

GRAMMAR DRILL

COULD AND COULDN'T

NAME: _____

1 Check (✓) the sentences that express a past ability.

- 1 Brenda could read and write when she was five.
- 2 I can't sleep at night.
- 3 Could you ride a bike when you were a child?
- 4 Birds can fly but we can't.
- 5 Julio couldn't speak English a year ago.
- 6 We could wear jeans on Fridays.
- 7 Tomás can help you with your bags.

2 Complete the sentences with the verbs from the box.

read	go	wait	run
eat	sleep	hear	

- 1 Oscar could run 200 meters in 30 seconds.
- 2 Matt couldn't go to my party last night.
- 3 Could Gerardo eat something? He is hungry.
- 4 Aurelio couldn't wait for me. I was very late.
- 5 They could hear the concert from behind the stage.
- 6 Could you sleep last night? Our neighbors were having a loud party.
- 7 Renata could read when she was 4. Her first book was *The Three Little Bears*.

3 Circle the correct option to complete the sentences.

- 1 _____ your mom help you yesterday?
a Could b Can
- 2 Alexis _____ sleep late, it was Friday.
a couldn't b could
- 3 I _____ finish my homework late at night.
a could b couldn't
- 4 They couldn't _____ out because it was raining.
a go b went
- 5 Last month, Juan couldn't _____ because he broke his right leg.
a walk b eat
- 6 He _____ run because he was sick.
a couldn't b could
- 7 Sofia went to the dentist because she _____ stand the toothache.
a couldn't b could

4 Underline the correct option.

- 1 Ana could / couldn't play the guitar in 2010. She learned how to last year.
- 2 Josué could spoke / speak English and Spanish at an early age because his mom is bilingual.
- 3 Luis couldn't / could go to school last week. He was sick.
- 4 In 1980, people could / couldn't use wireless Internet.

GRAMMAR DRILL

COULD AND COULDN'T

- René could skate / *skated* when he was younger. Now he's afraid of breaking a bone.
- Giselle couldn't / *could* open the door. She didn't have the keys.
- Laura *didn't can* / couldn't watch horror films when she was a child because she was scared.

5 Complete the sentences with *could* or *couldn't*.

- Ari couldn't paint before she took classes.
- Rodrigo could swim since he was four. His father taught him.
- Could Olivia ride a bike two years ago?
- I couldn't climb trees before and I still can't.
- Carlos couldn't surf on his vacation. The waves weren't high enough.
- Naomi couldn't speak to the teacher. She was too shy.
- My cat could catch mice when she was younger. Now she prefers to sleep.

6 Circle the mistake in each sentence and rewrite them correctly.

- He didn't can start to work.
He couldn't start to work.
- Karla could to skate on ice.
Karla could skate on ice.
- The team not could win the cup.
The team couldn't win the cup.
- The director couldn't met the new teacher.
The director couldn't meet the new teacher.

- The photographer could take good photos?
Could the photographer take good photos?
- Valeria couldn't took the exam.
Valeria couldn't take the exam.
- I could not to see the mountain.
I could not see the mountain.

7 Write eight sentences about abilities you had or didn't have when you were a child. Use *could* or *couldn't*.

- Students' own answers.
- Students' own answers.
- Students' own answers.
- Students' own answers.
- Students' own answers.
- Students' own answers.
- Students' own answers.
- Students' own answers.