



**Expansion Activities**  
Understanding and Using English Grammar, 3rd Edition  
**Chapter 9: Modals, Part I**

**Activity: Modal Scenarios**

**Materials needed:** Index cards

**Description:**

In pairs, students are going to develop dialogues using a variety of modal words and expressions. Write each scenario below on an index card and let each pair of students choose a random card.

Depending on your students' abilities, they can create written dialogues or spontaneous oral role plays based on the confrontational scenarios below. Give students free rein to take the scenarios in any direction they want, with the only caveat being that they need to incorporate as many modals from the chapter as they can.

This is a terrific opportunity to point out some language subtleties: how professionals try to conceal their frustration or anger beneath a veneer of civility by using polite forms, and how modals can be used to soften criticism, complaints, and bad news. When each group has finished presenting, find sentences in the productions that you can isolate to show how using a modal expression makes a difference. For example, in the role play with a customer and a store clerk, a line might read, "Would you mind asking the manager -- just to be sure?" Ask the students how the mood of the conversation would change if the speaker said, "Since you're not sure, go ask the manager."

You can have two pairs working on the same scenario because each pair will develop it in different ways.

**Scenario 1:** A dissatisfied customer is returning an item to the store where it was bought. The customer feels that the store should take the return. The sales clerk, while being as polite as possible, doesn't want to accept the return. **(2 roles -- add a store manager if 3 roles are needed.)**

**Scenario 2:** A teacher is talking with a child's parent. The child never completes the homework and always falls asleep in class. The teacher thinks the parent should change some of the child's habits at home. The parent thinks that the teacher gives too much homework, and that children should have more fun and less stress from school. **(2 roles)**

**Scenario 3:** A neighbor has a large, noisy dog that frequently escapes from its backyard and roams the neighborhood, barking and chasing people. The dog escaped yet again, and a neighbor down the street had to sit in his car for five minutes, scared to get out, as the dog jumped against the car and barked. Finally the dog's owner came to take it away. The dog's owner doesn't understand how people can be bothered or scared by his dog. **(2 roles)**



**Expansion Activities**  
Understanding and Using English Grammar, 3rd Edition  
**Chapter 9: Modals, Part I**

**Activity: Modal Scenarios**

**Scenario 5:** A teenager's parents have gone away for the weekend. The teenager disobeys his or her parents by driving their car while they are gone. While the teenager is driving with a friend, they have a minor accident that dents the car. The parents are coming home in the morning. The teens are now very upset and trying to decide what they should do. **(2 roles)**



**Scenario 6:** A teenager who disobeyed his or her parents and drove their car while they were out of town had an accident with the car. No one was hurt, but the car has body damage. The teenager's parents have just arrived home, and it is time for the teen to speak with them or dad about what happened. **(2 roles)**

**Scenario 7:** A business traveler has just arrived at a hotel where he or she is attending an important conference. The business person is exhausted after flying for eight hours and needs to freshen up and eat before checking in at the conference. Unfortunately, the hotel can't find any reservation and has no room ready for the traveler. **(2 roles)**