

Present and Past Ability- Sentence Completion Games

Play the game or games below that your teacher tells you to, in each case using the suggested sentences to complete on the next page.

Present and past ability sentence completion things in common

Tell and ask your partner about present and past abilities and try to make sentences such as those below which are true for both of you.

Present and past ability sentence completion guessing game

Perhaps after a few minutes filling in some of the sentences, choose one of the phrases below and say just the part that you completed it with (not the part that is written below). See if your partner can guess which sentence you put those words in.

Useful phrases for doing the activity

“No, that can’t be true, because...”

“Well, that could be true, but in fact...”

“That is true, but it’s not the sentence I was thinking of. Please try again”

“Yes, that’s right. It’s your turn”

Present and past ability sentence completion bluffing game

Choose one of the sentences below and make a true or made up sentence using those words. Perhaps after asking you for more details, the other students will guess if your sentence is true or false.

Present and past ability sentences to complete

- I can... very well.
- I can... fairly well.
- I can't... very well.
- I can't... at all.
- I've been trying to, but I still can't...
- I can't... yet, but I hope to be able to soon.
- I could... but I can't anymore.
- I was able to... but I can't anymore.
- I couldn't... when I was... but I can now.
- I wasn't able to... when I was younger but I can now.
- I couldn't... when I was in my early teens but I can now.
- I wasn't able to... when I was in primary school but I can now.
- I couldn't... until I was six years old.
- I wasn't able to... until I was nine.
- Luckily, I was able to... when I needed to.
- Luckily, I managed to... when it was necessary.
- Unfortunately, I wasn't able to... when the need arose.
- Unfortunately, I couldn't... when I had to.
- Unfortunately, I didn't manage to... when someone asked me to.

Present and past ability grammar presentation

Ask about any phrases above which you couldn't use or couldn't understand the different between.

Discuss the questions together in groups and then as a class:

- Why can't you say "Luckily, I could... when..."? How is that sentence different to the sentences in which you can use "could"?
- Why can't you say "I didn't manage to... when I was... but I can now"?
- Which verbs above can be used to talk about past general abilities, e.g. when a certain age?
- Which verbs above can be used to talk about particular moments in time, e.g. when telling a story? How about with negative verbs?
- Which verb above is the most generally useable and so the safe choice if you aren't sure which other verbs are right?