

Modal Tone Shift Answer Key

Sample Responses

1. *Could you finish the report by 3 p.m.?* - Tone shifts to more polite and respectful.
2. *Can you hand in your project by Friday?* - Becomes more direct and less formal.
3. *Could you come to the game tonight?* - Sounds more tentative or polite than direct.
4. *Can you take out the trash before dinner?* - Sounds more like an order than a polite request.
5. *Could you bring the check, please?* - Becomes more formal and courteous.

Teacher's Guide

- **Skill Focus:** Encourages students to recognize how *can* and *could* change tone, intent, and social meaning in conversation.
- **Differentiation Tips:**
 - For struggling students, model the tone change aloud and have them identify differences in politeness or certainty.
 - For advanced students, challenge them to create original dialogues using tone shifts for formal and informal contexts.
- **Engagement Idea:** Have students perform both versions of a rewritten dialogue and let the class discuss how tone affects interpretation.
- **Extension Activity:** Ask students to write a short scene (6-8 lines) showing two characters where tone escalation or softening occurs because of switching between *can* and *could*.