

'Could' can be used to talk about the past, the present or the future.

'Could' is a past form of 'can'

- When I lived in Boston, I could walk to work.
- He said he couldn't come to the party.
- I could see him clearly but I couldn't hear him well.

'Could' is used to make polite requests. We can also use 'can' for these.

- Could you help me, please?
- Could you lend me some money?
- Could I have a lift?
- Could I borrow some quarters?

If we use 'could' in reply to these requests, it suggests that we do not really want to do it. If you agree to the request, it is better to say 'can'

- I can help you.
- I could help you later, but I'm really busy right now.
- I could lend you some money but I don't have much money in my wallet.
- I could give you a lift to the university, but no farther.

'Could' is used to talk about possibility and is similar in meaning to 'might'.

- It could rain later. Take an umbrella.
- He could be with Michael.
- He could stay at your house, couldn't he?
- It could be Sarah's umbrella.

Read the story and answer the questions. Teachers: Make sure that everyone in the group is participating, not just one person.

Harry was artistic. He could draw very well. He liked to paint the scenery near his home. He painted trees and fields of flowers. Everyone said Harry was talented. But Harry did not do well at school. He couldn't understand math. He couldn't read or write well. All he wanted to do was draw or paint.

Jan was Harry's friend. She was not artistic at all. She loved to look at Harry's paintings. Jan did very well in school. She could do all the math problems in the book. She read well and she wrote wonderful stories.

One day Jan asked Harry to teach her to draw. Harry said, "I will teach you to draw if you will help me with school work." Jan agreed. Now Jan helps Harry with reading, writing and math. He is doing better in school. On weekends, Harry takes Jan to the country. They draw fields of flowers. Jan is getting better at drawing. They are happy together.

- 1.How did Harry and Jan solve their problems?
- 2.Are you artistic? Do you draw or paint?
- 3.Are you better at math or writing?
- 4.Do you enjoy reading?
- 5.Do you like to go to the country to see beautiful scenery?

Read this conversation and explain the meaning of the underlined idioms:

Bill: I told Sara that Stan only liked her for her money.

Susan: Oh Bill how could you? Stan doesn't feel that way at all. Stan doesn't need Sara's money. Stan is very wealthy.

Bill: Then how come he is always short on cash?

Susan: Stan pretends to be poor because he wants people to like him for himself, not for his money.

Bill: Oh. I didn't know that. I guess I've kind of fouled things up.

Susan: What a can of worms. I promised Stan I wouldn't tell Sara he was wealthy. But now I have to tell her or she'll dump him.

Is Stan wrong to pretend to be poor? What should Susan do about the situation?

PRONUNCIATION EXERCISE

Say these phrases and sentences **QUICKLY**. Repeat them faster and faster. Circle the phrases that are the hardest to pronounce.

kid talks back	go dog go	think back	sick ducks
my best vest	the vet bet	a bent vent	sushi chef
vroom vroom	I've got to go.	Let me know.	Want to dance?
Meet you later.	How did you like it?	Want a banana?	Did you do it?
Meet you there.	an ill eel	Is the light right?	bad bed
sell seashells	she sees shells	rubber buggy bumpers	
Jerry's jelly	There's chicken in the kitchen.	The fleas freeze.	
black bug on a black rug	three thin sticks	He threw three free throws.	
Fred fed Ted bread.	I thought of thanking you.	red blood, bad blood	
rolling red wagons	baby bubbles	Goopy gopher guts	
six sick sheep	Betty bought butter.	Is there butter in the batter?	
pickled peppers	shoeshine shop	The dog chews shoes.	
boys better bathe	nine nice night nurses	three thumbtacks	
Slit the sheet.	The stump stunk.	Which witch is which?	
a thumb thump	What wheel?	smooth tooth	
thirty three thieves	clean cream can	Wish the wish the witch wishes.	