



Expansion Activities
Understanding and Using English Grammar, 3rd Edition
Chapter 10: Modals, Part II

Activity: Get a Clue!



Materials needed: Internet access for small groups of students. (If you have no access in the class, students can do this in a lab or on their own time.)

Description: Students solve short, fun mysteries while practicing modals of certainty in the past and present.

There is a terrific website called Mystery Net that has several different formats of short mysteries to read, discuss, and solve.

Mystery Net is accessible at this address: <http://www.mysterynet.com/>

You can take advantage of its wonderful front-page feature called “Get-a-Clue.”

This little activity presents a mystery in small chunks of 2-4 sentences at a time. Students read the first clue and use modals of certainty to guess what might have happened. Then they can click for the next clue which will help them make more guesses. There are three or four separate clues to read before the solution is given. The story changes every week.

In addition to the weekly “Get-a-Clue,” there is a monthly feature called “See-n-Solve,” which has a short-story mystery (this month’s has 470 words). After reading the mystery, students click on a picture that shows a room or crime scene, and then click on active parts of the picture to get more clues. This will prompt more conversation and more use of modals as students try to solve the mystery. If you plan on using this site on an on-going basis for conversational fun, be sure to start out by having the students read the short background for the two detectives Amy and Harry Silver.