

## Speculating about the future, present and past including modals of probability and possibility and past modals

### Part One: Speculating about the future

Choose a future time and make a prediction about that time, using language to show how sure or unsure that thing is and maybe comparing the future to now. Do your partners agree with your predictions, including how confident you are?

#### Useful language for talking about the future

- “Next...,...”
- “The... after next,...”
- “In/ Within... days/ weeks/ months/ years/ decades/ centuries/ millennia,...”
- “In/ By... (month/ season/ year/ decade/ century),...”

#### Future speculating language presentation

Put predicting language in order from the most probable to the least likely in the space below. Some words can go in the same place below, in which case you should write them next to each other.

will definitely

100%!!

100%

100%?

0%!

Use the mixed phrases on the final page below to help with the brainstorming task above.

**Possible speculating about the future, present and past topics**

*Not all of these topics match talking about the future, so choose carefully.*

- (Lack of) technology
- (Not) enough – Too much/ Too many
- A city or town
- A company
- A continent
- A country
- A famous person
- A product or service
- A region
- A sector (banking, insurance, manufacturing, etc)
- A social class
- A technology
- Actions
- Arts
- Books/ Literature
- Business
- Celebrations
- Children/ Teenagers/ Young people
- Clothes/ Appearance/ Fashion
- Communication
- Computers
- Connections between people/ Relationships
- Conspiracy
- Convenience
- Crime and punishment
- Danger – Safety
- Data/ Information/ Knowledge
- Development
- Drop/ Fall
- Drugs
- Education/ Qualifications
- Feelings
- Festivals
- Financial situation
- Food and drink
- Free time/ Leisure
- Frequency
- Friends and family
- Friends and family
- Fun/ Enjoyment/ Entertainment
- Globalisation
- Growth
- Happiness
- Health/ Medicine
- Imagination/ Predictions

- Languages (English etc)
- Laws
- Likes and dislikes
- Living conditions/ Standard of living
- Marketing/ Advertising
- Marriage
- Media
- Middle aged people
- Money/ Cost/ Pay/ Savings/ Finances
- News
- Noise
- Old people
- Opinions/ Beliefs
- Outsourcing
- Plan/ Aim/ Ambition
- Politics/ Politicians/ Government
- Popularity
- Possessions
- Power/ Influence
- Rich people/ Wealth
- Robotics/ Automation
- Shops/ Shopping
- Size
- Smell
- Sport/ Exercise
- The economy
- The environment
- The Internet
- Thoughts
- Times/ Habits/ Routines
- Trade/ Imports/ Exports
- Transport/ Travel
- Trends/ Changes
- Unemployed people
- Wants/ Desires
- War/ Violence
- Weather
- Work
- Worry

*When your teacher stops you, share one speculation you agreed on and see what the class thinks.*

*Do the speculating language presentation tasks above.*

### Mixed future speculating phrases

- It almost certainly won't
- It can't
- It could
- It could possibly
- It definitely won't
- It may
- It may well
- It might
- It must
- It probably will
- It probably won't
- It will
- It will almost certainly
- It will definitely
- It won't

*Check your answers as a class, then ask about vocabulary above you don't understand.*

### Part Two: Speculating about the present

*Convert the future expressions above into speculating about the present phrases. Some do not need to change.*

*Speculate about the present of other people, places, companies etc, including your level of certainty or uncertainty. The present can mean either right now or repeated present actions. Not all the topics above match talking about the present, so choose carefully. Does your partner (completely) agree with your speculation?*

### Part Three: Speculating about the past

*Convert the speculating phrases about the future and present above into ones you can use to talk about the past. They don't need to change very much.*

*Which ones need to add "have + past participle (= PP)"?*

*Choose past periods and speculate about people's feelings, habits, beliefs, etc. Note that things you have learnt about the past aren't possible in this activity because they aren't speculations, so choose the topics carefully. Does your partner agree with your imagination about the past, and with your level of certainty or uncertainty?*

#### Useful phrases for talking about the past

- ... ago
- in the year...
- in the... age/ era
- when...