help.
***Time or reality distance**: could opens the condition; would gives the result.*

03 Mira knew the board would object.
***Time or reality distance**: would marks the later objection.*

04 They said the draft would arrive Friday.
***Time or reality distance**: would marks the later arrival.*

05 If we could test first, I would relax.
***Time or reality distance**: could marks the condition; would the result.*

06 Could you send the signed copy?
***Social distance**: could often sounds less direct.*

07 I would suggest a shorter meeting.
***Social distance**: would often sounds more careful.*

08 The estimate might be right, pending a check.
***Social distance**: might makes the claim tentative.*

09 Would you close the door?
***Social distance**: would can sound less direct.*

10 Could you possibly wait until Monday?
***Social distance**: could and possibly often sound diplomatic.*

BRICK 2 · FILL-IN

01 Kai said he **would** email the figures later.
Time distance: Would follows the past report.

02 If we **could** move the review, that would help.
Reality distance: Could keeps the condition open.

03 **Could** you possibly share the agenda?
Social distance: Possibly makes could more diplomatic.

04 I **would** suggest one final check.
Social distance: Would frames a careful suggestion.

05 That **might** be the reason, but I need to verify.
Tentative claim: Might keeps it open.

06 If I **understood** the concern, I would explain it.
Hypothetical condition: No would in the if-clause.

07 It would help if you **could** confirm the date.
Diplomatic request: Could avoids double would.

08 We **managed** to finish the audit yesterday.
Actual completion: Managed to shows the result.

BRICK 3 · CORRECT

01 If Lena **knew** the budget, she would advise us.
Hypothetical condition: No would in the if-clause.

02 I would be grateful if you **could** check the total.
Diplomatic request: Could avoids double would.

03 I **managed to** complete the stock count yesterday, so it is ready.
Actual completion: Managed to shows the result.

04 She said she **would** call after the review.
Time distance: Would follows the past report.

05 The estimate **might** be accurate, but the source is unconfirmed.
Checking register: Might is more tentative than must.

06 If we could add one day, that **would** reduce the risk.
Hypothetical result: Would matches the open condition.

BRICK 4 · WRITE

Answers vary; check the kind of distance, intended directness, and register.

01 Jon said he **would deliver** the summary later.
Time distance: Would marks the later promise.

02 If we **could extend** the pilot, it **would reduce** risk.
Reality distance: Could opens the condition; would the result.

03 **Could you possibly** approve the revised total?
Social distance: The request often sounds diplomatic.

04 I **would suggest** a backup date. That **might** work, but I need to check.
Careful register: Would frames; might softens the claim.

NEXT BRICKS — KEEP BUILDING FREE ONLINE

PREREQUISITE
Might, Could, May
englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons/might-could-may

PREREQUISITE
Modals of Present Deduction
englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons/modals-deduction-present

ALL LESSONS
45+ free lessons
englisch-lehrer.com/en/lessons

HANOVER
Schaufelder Straße 11 · 30167
englisch-lehrer.com/hannover

BERLIN
Kurfürstendamm 30 · 10719
englisch-lehrer.com/berlin

ONLINE COURSES
englisch-lehrer.com/online
worldwide on Zoom

CONTACT
+49 511 4739339
james@englisch-lehrer.com