

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 _____ 200 meters in 30 seconds.
- 2 Matt couldn't _____ to my party last night.
- 3 Could Gerardo _____ something? He is hungry.
- 4 Aurelio couldn't _____ for me. I was very late.
- 5 They could _____ the concert from behind the stage.
- 6 Could you _____ last night? Our neighbors were having a loud party.
- 7 Renata could _____ 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.

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

- 5 The photographer *could* take good photos?

- 6 Valeria *couldn't* took the exam.

- 7 I *could not* to see the mountain.

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

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

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

- 1 _____
- 2 _____
- 3 _____
- 4 _____
- 5 _____
- 6 _____
- 7 _____
- 8 _____

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

- 1 He didn't can start to work.

- 2 Karla could to skate on ice.

- 3 The team not could win the cup.

- 4 The director couldn't met the new teacher.
