

Case File: The Dyatlov Pass Incident

Topic: The Mountain of the Dead

Level: Upper-Intermediate (B2) / Advanced (C1)

Focus: Modals of Present & Future (Deduction, Possibility, Obligation), Vocabulary.

1. The Reading Text

Frozen in Fear: A Cold Case Review

The Incident

In 1959, nine hikers died in the Ural Mountains under mysterious circumstances. Today, we are reopening the file. To understand this tragedy, we **must not** look at it simply as a hiking accident. The details are too strange.

The hikers cut their tent from the *inside* and ran into the snow without shoes. Why? Some say they **must** be crazy, but these were experienced professionals. You **don't have to** be a detective to realize that something terrifying **must** be the cause of such panic.

Analyzing the Theories

Let's look at the evidence. The tent was destroyed. This **could** be the result of an avalanche. If snow covers the tent, you **can't** breathe, so cutting your way out is logical. However, the slope was not steep enough for a major avalanche. It is strange that an avalanche **should** occur on such a shallow hill.

What about the radiation found on their clothes? This **could** be a sign of a secret military weapon. If the military is involved, the files **will** likely remain classified forever. Some theorists argue that the hikers **might** be victims of a parachute mine test.

The Medical Puzzle

The injuries are the most baffling part. Three hikers had crushed ribs, but no external bruises. Doctors compare it to a car crash. A human **can't** cause that damage with a fist. It **must** be a force of immense pressure.

Furthermore, one hiker was missing her tongue. While this **could** be the result of natural decomposition, it fuels the darkest theories.

The Conclusion?

We **may** never know the truth. It **could** be infrasound driving them mad, it **might** be a KGB cover-up, or it **will** perhaps remain a "compelling natural force" forever. One thing is certain: you **should** think twice before venturing into the "Mountain of the Dead."

2. The Psychology of Survival

Concept: Paradoxical Undressing

Why were they naked? This phenomenon **should** be familiar to anyone studying hypothermia. As the body freezes, muscles controlling blood vessels tire and relax. Warm blood rushes to the skin, making the victim feel incredibly hot. They tear off their clothes. It is a cruel trick of the mind; just as they **should** be bundling up, they strip down.

3. Key Vocabulary

1. **Treacherous** (*Adj*): Hazardous due to hidden dangers.
 2. **Baffling** (*Adj*): Impossible to understand; perplexing.
 3. **Catastrophic** (*Adj*): Involving sudden great damage.
 4. **Speculation** (*Noun*): Forming a theory without firm evidence.
 5. **Ominously** (*Adv*): Suggesting something bad is going to happen.
 6. **Dispatched** (*Verb*): Sent off to a destination for a purpose.
 7. **Sustained** (*Verb*): To undergo or suffer (an injury).
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4. Grammar Spotlight: Modals of Present & Future

Based on the rules from your PDF.

1. Deduction & Certainty (Must / Can't)

- **Rule:** Use *must* when you are sure something is true. Use *can't* when you are sure it is impossible.
- *Text Example:* "Something terrifying **must** be the cause." (I am sure of this).
- *Text Example:* "A human **can't** cause that damage." (I am sure this is impossible).

2. Possibility (Could / May / Might)

- **Rule:** Use these when you are not sure, but it is possible.
- *Text Example:* "This **could** be the result of an avalanche."
- *Text Example:* "The hikers **might** be victims of a test."

3. Expectation & Oddity (Should)

- **Rule:** As per your PDF, *should* is used with adjectives describing chance (odd, strange) to express surprise.
- *Text Example:* "It is strange that an avalanche **should** occur on such a shallow hill."

4. Assumption (Will)

- **Rule:** Use *will* to express a confident assumption or prediction about the situation.
- *Text Example:* "The files **will** likely remain classified."

5. Obligation (Must not / Don't have to)

- **Rule:** *Must not* is a prohibition. *Don't have to* means there is no obligation (you have a choice/it's not necessary).
 - *Text Example:* "We **must not** look at it simply as an accident." (Prohibition/Strong advice).
 - *Text Example:* "You **don't have to** be a detective..." (It is not necessary to be one).
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5. Activity: Grammar & Vocabulary

Part A: Vocabulary Context

Fill in the blanks with the correct word from the list: (dispatched, baffling, speculation, treacherous, sustained, ominously, catastrophic)

1. The storm caused _____ damage to the town.
2. The dark clouds gathered _____ overhead.
3. The detective found the clues completely _____.
4. The mountain pass is _____ in winter.
5. An ambulance was _____ to the scene immediately.
6. The hiker _____ a severe head injury.
7. There is widespread _____ that aliens were involved.

Part B: Grammar (Modals)

Choose the correct modal based on the context.

1. **(Deduction)** The lights are off and the car is gone. They **(must / can't)** be home.
2. **(No Obligation)** You **(must not / don't have to)** finish the report today; the deadline is next week.
3. **(Oddity/Chance)** It is strange that he **(should / must)** say that to you.
4. **(Possibility)** Don't drink that water! It **(could / must)** be contaminated.
5. **(Prohibition)** You **(don't have to / must not)** smoke in the hospital. It is forbidden.

Answer Key

Part A: 1. Catastrophic, 2. Ominously, 3. Baffling, 4. Treacherous, 5. Dispatched, 6. Sustained, 7. Speculation.

Part B: 1. Can't, 2. Don't have to, 3. Should, 4. Could, 5. Must not.