



Answers

1. a) must
2. b) might
3. c) should
4. d) can't
5. a) could
6. b) ought
7. c) must
8. d) might
9. a) should
10. b) can't
11. c) could
12. d) shouldn't
13. a) might
14. b) mustn't
15. c) could
16. d) better
17. a) must
18. b) could
19. c) ought
20. d) may



Explanations

1. “must” (a)

Use 'must' for a strong logical deduction — you are almost certain based on the evidence. Working all day without a break makes it almost certain he is tired. 'Might' or 'could' would express less certainty.

2. “might” (b)

Use 'might' to express possibility when you are uncertain. 'I'm not sure' clearly shows the speaker doesn't know, so 'might' (= it's possible) is correct. 'Must' would express certainty, which contradicts 'I'm not sure'.

3. “should” (c)

Use 'should' to give advice or recommend an action. A persistent cough warrants medical attention, and the speaker is advising the listener. 'Must' would sound like a command rather than concerned advice.

4. “can't” (d)

Use 'can't' for a strong negative deduction — you are almost certain something is NOT true. The car is the wrong colour, so it's logically impossible that it belongs to Tom. 'Mustn't' expresses prohibition, not impossibility. 'May not' would express uncertain possibility.

5. “could” (a)

Use 'could' to express a reasonable possibility. The speaker thinks the delivery man is a possible explanation but isn't certain. 'Must' would express near-certainty, which is stronger than the speaker's level of confidence here.

6. “ought” (b)

Use 'ought to' to give advice or say what is the right thing to do. It is slightly more formal than 'should' but has the same meaning. 'Must' would be too strong for general health advice.

7. “must” (c)

Use 'must' for a logical deduction when you have strong evidence. Speaking French perfectly and growing up in Paris are strong reasons to conclude she is French. 'Might' would be too uncertain given the strong evidence.

8. “might” (d)

Use 'might' when something is possible but you don't have enough information to be sure. 'I haven't checked yet' shows the speaker is uncertain. 'Must' would express a confident deduction.

9. “should” (a)

Use 'should' to give strong advice about the right thing to do. The speaker is saying it is morally important to apologise. 'Might' or 'could' would be too weak for this level of advice.

10. “can't” (b)

Use 'can't' for a negative deduction — you are certain something is not possible. His office is closed on Sunday, so it's logically impossible he is there. 'May' would express uncertainty, which doesn't match the clear logic.

11. “could” (c)

Use 'could' to express possibility about a future event based on present evidence. The dark sky suggests rain is possible. 'Must' would express certainty, but weather predictions are inherently uncertain.

12. “shouldn't” (d)

Use 'shouldn't' to advise against something — to say it's not a good idea. The speaker is giving health advice. 'Mustn't' would mean it is strictly forbidden, which is too strong for dietary advice.

13. “might” (a)

Use 'might' when you're making a guess without strong evidence. The black backpack is a clue, but the speaker isn't certain. 'Must' would need stronger evidence to be appropriate.

14. “mustn't” (b)

Use 'mustn't' when something is strictly forbidden. Telling someone would ruin the surprise, so it's treated as a strict prohibition. 'Shouldn't' would be a softer recommendation, but the phrase 'it has to stay a secret' shows this is non-negotiable.

15. “could” (c)

Use 'could' to talk about possible options or plans that haven't been decided. Both the beach and mountains are possibilities. 'Must' would imply obligation, and 'should' would imply a recommendation.

16. “better” (d)

Use 'had better' (you'd better) for strong advice with a warning. If the listener doesn't leave now, there is a negative consequence — missing the train. 'Would rather' expresses preference, not advice.

17. “must” (a)

Use 'must' for a confident deduction based on clear evidence. The coat and moving towards the door are strong visual evidence that she is about to leave.

18. “could” (b)

Use 'could' to acknowledge the possibility that you might be wrong. 'I could be wrong' is a common hedging expression that shows modesty. 'Must' would express certainty about being wrong, which is contradictory.

19. “ought” (c)

Use 'ought to' to make a strong recommendation. The speaker has good knowledge (the food is excellent) and is advising the listener to go. It functions like 'should' but slightly more formal.

20. “may” (d)

Use 'may' to express a possibility you are uncertain about. 'I'm not sure' confirms the speaker is guessing. 'Must' would express a confident deduction, which contradicts the speaker's uncertainty.