❏ **Exercise 7. Warm-up.** (Chart 2-3)
Choose the correct completions.

1. The chef is in his kitchen right now. He _____.
   a. cooks   b. is cooking

2. He _____ some soup.
   a. tastes   b. is tasting

3. It _____ too salty.
   a. tastes   b. is tasting

4. He _____ it.
   a. doesn't like   b. isn't liking

2-3 Non-Progressive Verbs

(a) I *know* your cousin. (b) INCORRECT: I ~~am knowing~~ your cousin.	Some verbs, like *know*, are *non-progressive;** i.e., they are rarely used in progressive tenses. They describe states, not actions. ("States" are conditions or situations that exist.)

Common Verbs That Are Usually Non-Progressive (like *know*)

know	like	dislike	belong	consist of	hear	agree
believe	appreciate	fear	possess	contain	sound	disagree
doubt	care about	hate	own			mean
recognize	please	mind		exist	seem	promise
remember	prefer		desire	matter	look like	amaze
suppose			need		resemble	surprise
understand			want			
			wish			

(c) I *think* that your cousin is very nice. (d) I*'m thinking* about my trip to Rome.	Some verbs, like *think*, have both *non-progressive* meanings and *progressive* meanings. In (c): *think* means "believe." In (d): *am thinking* means "thoughts are going around in my mind right now."

Common Verbs with Both Non-Progressive and Progressive Meanings (like *think*)

	NON-PROGRESSIVE	PROGRESSIVE
look	It *looks* cold outside.	Olga *is looking* out the window.
appear	Jack *appears* to be tired today.	She*'s appearing* on a TV show today.
think	I *think* that Mr. Liu is a good teacher.	I*'m thinking* about my family right now.
feel	I *feel* that Mr. Liu is a good teacher.	I*'m feeling* a little tired today.
have	I *have* a bicycle.	I*'m having* a good time.
see	*Do* you *see* that bird?	The doctor *is seeing* a patient right now.
taste	The soup *tastes* salty.	The chef *is tasting* the soup.
smell	Something *smells* bad. What is it?	Ann *is smelling* the perfume to see if she wants to buy it.
love	Ken *loves* his baby daughter.	Ken is enjoying parenthood. In fact, he*'s loving* it!
be	Mary *is* old and wise.	Al is ill but won't see a doctor. He *is being foolish.***

*Non-progressive verbs are also called "stative verbs" or non-action verbs.

****Am/is/are being** + *an adjective* describes temporary behavior. In the example, Al is usually not foolish, but right now he is acting that way.

4-3   Expressing the Future in Time Clauses

(a)	Bob will come soon. *When Bob comes*, we will see him.	In (a): *When Bob comes* is a time clause.* *when + subject + verb = a time clause* When the meaning of the time clause is future, the SIMPLE PRESENT tense is used. *Will* or *be going to* is not used in the time clause.
(b)	Linda is going to leave soon. *Before she leaves*, she is going to finish her work.	
(c)	I will get home at 5:30. *After I get home*, I will eat dinner.	A time clause begins with such words as *when, before, after, as soon as, until,* and *while* and includes a subject and a verb. The time clause can come either at the beginning of the sentence or in the second part of the sentence: *When he comes*, we'll see him. OR We'll see him *when he comes.*
(d)	The taxi will arrive soon. *As soon as it arrives*, we'll be able to leave for the airport.	
(e)	They are going to come soon. I'll wait here *until they come.*	Notice: A comma is used when the time clause comes first in a sentence.
(f)	*While I am traveling in Europe next year*, I'm going to save money by staying in youth hostels.	Sometimes the PRESENT PROGRESSIVE is used in a time clause to express an activity that will be in progress in the future, as in (f).
(g)	I will go to bed *after I finish my work.*	Occasionally, the PRESENT PERFECT is used in a time clause, as in (h). Examples (g) and (h) have the same meaning. The present perfect in the time clause emphasizes the completion of one act before a second act occurs in the future.
(h)	I will go to bed *after I have finished my work.*	

*A *time clause* is an adverb clause. See Charts 17-1 (p. 365) and 17-2 (p. 368) for more information.

6-2 Basic Subject-Verb Agreement

Singular Verb	Plural Verb	
(a) My *friend lives* in Boston.	(b) My *friends live* in Boston.	*Verb* + *-s/-es* = third person singular in the simple present tense *Noun* + *-s/-es* = plural
	(c) My *brother and sister live* in Boston. (d) My *brother, sister, and cousin live* in Boston.	Two or more subjects connected by *and* require a plural verb.
(e) *Every man, woman, and child needs* love. (f) *Each book and magazine is* listed in the bibliography.		EXCEPTION: *Every* and *each* are always followed immediately by singular nouns. (See Chart 7-11, p. 129.) In this case, even when there are two (or more) nouns connected by *and*, the verb is singular.
(g) That *book* on political parties *is* interesting. (i) The *book* that I got from my parents *was* very interesting.	(h) The *ideas* in that book *are* interesting. (j) The *books* I bought at the bookstore *were* expensive.	Sometimes a phrase or clause separates a subject from its verb. These interrupting structures do not affect basic agreement. For example, in (g) the interrupting prepositional phrase *on political parties* does not change the fact that the verb *is* must agree with the subject *book*. In (i) and (j): The subject and verb are separated by an adjective clause. (See Chapter 13.)
(k) *Watching* old movies *is* fun.		A gerund (e.g., *watching*) used as the subject of the sentence requires a singular verb. (See Chart 14-8, p. 322.)

6-3 Subject-Verb Agreement: Using Expressions of Quantity

Singular Verb	Plural Verb	

(a) *Some of the book is* good.
(c) *A lot of the equipment is* new.
(e) *Two-thirds of the money is* mine.
(g) *Most of our homework is* easy.
	(b) *Some of the books are* good.
	(d) *A lot of my friends are* here.
	(f) *Two-thirds of the boys are* here.
	(h) *Most of our assignments are* easy.
		In most expressions of quantity, the verb is determined by the noun (or pronoun) that follows *of.*
		
		For example, in (a) and (b):
		  some of + singular noun = singular verb
		  some of + plural noun = plural verb

(i) *One of my friends is* here. (j) *Each of my friends is* here. (k) *Every one of my friends is* here.		EXCEPTIONS: *One of, each of,* and *every one of* take singular verbs. *one of* *each of* } + plural noun = singular verb *every one of*
(l) *None of the boys is* here.	(m) *None of the boys are* here.	Subjects with *none of* used to be considered singular in very formal English, but plural verbs are often used in informal English and sometimes even in formal writing.
(n) *The number of students* in the class *is* fifteen.	(o) *A number of students were* late for class.	COMPARE: In (n): *The number* is the subject. In (o): *A number of* is an expression of quantity meaning "a lot of." It is followed by a plural noun and a plural verb.

6-4 Subject-Verb Agreement: Using *There* + *Be*

(a) *There is a fly* in the room.	*There* + *be* introduces the idea that something exists in a particular place. ***There*** + ***be*** + *subject* + *expression of place**
(b) *There are three windows* in this room.	The subject follows *be* when *there* is used. In (a): The subject is *a fly.* (singular) In (b): The subject is *three windows.* (plural)
(c) *INFORMAL:* There's *two sides* to every story.	In informal spoken English, some native speakers use a singular verb even when the subject is plural, as in (c). The use of this form is fairly frequent but is not generally considered to be grammatically correct.

*Sometimes the expression of place is omitted when the meaning is clear. For example, *There are seven continents.* The implied expression of place is clearly *in the world.*

6-5 Subject-Verb Agreement: Some Irregularities

Singular Verb

(a) *The United States is* big. (b) *The Philippines consists* of more than 7,000 islands. (c) *The United Nations has* its headquarters in New York City. (d) *Harrods is* a department store.	Sometimes a proper noun that ends in *-s* is singular. In the examples, if the noun is changed to a pronoun, the singular pronoun *it* is used (not the plural pronoun *they*) because the noun is singular. In (a): *The United States = it* (not *they*)
(e) The *news is* interesting.	*News* is singular.
(f) *Mathematics is* easy for her. *Physics is* easy for her too.	Fields of study that end in *-ics* require singular verbs.
(g) *Diabetes is* an illness.	Certain illnesses that end in *-s* are singular: *diabetes, measles, mumps, rabies, rickets, shingles.*
(h) *Eight hours* of sleep *is* enough. (i) *Ten dollars is* too much to pay. (j) *Five thousand miles is* too far to travel.	Expressions of time, money, and distance usually require a singular verb.

(k) *Two and two is* four.
      Two and two equals four.
      Two plus two is/equals four.
 (l) *Five times five is* twenty-five.
	Arithmetic expressions require singular verbs.

Plural Verb

(m) *Those people are* from Canada. (n) *The police have* been called. (o) *Cattle are* domestic animals. (p) *Fish live* under water.	*People,* police, cattle,* and *fish* do not end in *-s,* but they are plural nouns in the example sentences and require plural verbs.

Singular Verb	Plural Verb	
(q) *English is* spoken in many countries. (s) *Chinese is* his native language.	(r) *The English drink* tea. (t) *The Chinese have* an interesting history.	In (q): *English* = language In (r): *The English* = people from England Some nouns of nationality that end in *-sh,* *-ese,* and *-ch* can mean either language or people, e.g., *English, Spanish, Chinese, Japanese, Vietnamese, Portuguese, French.*
	(u) *The poor have* many problems. (v) *The rich get* richer.	A few adjectives can be preceded by *the* and used as a plural noun (without final *-s*) to refer to people who have that quality. Other examples: *the young, the elderly, the living, the dead, the blind, the deaf, the disabled.*

*The word *people* has a final *-s* (*peoples*) only when it is used to refer to ethnic or national groups: *All the peoples of the world desire peace.*

7-1 Regular and Irregular Plural Nouns

(a) song—*songs*	The plural of most nouns is formed by adding final -*s*.*
(b) box—*boxes*	Final -*es* is added to nouns that end in -*sh*, -*ch*, -*s*, -*z*, and -*x*.*
(c) baby—*babies*	The plural of words that end in a consonant + -*y* is spelled -*ies*.*
(d) man—*men* ox—*oxen* tooth—*teeth* woman—*women* foot—*feet* mouse—*mice* child—*children* goose—*geese* louse—*lice*	The nouns in (d) have irregular plural forms that do not end in -*s*.
(e) echo—*echoes* potato—*potatoes* hero—*heroes* tomato—*tomatoes*	Some nouns that end in -*o* add -*es* to form the plural.
(f) auto—*autos* photo—*photos* studio—*studios* ghetto—*ghettos* piano—*pianos* tatoo—*tatoos* kangaroo—*kangaroos* radio—*radios* video—*videos* kilo—*kilos* solo—*solos* zoo—*zoos* memo—*memos* soprano—*sopranos*	Some nouns that end in -*o* add only -*s* to form the plural. NOTE: When in doubt, use your dictionary or spellcheck.
(g) memento—*mementoes/mementos* volcano—*volcanoes/volcanos* mosquito—*mosquitoes/mosquitos* zero—*zeroes/zeros* tornado—*tornadoes/tornados*	Some nouns that end in -*o* add either -*es* or -*s* to form the plural (with -*es* being the more usual plural form).
(h) calf—*calves* life—*lives* thief—*thieves* half—*halves* loaf—*loaves* wolf—*wolves* knife—*knives* self—*selves* scarf—*scarves/scarfs* leaf—*leaves* shelf—*shelves*	Some nouns that end in -*f* or -*fe* are changed to -*ves* to form the plural.
(i) belief—*beliefs* cliff—*cliffs* chief—*chiefs* roof—*roofs*	Some nouns that end in -*f* simply add -*s* to form the plural.
(j) one deer—*two deer* one series—*two series* one fish—*two fish*** one sheep—*two sheep* one means—*two means* one shrimp—*two shrimp**** one offspring—*two offspring* one species—*two species*	Some nouns have the same singular and plural form: e.g., *One deer is* . . . . *Two deer are* . . . .
(k) criterion—*criteria* (m) analysis—*analyses* phenomenon—*phenomena* basis—*bases* crisis—*crises* (l) bacterium—*bacteria* hypothesis—*hypotheses* curriculum—*curricula* parenthesis—*parentheses* datum—*data* thesis—*theses* medium—*media* memorandum—*memoranda*	Some nouns that English has borrowed from other languages have foreign plurals.

*For information about the pronunciation and spelling of words ending in -*s*/-*es*, see Chart 6-1, p. 85.

**Fishes* is also possible but rarely used.

****Especially in British English, but also occasionally in American English, the plural of *shrimp* can be *shrimps*.

7-4 Count and Noncount Nouns

(a) I bought *a chair*. Sam bought *three chairs*.

(b) We bought *some furniture*.
INCORRECT: We bought *some furnitures*.
INCORRECT: We bought *a furniture*.

	Singular	Plural	
Count Noun	*a chair* *one chair*	*two chairs* *some chairs* *a lot of chairs* *many chairs* *Ø chairs*★	**Chair** is called a "count noun." This means you can count chairs: *one chair, two chairs, etc.* A count noun: (1) may be preceded by *a/an* or *one* in the singular. (2) takes a final *-s/-es* in the plural.
Noncount Noun		*some furniture* *a lot of furniture* *much furniture* *Ø furniture*★	**Furniture** is called a "noncount noun." In grammar, you cannot use numbers (*one, two, etc.*) with the word **furniture**. A noncount noun: (1) is not immediately preceded by *a/an* or *one*. (2) has no plural form, so does not add a final *-s/-es*.

★Ø = nothing (i.e., no article or other determiner).

7-10 Using A Few and Few; A Little and Little

COUNT:	(a) We sang *a few songs*.	***A few*** and ***few*** are used with plural count nouns, as in (a).
NONCOUNT:	(b) We listened to *a little music*.	***A little*** and ***little*** are used with noncount nouns, as in (b).
(c)	She has been here only two weeks, but she has already made *a few friends*. (*Positive idea: She has made some friends.*)	***A few*** and ***a little*** give a positive idea; they indicate that something exists, is present, as in (c) and (d).
(d)	I'm very pleased. I've been able to save *a little money* this month. (*Positive idea: I have saved some money instead of spending all of it.*)	
(e)	I feel sorry for her. She has (very) *few friends*. (*Negative idea: She does not have many friends; she has almost no friends.*)	***Few*** and ***little*** (without *a*) give a negative idea; they indicate that something is largely absent, as in (e).
(f)	I have (*very*) *little money*. I don't even have enough money to buy food for dinner. (*Negative idea: I do not have much money; I have almost no money.*)	***Very*** (+ ***few/little***) makes the negative stronger, the number/amount smaller, as in (f).

7-11 Singular Expressions of Quantity: One, Each, Every

(a) *One student* was late to class.	***One, each,*** and ***every*** are followed immediately by singular count nouns (never plural nouns, never noncount nouns).
(b) *Each student* has a schedule.	
(c) *Every student* has a schedule.	
(d) *One of the students* was late to class.	***One of, each of,*** and ***every one of**** are followed by specific plural count nouns (never singular nouns; never noncount nouns).
(e) *Each (one) of the students* has a schedule	
(f) *Every one of the students* has a schedule.	

NOTE: ***Each*** and ***every*** have essentially the same meaning.

Each is used when the speaker is thinking of one person/thing at a time: *Each student has a schedule. = Mary has a schedule. Hiroshi has a schedule. Carlos has a schedule. Sabrina has a schedule. Etc.*

Every is used when the speaker means ***all***: *Every student has a schedule. = All of the students have schedules.*

*COMPARE:

Every one (two words) is an expression of quantity (e.g., *I have read every one of these books*).

Everyone (one word) is an indefinite pronoun. It has the same meaning as *everybody* (e.g., *Everyone/Everybody has a schedule*).

9-1 Basic Modal Introduction

Modal auxiliaries generally express speakers' attitudes. For example, modals can express that a speaker feels something is necessary, advisable, permissible, possible, or probable; and, in addition, they can convey the strength of those attitudes. Each modal has more than one meaning or use. See Chart 10-10, p. 204–205, for a summary overview of modals.

Modal auxiliaries in English

| can | had better | might | ought (to) | should | would |
| could | may | must | shall | will | |

Modal Auxiliaries

I You He She It We You They	+	*can do* it. *could do* it. *had better do* it. *may do* it. *might do* it. *must do* it. *ought to do* it. *shall do* it. *should do* it. *will do* it. *would do* it.	Modals do not take a final **-s**, even when the subject is *she*, *he*, or *it*.

Modals do not take a final **-s**, even when the subject is *she*, *he*, or *it*.
  CORRECT: *She can do it.*
  INCORRECT: She ~~cans~~ do it.

Modals are followed immediately by the simple form of a verb.
  CORRECT: *She can do it.*
  INCORRECT: She can ~~to~~ do it. / She can ~~does~~ it. / She can ~~did~~ it.

The only exception is *ought*, which is followed by an infinitive (*to* + *the simple form of a verb*).
  CORRECT: *He ought to go* to the meeting.

Phrasal Modals

be able to do it
be going to do it
be supposed to do it
have to do it
have got to do it

Phrasal modals are common expressions whose meanings are similar to those of some of the modal auxiliaries. For example: *be able to* is similar to *can*; *be going to* is similar to *will*.

An infinitive (*to* + *the simple form of a verb*) is used in these similar expressions.

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*See Appendix Chart B-1 for question forms with modals.
**See Appendix Chart D-1 for negative forms with modals.

9-2 Polite Requests with "I" as the Subject

May I Could I	(a) *May I borrow* your pen (please)? (b) *Could I* (please) *borrow* your pen?	*May I* and *could I* are used to request permission. They are equally polite, but *may I* sounds more formal.* NOTE in (b): In a polite request, *could* has a present or future meaning, not a past meaning.
Can I	(c) *Can I borrow* your pen?	*Can I* is used informally to request permission, especially if the speaker is talking to someone she/he knows fairly well. *Can I* is usually considered a little less polite than *may I* or *could I.*
	TYPICAL RESPONSES Certainly. Yes, certainly. Of course. Yes, of course. INFORMAL: Sure.	Often the response to a polite request is an action, such as a nod or shake of the head, or a simple "uh-huh," meaning "yes."

Might is also possible: *Might I borrow your pen? Might I* is quite formal and polite; it is used much less frequently than *may I* or *could I.*

9-4 Polite Requests with *Would You Mind*

Asking Permission

(a) *Would you mind if I closed* the window? (b) *Would you mind if I used* the phone? TYPICAL RESPONSES No, not at all. No, of course not. No, that would be fine.	Notice in (a): **Would you mind if I** is followed by the simple past.* The meaning in (a): *May I close the window? Is it all right if I close the window? Will it cause you any trouble or discomfort if I close the window?* Notice that the typical response is "no." "Yes" means *Yes, I mind.* In other words: *It is a problem for me.* Another typical response might be "unh-uh," meaning "no."

Asking Someone to Do Something

(c) *Would you mind closing* the window? (d) Excuse me. *Would you mind repeating* that? TYPICAL RESPONSES No. I'd be happy to. Not at all. I'd be glad to. *INFORMAL:* No problem. / Sure. / Okay.	Notice in (c): **Would you mind** is followed by the *-ing* form of a verb (a gerund). The meaning in (c): *I don't want to cause you any trouble, but would you please close the window? Would that cause you any inconvenience?* The informal responses "Sure" and "Okay" are common but not logical. The speaker means *No, I wouldn't mind* but seems to be saying the opposite: *Yes, I would mind.* Native speakers understand that the response "Sure" or "Okay" in this situation means that the speaker agrees to the request.

*Sometimes, in informal spoken English, the simple present is used: *Would you mind if I close the window?*

NOTE: The simple past does not refer to past time after *would you mind*; it refers to present or future time. See Chart 20-3, p. 419, for more information.

9-6 Lack of Necessity and Prohibition: *Have To* and *Must* in the Negative

Lack of Necessity

(a) Tomorrow is a holiday. We *don't have to go* to class. (b) I can hear you. You *don't have to shout.**	When used in the negative, *must* and *have to* have different meanings.
	Negative form: *do not have to* = lack of necessity. The meaning in (a): *We don't need to go to class tomorrow because it is a holiday.*

Prohibition

(c) You *must not tell* anyone my secret. Do you promise?	*must not* = prohibition (DO NOT DO THIS!) The meaning in (c): *Do not tell anyone my secret. I forbid it. Telling anyone my secret is prohibited.* Negative contraction: *mustn't.* (The first "t" is silent: "muss-ənt.")
(d) *Don't tell* anyone my secret. (e) You *can't tell* anyone my secret. (f) You *'d better not tell* anyone my secret.	Because *must not* is so strong, speakers also express prohibition with imperatives, as in (d), or with other modals, as in (e) and (f).

*Lack of necessity may also be expressed by *need not* + *the simple form of a verb*: *You needn't shout.* The use of *needn't* as an auxiliary is chiefly British except in certain common expressions such as *You needn't worry.*

9-7 Advisability: *Should, Ought To, Had Better*

(a) You *should study* harder. You *ought to study* harder. (b) Drivers *should obey* the speed limit. Drivers *ought to obey* the speed limit.	*Should* and *ought to* both express advisability. Their meaning ranges in strength from a suggestion (*This is a good idea*) to a statement about responsibility or duty (*This is a very important thing to do*). The meaning in (a): *This is a good idea. This is my advice.* In (b): *This is an important responsibility.*
(c) You *shouldn't leave* your keys in the car.	Negative contraction: *shouldn't.** NOTE: the /t/ is often hard to hear in relaxed, spoken English.
(d) I *ought to* ("otta") *study* tonight, but I think I'll watch TV instead.	Native speakers often pronounce *ought to* as "otta" in informal speech.
(e) The gas tank is almost empty. We *had better stop* at the next gas station. (f) You *had better take* care of that cut on your hand soon, or it will get infected.	In meaning, *had better* is close to *should* and *ought to*, but *had better* is usually stronger. Often *had better* implies a warning or a threat of possible bad consequences. The meaning in (e): *If we don't stop at a service station, there will be a bad result. We will run out of gas.* Notes on the use of *had better*: • It has a present or future meaning. • It is followed by the simple form of a verb. • It is more common in speaking than writing.
(g) You *'d better* take care of it. (h) You *better* take care of it.	Contraction: *'d better*, as in (g). Sometimes in speaking, *had* is dropped, as in (h).
(i) You *'d better not* be late.	Negative form: *had better + not*

*Ought to is not commonly used in the negative. If it is, the *to* is sometimes dropped: *You oughtn't (to) leave your keys in the car.*

9-8 The Past Form of *Should*

(a) I had a test this morning. I didn't do well on the test because I didn't study for it last night. I *should have studied* last night.	Past form: *should have* + *past participle.*[*] The meaning in (a): *I should have studied* = *Studying was a good idea, but I didn't do it. I made a mistake.*
(b) You were supposed to be here at 10:00 P.M., but you didn't come until midnight. We were worried about you. You *should have called* us. (You did not call.)	Usual pronunciation of *should have*: "should-əv" or "should-ə."
(c) My back hurts. I *should not have carried* that heavy box up two flights of stairs. (I carried the box, and now I'm sorry.)	The meaning in (c): *I should not have carried* = *I carried something, but it turned out to be a bad idea. I made a mistake.*
(d) We went to a movie, but it was a waste of time and money. We *should not have gone* to the movie.	Usual pronunciation of *should not have*: "shouldn't-əv" or "shouldn't-ə."

[*]The past form of *ought to* is *ought to have* + *past participle* (*I ought to have studied.*). It has the same meaning as the past form of *should*. In the past, *should* is used more commonly than *ought to*. *Had better* is used only rarely in a past form (e.g., *He had better have taken care of it.*) and usually only in speaking, not writing.

10-1 Degrees of Certainty: Present Time

— Why isn't John in class? **100% sure:** He *is* sick. **95% sure:** He *must be* sick. **50% sure or less:** { He *may be* sick. He *might be* sick. He *could be* sick. NOTE: These percentages are approximate.	*Degree of certainty* refers to how sure we are — what we think the chances are — that something is true. If we are sure something is true in the present, we don't need to use a modal. For example, if I say, "John is sick," I am sure; I am stating a fact that I am sure is true. My degree of certainty is 100%.
— Why isn't John in class? (a) He *must be* sick. (Usually he is in class every day, but when I saw him last night, he wasn't feeling good. So my best guess is that he is sick today. I can't think of another possibility.)	*Must* expresses a strong degree of certainty about a present situation, but the degree of certainty is still less than 100%. In (a): The speaker is saying, "Probably John is sick. I have evidence to make me believe that he is sick. That is my logical conclusion, but I do not know for certain."
— Why isn't John in class? (b) He *may be* sick. (c) He *might be* sick. (d) He *could be* sick. (I don't really know. He may be at home watching TV. He might be at the library. He could be out of town.)	*May, might,* and *could* express a weak degree of certainty. In (b), (c), and (d): The meanings are all the same. The speaker is saying, "Perhaps, maybe,* possibly John is sick. I am only making a guess. I can think of other possibilities."

Maybe (one word) is an adverb: *Maybe he is sick.* *May be* (two words) is a verb form: *He may be sick.*

10-2 Degrees of Certainty: Present Time Negative

100% sure:	Sam *isn't* hungry.
99% sure:	Sam *couldn't be* hungry. Sam *can't be* hungry.
95% sure:	Sam *must not be* hungry.
50% sure or less:	Sam *may not be* hungry. Sam *might not be* hungry.

NOTE: These percentages are approximate.

(a) Sam doesn't want anything to eat. He *isn't* hungry. He told me his stomach is full. I heard him say that he isn't hungry. I believe him.	In (a): The speaker is sure that Sam is not hungry.
(b) Sam *couldn't/can't be* hungry. That's impossible. I just saw him eat a huge meal. He has already eaten enough to fill two grown men! Did he really say he'd like something to eat? I don't believe it.	In (b): The speaker believes that there is no possibility that Sam is hungry (but the speaker is not 100% sure). When used in the negative to show degree of certainty, *couldn't* and *can't* forcefully express the idea that the speaker believes something is impossible.
(c) Sam isn't eating his food. He *must not be* hungry. That's the only reason I can think of.	In (c): The speaker is expressing a logical conclusion, a "best guess."
(d) I don't know why Sam isn't eating his food. He *may not/might not be* hungry right now. Or maybe he doesn't feel well. Or perhaps he ate just before he got here. Who knows?	In (d): The speaker uses *may not/might not* to mention a possibility.

10-6 Ability: *Can* and *Could*

(a) Tom is strong. He *can lift* that heavy box.	*Can* is used to express physical ability, as in (a).
(b) I *can see* Central Park from my apartment.	*Can* is frequently used with verbs of the five senses: *see, hear, feel, smell, taste*, as in (b).
(c) Maria *can play* the piano. She's been taking lessons for many years.	*Can* is used to express an acquired skill. In (c): *can play = knows how to play.*
(d) You *can buy* a hammer at the hardware store.	*Can* is used to express possibility. In (d): *you can buy = it is possible for one to buy.*
COMPARE: (e) I'm not quite ready to go, but you *can leave* if you're in a hurry. I'll meet you later. (f) When you finish the test, you *may leave*.	*Can* is used to give permission in informal situations, as in (e). In formal situations, *may* rather than *can* is usually used to give permission, as in (f).
(g) Dogs *can bark*, but they *cannot/can't talk*.	Negative form: *cannot* or *can't*
(h) Tom *could lift* the box, but I *couldn't*.	The past form of *can* meaning "ability" is *could*, as in (h). Negative form: *could not* or *couldn't*

10-7 Using *Would* to Express a Repeated Action in the Past

(a) When I was a child, my father *would read* me a story at night before bedtime.	*Would* can be used to express *an action that was repeated regularly in the past.* When *would* is used to express this idea, it has the same meaning as *used to* (habitual past). Sentences (a) and (b) have the same meaning.
(b) When I was a child, my father *used to read* me a story at night before bedtime.	
(c) I *used to live* in California. He *used to be* a Boy Scout. They *used to have* a Ford.	*Used to* expresses *a situation that existed in the past,* as in (c). In this case, *would* may not be used as an alternative. *Would* is used only for regularly repeated actions in the past.

10-10 Summary Chart of Modals and Similar Expressions

Auxiliary	Uses	Present/Future	Past
may	(1) polite request (only with "I" or "we")	*May* I *borrow* your pen?	
	(2) formal permission	You *may leave* the room.	
	(3) 50% or less certainty	— Where's John? He *may be* at the library.	He *may have been* at the library.
might	(1) 50% or less certainty	— Where's John? He *might be* at the library.	He *might have been* at the library.
	(2) polite request (*rare*)	*Might* I *borrow* your pen?	
should	(1) advisability	I *should study* tonight.	I *should have studied* last night, but I didn't.
	(2) 90% certainty (*expectation*)	She *should do* well on the test tomorrow.	She *should have done* well on the test.
ought to	(1) advisability	I *ought to study* tonight.	I *ought to have studied* last night, but I didn't.
	(2) 90% certainty (*expectation*)	She *ought to do* well on the test tomorrow.	She *ought to have done* well on the test.
had better	(1) advisability with threat of bad result	You *had better be* on time, or we will leave without you.	(*past form uncommon*)
be supposed to	(1) expectation	Class *is supposed to begin* at 10:00.	
	(2) unfulfilled expectation		Class *was supposed to begin* at 10:00, but it began at 10:15.
must	(1) strong necessity	I *must go* to class today.	(I *had to go* to class yesterday.)
	(2) prohibition (*negative*)	You *must not* open that door.	
	(3) 95% certainty	Mary isn't in class. She *must be* sick.	Mary *must have been* sick yesterday.
have to	(1) necessity	I *have to go* to class today.	I *had to go* to class yesterday.
	(2) lack of necessity (*negative*)	I *don't have to go* to class today.	I *didn't have to go* to class yesterday.
have got to	(1) necessity	I *have got to go* to class today.	(I *had to go* to class yesterday.)
will	(1) 100% certainty	He *will be* here at 6:00.	
	(2) willingness	— The phone's ringing. I*'ll get* it.	
	(3) polite request	*Will* you please help me?	
be going to	(1) 100% certainty (*prediction*)	He *is going to be* here at 6:00.	
	(2) definite plan (*intention*)	I*'m going to paint* my bedroom.	
	(3) unfulfilled intention		I *was going to paint* my room, but I didn't have time.