**7.2 Speculating**

1. ***must (have)* and *can’t (have)***

* We use *must* to talk about things which we can deduce are definitely true. We use *must have* when we are referring to a past event.

He must be at work. He just called me from his office.

Do they live in Liverpool? They used to live in Leeds. They must have moved.

* We use *can’t* for talking about things which we can deduce are impossible. We use *can’t have* when we are referring to a past event.

She can't be abroad. She hasn't got a passport.

They can't have gone far. They only left two minutes ago.

1. ***may (have), might (have)* and *could (have)***

* We use *may, might* or *could* to speculate about things that are possibly true.

Kirsten may be at home. Why don't you phone her?

Don't throw that painting away. It might be valuable.

Your friends are very late. They could be lost.

* They can often refer to a future event.

Be careful with that vase. You might break it.

* We can use the negative forms *may not and might not.* However, we cannot use the negative form *couldn’t* in this sense.

I've sent him a postcard, but it may not / might not arrive.

* When we are speculating about something in the past, we use *may have, might have,* or *could have* + past participle.

Police think the robbers may have escaped through the window.

* However, we cannot use *may have* for things which we now know didn’t happen. We use *might have or could have.*

That was a dangerous thing to do. You might have been killed. (But you weren't.)

**1 Complete the sentences with an appropriate verb from section 7.2.**

1. l’m not sure what we’re doing tomorrow. We … go to the beach.
2. There’s no juice in the fridge. Somebody .. drunk it.
3. Jacqui … be at the sports centre. It’s closed.
4. You shouldn’t drive so fast. You … have an accident one day.
5. They … cleaned this room - look, it’s filthy!
6. The robbers … been looking for jewellery – nobody really knows.
7. I can see people opening their umbrellas. It … be starting to rain.
8. The chair broke as soon as he sat on it. It … been very well made.