

# **Seminario 23:**

# **Modal Verbs:**

# **Ability & Obligation**



# Welcome Back!!!



# How well can you swim?

## Shouldn't you be enjoying English by the pool today?

# **Seminario 23:**

# **Modal Verbs:**

# **Ability & Obligation**



# Versatile Vocab Focus:

Today...

**Understanding power !**



# Grammar

## Hammer Time:



## Modal Verbs: Ability & Obligation



# Modal Auxiliary Verb Overview

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I **work** this Saturday.

I **can** work this Saturday.

I **may** work this Saturday.

I **might** work this Saturday.

I **will** work this Saturday.

I **shall** work this Saturday.

I **should** work this Saturday.

I **could** work this Saturday.

I **would** work this Saturday.

I **must** work this Saturday.

**Trabajo** este sábado.

**Puedo** trabajar este sábado.

**Puede** que trabaje este sábado.

**Puede** que trabaje este sábado.

**Trabajaré** este sábado.

**Trabajaré** este sábado.

**Debería** trabajar este sábado.

**Podía** trabajar este sábado.

**Trabajaría** este sábado

**Debo** trabajar este sábado.

# Modal Auxiliary Verb Overview

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I **will** work this Saturday.

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I **should** work this Saturday.

I **could** work this Saturday.

I **would** work this Saturday.

I **must** work this Saturday.

I **work** this Saturday.

I **am able to** work this Saturday.

**It's possible that** I work this Saturday.

**It's possible that** I work this Saturday.

I **plan to** work this Saturday.

I **plan to** work this Saturday.

**It's recommended that** I work this Saturday.

**An option is that** I work this Saturday.

I **would\*** work this Saturday.

I **have to** work this Saturday.



# Modal Auxiliary Verb Overview

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## RULES REVIEW:

1) NO 'to' before or after

I **can** to work this Saturday.  
I want **to** can speak English better.

2) no 's'

She musts do it.

3) no conjugation

He can do it. I can do it. You can do it.  
We can do it. They can do it.

4) not together

Tomorrow she will can see you.

# Modal Auxiliary Verb Overview

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He cans ~~s~~ do it.

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He can do it. I can do it. You can do it.  
We can do it. They can do it.

4) not together

Tomorrow she will **be able to** see you.

# ABILITY in the PRESENT

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# ABILITY in the **PRESENT**

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**Can = ability, possibility**

**AFFIRMATIVE form: subject + can + the verb**  
(infinitive verb without 'to')

**NEGATIVE form: subject + can not + the verb**  
commonly contracted: 'cannot' or 'can't'

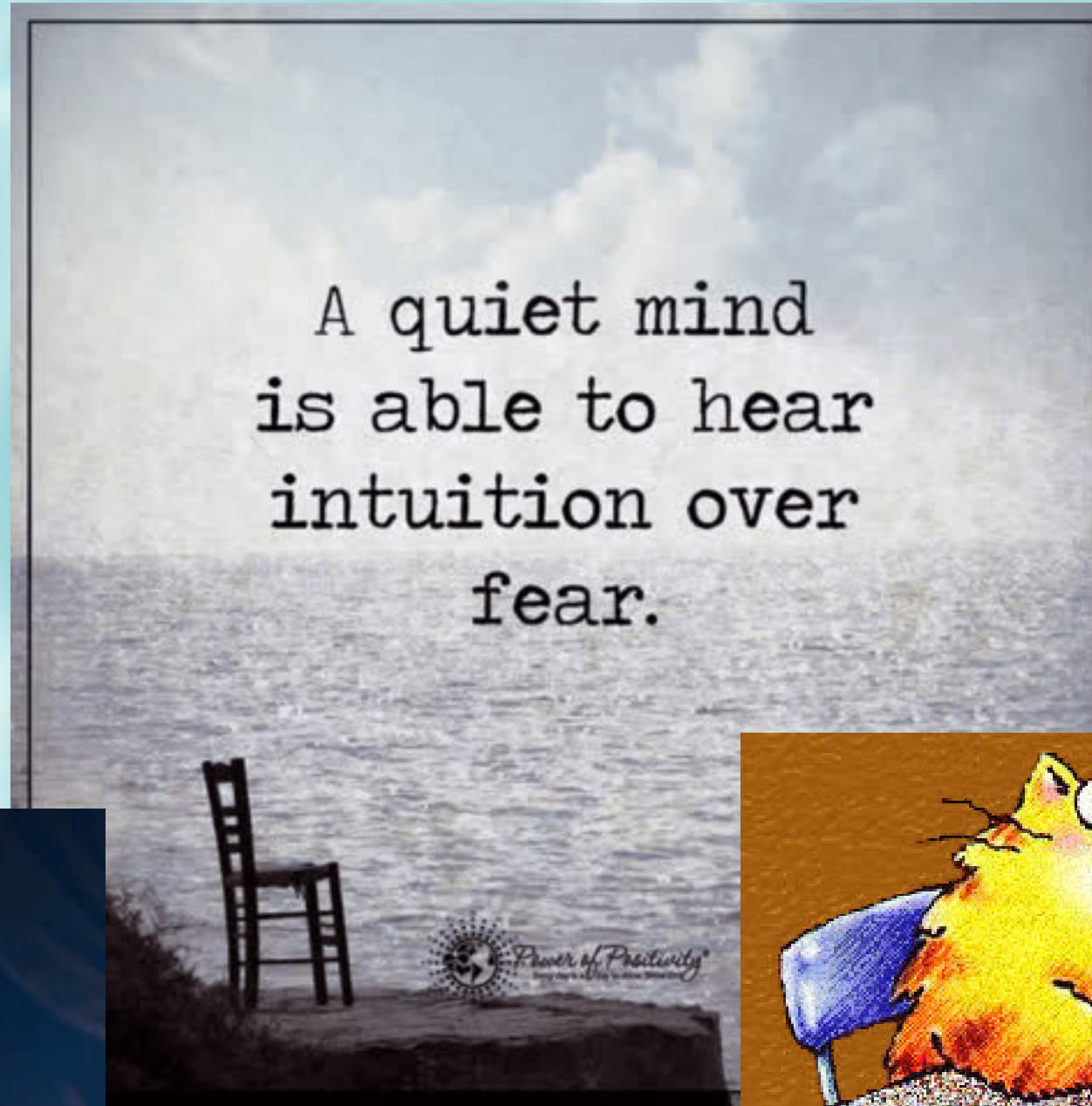
**QUESTION form: can + subject + the verb**  
(infinitive verb without 'to')

I **can** do it any time.  
She **can** play the guitar.

We **can't** commit right now.  
He **can't** hear very well.

**Can** they help us?  
**Can** you finish all of them now?

# ABILITY



# ABILITY in the **PRESENT**

---

**Can = ability, possibility = is/are able to**

## modal verb

I **can** do it any time.

She **can** play the guitar.

We **can't** commit right now.

He **can't** hear very well.

**Can** they help us?

**Can** you finish all of them now?

## normal verb (more specific & formal)

I'm **able** do it any time.

She **is able** play the guitar.

We **aren't able to** commit right now.

He **isn't able to** hear very well.

**Are** they **able to** come?

**Are** you **able to** finish all of them now?



# ABILITY in the **PAST**

---

**Could** = **GENERAL ability, possibility in PAST**

**AFFIRMATIVE:**

I **can't** play football now (present ability),  
but I **could** when I was younger. (past ability)

She **could** read when she was four (years old).

# ABILITY in the **PAST**

---

**Couldn't = GENERAL & SPECIFIC ability, possibility in PAST**

My friend **couldn't** read when he was four. (general ability)

We **couldn't** go to that restaurant because it was too expensive. (general ability)

He called us because he **couldn't** find the file. (specific ability)

I **couldn't** tell her. (specific ability)

# ABILITY in the **PAST**

---

**Couldn't** = **NO ability, possibility** = was/were **NOT** able to

## modal verb

I **couldn't** do it yesterday.  
She **couldn't** play the guitar.

We **couldn't** commit last year.  
He **couldn't** hear very well.

**Couldn't** they help us?  
**Couldn't** he finish all of them?

## normal verb (more difficult & formal)

I **wasn't able** do it yesterday.  
She **wasn't able** play the guitar.

We **weren't able to** commit last year.  
He **wasn't able to** hear very well.

**Were** they **not able to** come?  
**Wasn't** he **able to** finish all of them?

# ABILITY in the **PAST**

---

**was/were able to = overcoming difficulty in the PAST in AFFIRMATIVE**

·When the computer crashed yesterday, **I was able to** fix it.

(NOT 'I could fix it')

·**She was able to** pass the exam, even though she hadn't studied much.

(NOT 'she could pass')

John got lost but **he was able to** get back home by taxi.

(NOT 'he could get back')

They got lost in France, but **they were able to** talk with the locals.

(NOT 'they could talk')

The system went down, but **we were able to** get it working again.

(NOT 'we could get')

# ABILITY in the FUTURE

---

**can** = **GENERAL ability, possibility in FUTURE**

We use 'can' to describe a **general** future ability:

I can help you tomorrow.

We can't come to the party.

He can do it later.

You can't call until we get there.

Lilah can explain more to you next week!

# ABILITY in the FUTURE

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**will be able to = SPECIFIC/MORE DIFFICULT ability,  
possibility in FUTURE**

## AFFIRMATIVE:

Next year **he will be able to** drive.

On Saturday **we will be able to** see the new collection at the museum.

## NEGATIVE:

Sorry, **I'll be unable to** attend the meeting at that time.

If you don't study well, **you won't be able to** improve.

# EXERCISE TIME!

## ABILITY

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# POLL TIME

## ABILITY

---

**EXERCISE 1:** Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

Elige la palabra correcta para completar la frase.

1. They \_\_\_\_\_ meet with you now.

- a. can
- b. could
- c. be able to



# POLL TIME

## ABILITY

---

**EXERCISE 1:** Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

Elige la palabra correcta para completar la frase.

2. She \_\_\_\_\_ walk when she was less than a year old.

- a. can
- b. could**
- c. is able to

# POLL TIME

## ABILITY

---

**EXERCISE 1:** Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

Elige la palabra correcta para completar la frase.

3. \_\_\_\_\_ he understand what they were talking about?

- a. (Can)
- b. Could
- c. Is able

# POLL TIME

## ABILITY

---

**EXERCISE 1:** Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

Elige la palabra correcta para completar la frase.

4. If you work hard you \_\_\_\_\_ to move up in the company.

- a. will can
- b. can
- c. will be able

# POLL TIME

## ABILITY

---

**EXERCISE 1:** Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

Elige la palabra correcta para completar la frase.

5. We \_\_\_\_\_ find the file anywhere!

- a. can't
- b. couldn't
- c. weren't able to

# POLL TIME

## ABILITY

---

**EXERCISE 1:** Choose the correct word to complete the sentence.

Elige la palabra correcta para completar la frase.

5. We \_\_\_\_\_ find the file anywhere!

a. **can't** (PRESENT)

b. **couldn't** (PAST GENERAL)

c. **weren't able to** (PAST DIFFICULT/FORMAL)

# EXERCISES

## ABILITY

---

**EXERCISE 2:** Translate the following sentences from Spanish to English  
(Traduce la frase de español a inglés)

- 1. Pudieron evacuar el edificio a tiempo.**
- 2. ¿Podremos conseguir una mesa de 10 personas?**
- 3. ¿Han podido contactar con Carlos?**
- 4. No veíamos bien en el cine.**
- 5. No puede ser verdad.**

# EXERCISES

## ABILITY

---

**EXERCISE 2:** Translate the following sentences from Spanish to English  
(Traduce la frase de español a inglés)

- 1. Pudieron evacuar el edificio a tiempo.**  
**They were able to evacuate the building in time.**
- 2. ¿Podremos conseguir una mesa de 10 personas?**  
**Will we be able to get a table for 10 people?**
- 3. ¿Han podido contactar con Carlos?**  
**Have they been able to contact Carlos?**
- 4. No veíamos bien en el cine.**  
**We couldn't see very well at the cinema/ movie theatre.**
- 5. No puede ser verdad.**  
**It can't be true.**

# EXERCISES

## ABILITY

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**EXERCISE 2:** Translate the following sentences from Spanish to English  
(Traduce la frase de español a inglés)

6. ¿Me pasas la sal?
7. ¿Hemos podido recuperar la grabación?
8. El medico pudo salvar al paciente.
9. El vino puede ser bebida o postre.
10. ¿Puede registrarse temprano?



# EXERCISES

## ABILITY

**EXERCISE 2:** Translate the following sentences from Spanish to English  
(Traduce la frase de español a inglés)

6. ¿Me pasas la sal?  
**Can you pass me the salt?**
7. ¿Hemos podido recuperar la grabación?  
**Were we able to recover the recording? / Have we been able to...**
8. El medico pudo salvar al paciente.  
**The doctor was able to save the patient.**
9. El vino puede ser bebida o postre.  
**Wine can be a drink or a dessert.**
10. ¿Puede registrarse temprano?  
**Can you register early?**

# OBLIGATION

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# OBLIGATION in the Present

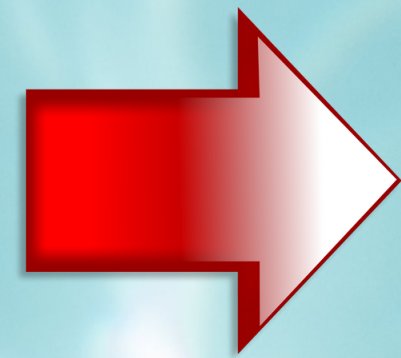
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## STRONG - AFFIRMATIVE

(Formal verbs)

be mandatory to  
be required to  
be obligated to  
be necessary to

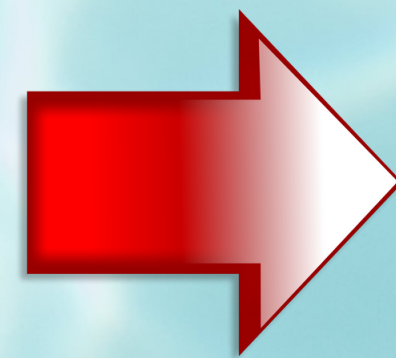
It is mandatory  
to wear shoes.



(Normal verbs)

have to  
need to

You have to  
wear shoes.



(Modal verbs)

**must**

You **must** wear  
shoes inside.

# OBLIGATION in the Present

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## **STRONG - AFFIRMATIVE**

We can use 'must' for official obligation, but we commonly use it for more personal, subjective statements.

He **must** exercise more.

She **must** study more.

I **must** go.

# OBLIGATION in the Present

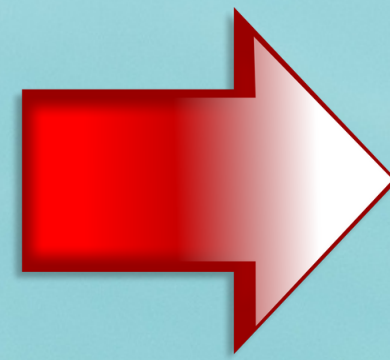
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## STRONG - NEGATIVE

(Formal verbs)

be prohibited to  
be outlawed to  
unacceptable to  
not permitted to  
not allowed to  
be banned

It is prohibited to smoke inside.



(Modal verbs)

**must not (musn't)**  
**can not (can't)**

You **must not** smoke.  
You **can't** smoke here.

# OBLIGATION in the Present

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## **STRONG - NEGATIVE**

We use 'must NOT' for prohibition.

He **must not** smoke inside.

She **must not** park there.

I **mustn't** be late.

# OBLIGATION in the PRESENT

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# OBLIGATION in the Present/Future

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## MILDER/ ADVICE - AFFIRMATIVE

(Formal verbs)

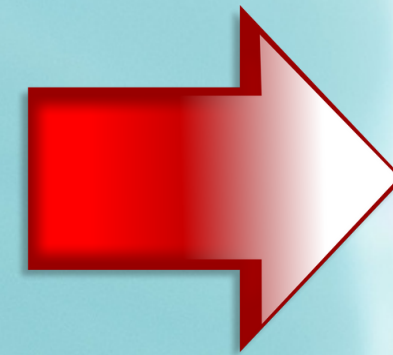
(Modal verbs)

recommend that someone

suggest that someone

advise someone to

urge someone to



should

(ought to)

I recommend that you see a doctor.

You **should** see a doctor.

You **ought to** see a doctor.



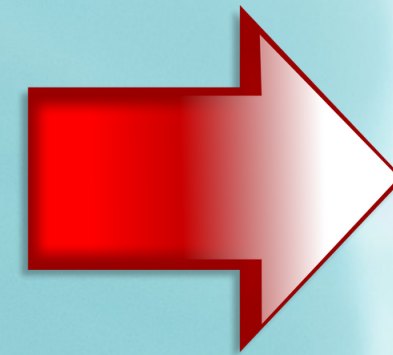
# OBLIGATION in the Present/Future

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## MILDER / ADVICE - NEGATIVE

(Formal verbs)

recommend that someone not  
suggest that someone not  
advise someone to not  
urge someone to not



(Modal verbs)

should not  
(ought to not)

I urge you not to accept the offer.    You **should not** accept the offer.

# OBLIGATION in the Present



# OBLIGATION in the **PAST**

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## Positive

**had to**  
**didn't have to**

He **had to** do it.  
We had to pay the fine.

**must**  
(strong)

He **had to** do it.  
We had to pay the fine.

**should have**  
**shouldn't have**  
(less strong)

They **should have** done it.  
(Deberían haberlo hecho.)

## Negative

She **didn't have to** wear a  
school uniform when she was a  
child.

She **didn't have to** wear a  
school uniform when she was a  
child.

They **shouldn't have** fired him.  
(No le deberían haber hechado.)

# OBLIGATION in the **PAST**

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## Examples of past obligation:

We **had to leave** by 10:00 a.m.

We left at 10:05

We **didn't have to** spend so much time eating breakfast.

We **had to** stop for gas.

We **had to** drive the speed limit.

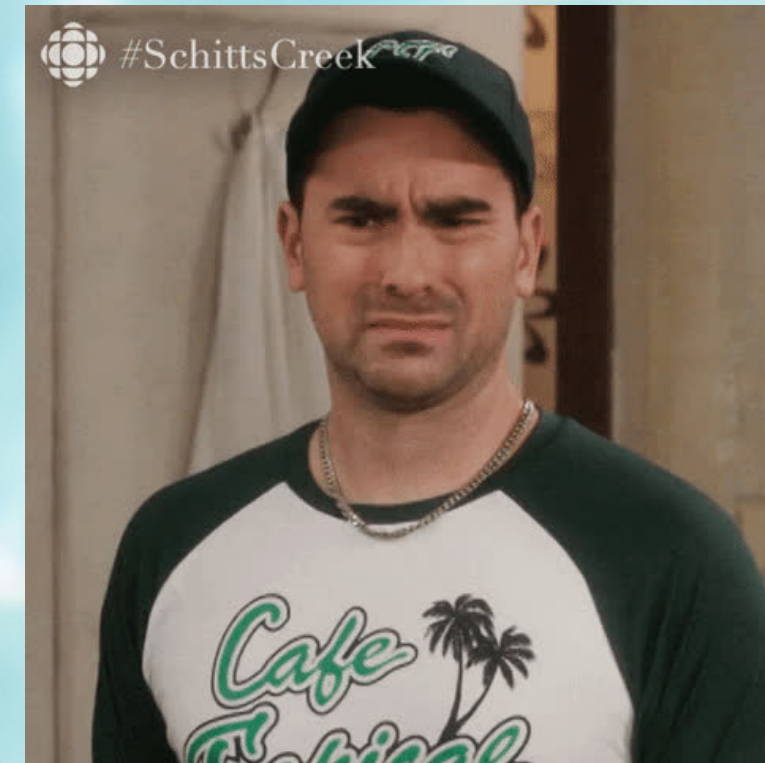
We arrived late.

We were **obligated to** go through security.

Our plane left right as we got to the gate.

We **should have left** earlier!

# COMMON ERRORS & CONFUSION !!



# ABILITY & OBLIGATION

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**BE  
CAREFUL!**

**'Mustn't' and 'don't have to' are not the same!**



**Mustn't = it's not allowed, or it's a bad idea:**

- You mustn't eat so much chocolate, you'll be sick

**Don't have to = you don't need to do something, but it's OK if you do it:**

- I don't have to get up early at the weekend (it's optional).

No tienes que tocar ese botón!  $\neq$  You don't have to push that button  
= You must not push that button!

# ABILITY & OBLIGATION

---

**BE  
CAREFUL!**

**Must in the past changes the meaning to deduction!**



<b>PRESENT:</b>	<b>He must do it.</b> (Debe hacerlo)	=	<b>He has to do it.</b> (Tiene que hacerlo)
<b>PAST:</b>	<b>He must done it.</b>	=	--
<b>PAST:</b>	<b>He must have done it.</b> (Debería haberlo hecho.)	=	<b>He had to do it.</b> (Tenia que hacerlo.)

# ABILITY & OBLIGATION

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<b>PRESENT:</b>	<b>He must do it.</b> (Debe hacerlo)	=	<b>He has to do it.</b> (Tiene que hacerlo)
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<b>PAST:</b>	<b>He must have done it.</b> (Debería haberlo hecho.)	≠	<b>He had to do it.</b> (Tenía que hacerlo.)




# ABILITY & OBLIGATION

**BE  
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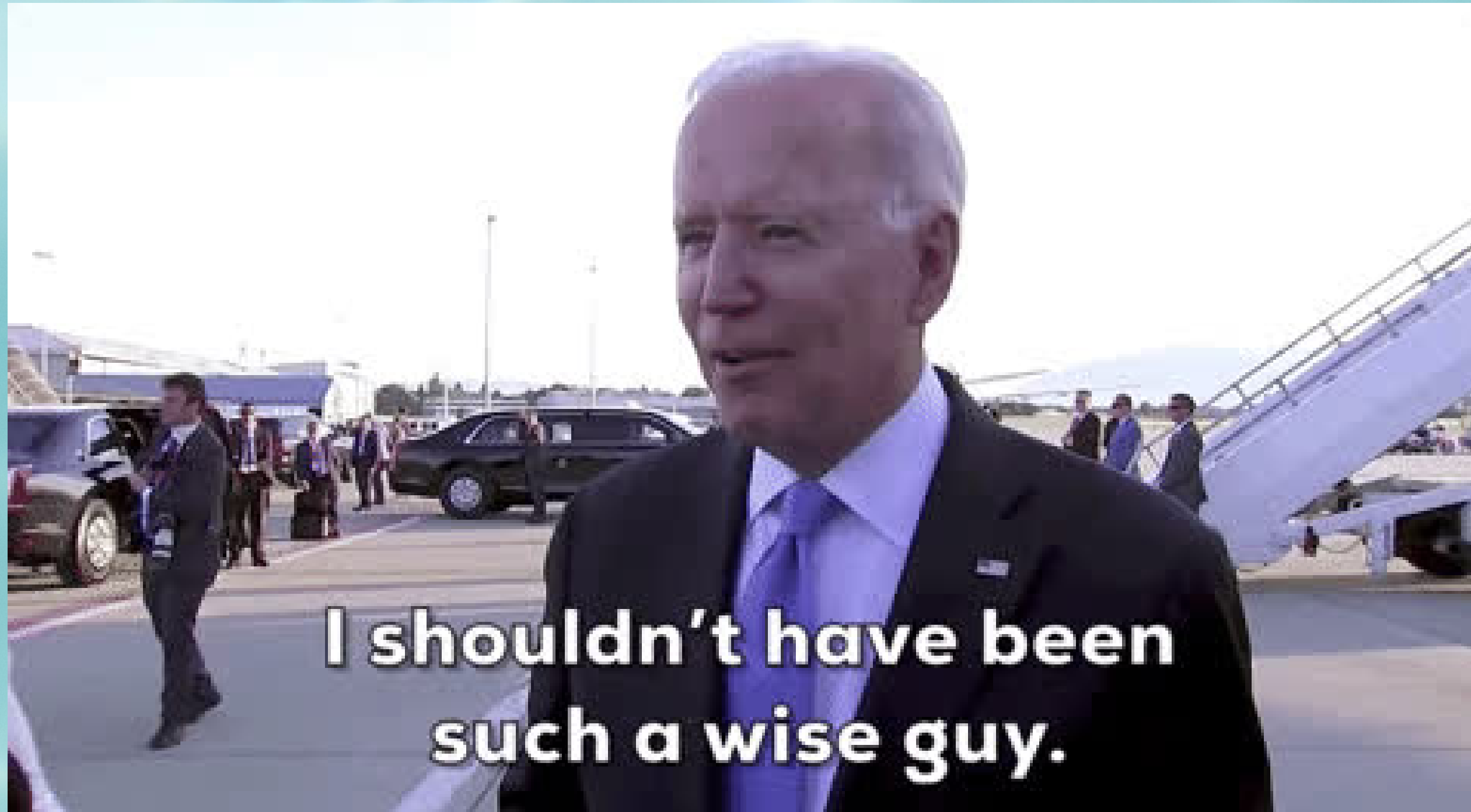
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<b>PAST:</b>	<b>He must  e done it.</b> (Debería haberlo hecho.)	≠	<b>He had to do it.</b> (Tenía que hacerlo.)

# ABILITY & OBLIGATION

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# EXERCISE TIME!

## ABILITY

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# EXERCISES

## OBLIGATION in the PRESENT:

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**EXERCISE 3:** Choose the correct words below to complete the questions/sentences.

(Elija las palabras correctas abajo para completar las oraciones)

**mustn't (x2) / don't have to / doesn't have to / ought to**

- 1) We have a lot of work tomorrow. You \_\_\_\_\_ be late.
- 2) You \_\_\_\_\_ tell anyone what I just told you. It's confidential.
- 3) The museum is free. You \_\_\_\_\_ pay to get in.
- 4) They \_\_\_\_\_ rent out one of their rooms on Airbnb.
- 5) John's a millionaire. He \_\_\_\_\_ go to work.

# EXERCISES

## OBLIGATION in the PRESENT:

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(Elija las palabras correctas abajo para completar las oraciones)

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- 1) We have a lot of work tomorrow. You mustn't be late.
- 2) You mustn't tell anyone what I just told you. It's confidential.
- 3) The museum is free. You don't have to pay to get in.
- 4) They ought to rent out one of their rooms on Airbnb.
- 5) John's a millionaire. He doesn't have to go to work.

# EXERCISES

## OBLIGATION in the PRESENT:

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**EXERCISE 3:** Choose the correct words below to complete the questions/sentences.

(Elija las palabras correctas abajo para completar las oraciones)

**mustn't / must / don't have to / shouldn't / should**

- 6) I \_\_\_\_\_ finish this report before I leave as I probably won't have time later.
- 7) We \_\_\_\_\_ rush. We've got plenty of time.
- 8) You \_\_\_\_\_ work so hard. You're going to burn yourself out.
- 9) Children \_\_\_\_\_ tell lies. It destroys trust.
- 10) We \_\_\_\_\_ submit our taxes before the end of the month.

# EXERCISES

## OBLIGATION in the PRESENT:

---

**EXERCISE 3:** Choose the correct words below to complete the questions/sentences.

(Elija las palabras correctas abajo para completar las oraciones)

**mustn't / must / don't have to / shouldn't / should**

- 6) I should finish this report before I leave as I probably won't have time later.
- 7) We don't have to rush. We've got plenty of time.
- 8) You shouldn't work so hard. You're going to burn yourself out.
- 9) Children mustn't tell lies. It destroys trust.
- 10) We must submit our taxes before the end of the month.

# EXERCISES

## OBLIGATION in the PAST:

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**EXERCISE 4: Correct the errors.** (Corrige los errores)

1. The road was closed we must to go a different way yesterday.
2. The restaurant was full last night, so we have to reserve a different one.
3. We should called earlier.
4. In order to register she must have fill out a lot of forms.
5. She didn't had to provide any bank information, however.
6. I mustn't have drunk so much last night!



# EXERCISES

## OBLIGATION in the PAST:

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### **EXERCISE 4: Correct the errors.** (Corrige los errores)

1. The road was closed we **must** to go a different way yesterday.  
The road was closed we had to go a different way yesterday.
2. The restaurant was full last night, so we **have** to reserve a different one.  
The restaurant was full last night, so we had to reserve a different one.
3. We **should** called earlier.  
We should have called earlier.
4. In order to register she **must** have fill out a lot of forms.  
In order to register she had to fill out a lot of forms.
5. She **didn't** had to provide any bank information, however.  
She didn't have to provide any bank information, however.
6. I **mustn't** have drunk so much last night!  
I shouldn't have drunk so much last night!

# LET'S TALK...



**Understanding power!**



# LET'S TALK...

## Understanding power!

### General vocab:

practitioner of civics - practicante de civismo

those of you who have just fallen asleep - aquellos  
de ustedes que acaban de

the very word - la misma palabra

soporific - soporífero

even a narcoleptic effect - incluso un efecto  
narcoléptico

in person – en persona (presencial)

gatherings - reuniones

the scale of the problem - la escala del problema

seat of the solution - asiento de la solución

this kind of disengagement - este tipo de  
desconexión

willful ignorance - ignorancia deliberada

wealth and clout - riqueza e influencia



# LET'S TALK...

## Understanding power!

### General vocab:

This is why – Es por esto /esta es la razón por  
you can plausibly practice deciding - puedes  
practicar de manera plausible decidir  
you have to play that out in a place = tienes que  
dejar que eso suceda

And this brings me to - Y esto me lleva a  
street lamp - farola

dilapidated waterfront - frente al mar en ruinas

highway or a greenway - autopista o vía verde  
whether - ya sea

pay a living wage - pagar un salario digno  
that are at play - que están en juego  
misinformation - desinformación

threat of force - la amenaza de la fuerza



# LET'S TALK...

## Understanding power!

### Verb Focus:

signifies- significa

show up - aparecer

we face - enfrentamos

to make civics sexy again - para hacer que la  
educación cívica sea sexy de nuevo

it becomes - se vuelve

they get left out - se quedan fuera

means being awake - significa estar  
despierto

boils down to - se reduce

# LET'S TALK...

## Understanding power!

### Modal Verb Use:

**will kindly ask** - preguntará amablemente

**in any way we can** - de cualquier forma que  
podamos

**can be** - puede ser

**we must now** - ahora debemos

**can practice** - puede practicar

**have to** - tengo que

**should go** - debería ir

**should have** - debería tener

**should be turned into** - debería ser  
convertido en

**should be required** - debería ser  
requerido

**would get it** - lo conseguiría

**would make it happen** - lo haría posible

**would activate** - activaría



# LET'S TALK...

## Understanding power!

Pronunciation:

inventory

various

explicitly



# LET'S LISTEN...

## Understanding power!

Why ordinary people need to understand power

by Eric Liu (TED Aug 2014)



# LET'S LISTEN...

## PART 3 Understanding power!

### EXERCISE 1 Listen and fill in the blanks with the missing words.

I'm a teacher and a practitioner of \_\_\_\_\_ in America. Now, I will \_\_\_\_\_ ask those of you who have just \_\_\_\_\_ asleep to please wake up. Why is it that the very word "civics" has \_\_\_\_\_ soporific, even a \_\_\_\_\_ on us? I think it's because the very word signifies something exceedingly \_\_\_\_\_, exceedingly important, and exceedingly boring. Well, I think it's the responsibility of people like us, people who \_\_\_\_\_ for gatherings like this in person or online, in any way we \_\_\_\_\_, to make civics \_\_\_\_\_ again, as sexy as it was during the American Revolution, as sexy as it was during the Civil Rights Movement. And I believe the way we make civics sexy again is to make \_\_\_\_\_ about the teaching of power. The way we do that, I believe, is at the level of the city. This is what I want to talk about today, and I want to start \_\_\_\_\_ defining some terms and then I want to describe the \_\_\_\_\_ of the problem I think we \_\_\_\_\_ and then suggest the ways that I believe cities can be the seat of the solution.

# LET'S LISTEN...

## PART 3 **Understanding power!**

### **EXERCISE 1** Listen and fill in the blanks with the missing words.

I'm a teacher and a practitioner of civics in America. Now, I will kindly ask those of you who have just fallen asleep to please wake up. Why is it that the very word "civics" has such a soporific, even a narcoleptic effect on us? I think it's because the very word signifies something exceedingly virtuous, exceedingly important, and exceedingly boring. Well, I think it's the responsibility of people like us, people who show up for gatherings like this in person or online, in any way we can, to make civics sexy again, as sexy as it was during the American Revolution, as sexy as it was during the Civil Rights Movement. And I believe the way we make civics sexy again is to make explicitly about the teaching of power. The way we do that, I believe, is at the level of the city. This is what I want to talk about today, and I want to start by defining some terms and then I want to describe the scale of the problem I think we face and then suggest the ways that I believe cities can be the seat of the solution.

# LET'S LISTEN...

## PART 3 **Understanding power!**

**EXERCISE 2** Listen and answer the questions below:

What must we do with this challenge?

People will be left out if we don't act, so what must they do?

Civics boils down to who decides. So, civics has to play out where?

# LET'S LISTEN...

## PART 3 Understanding power!

### EXERCISE 2 Listen and answer the questions:

Well, this problem, this challenge, is a thing **that we must now confront**, and I believe that when you have this kind of disengagement, this willful ignorance, it becomes both a cause and a consequence of this concentration of opportunity of wealth and clout that I was describing a moment ago, this profound civic inequality. This is why it is so important in our time right now to reimagine civics as the teaching of power. Perhaps it's never been more important at any time in our lifetimes. **If people don't learn power, people don't wake up, and if they don't wake up, they get left out.** Now, part of the art of practicing power means being awake and having a voice, but it also is about having an arena where you can plausibly practice deciding. All of civics boils down to the simple question of who decides, **and you have to play that out in a place, in an arena.**

# LET'S LISTEN...

## PART 3 **Understanding power!**

**EXERCISE 2** Listen and answer the questions below:

What must we do with this challenge?

**We must confront it.**

People will be left out if we don't act, so what must they do?

**People must learn; people must wake up!**

Civics boils down to who decides. So, civics has to play out where?

**It has to play out in place, in an arena.**

# LET'S LISTEN...

## PART 3 **Understanding power!**

**EXERCISE 3 MATCH:** Combine the words below to form a question  
(Escuche y relacione la información correcta)

Where	Should all the businesses	be turned into a highway or a greenway?
Which library	should	have its hour extended or cut?
How	Should a dilapidated waterfront	a street lamp go?
	should	make change happen?
	would you	be required to pay a living wage?

# LET'S LISTEN...

## PART 3 **Understanding power!**

### **EXERCISE 3 MATCH:** Combine the words below to form a question

And this brings me to the third point that I want to make today, which is simply that there is no better arena in our time for the practicing of power than the city. Think about the city where you live, where you're from. Think about a problem in the common life of your city. It can be something small, like where a street lamp **should** go, or something medium like which library **should** have its hours extended or cut, or maybe something bigger, like whether a dilapidated waterfront **should** be turned into a highway or a greenway, or whether all the businesses in your town **should** be required to pay a living wage. Think about the change that you want in your city, and then think about how you would get it, how you **would** make it happen. Take an inventory of all the forms of power that are at play in your city's situation: money, of course, people, yes, ideas, information, misinformation, the threat of force, the force of norms. All of these forms of power are at play. Now think about how you **would** activate or perhaps neutralize these various forms of power.

# LET'S LISTEN...

## PART 3 **Understanding power!**

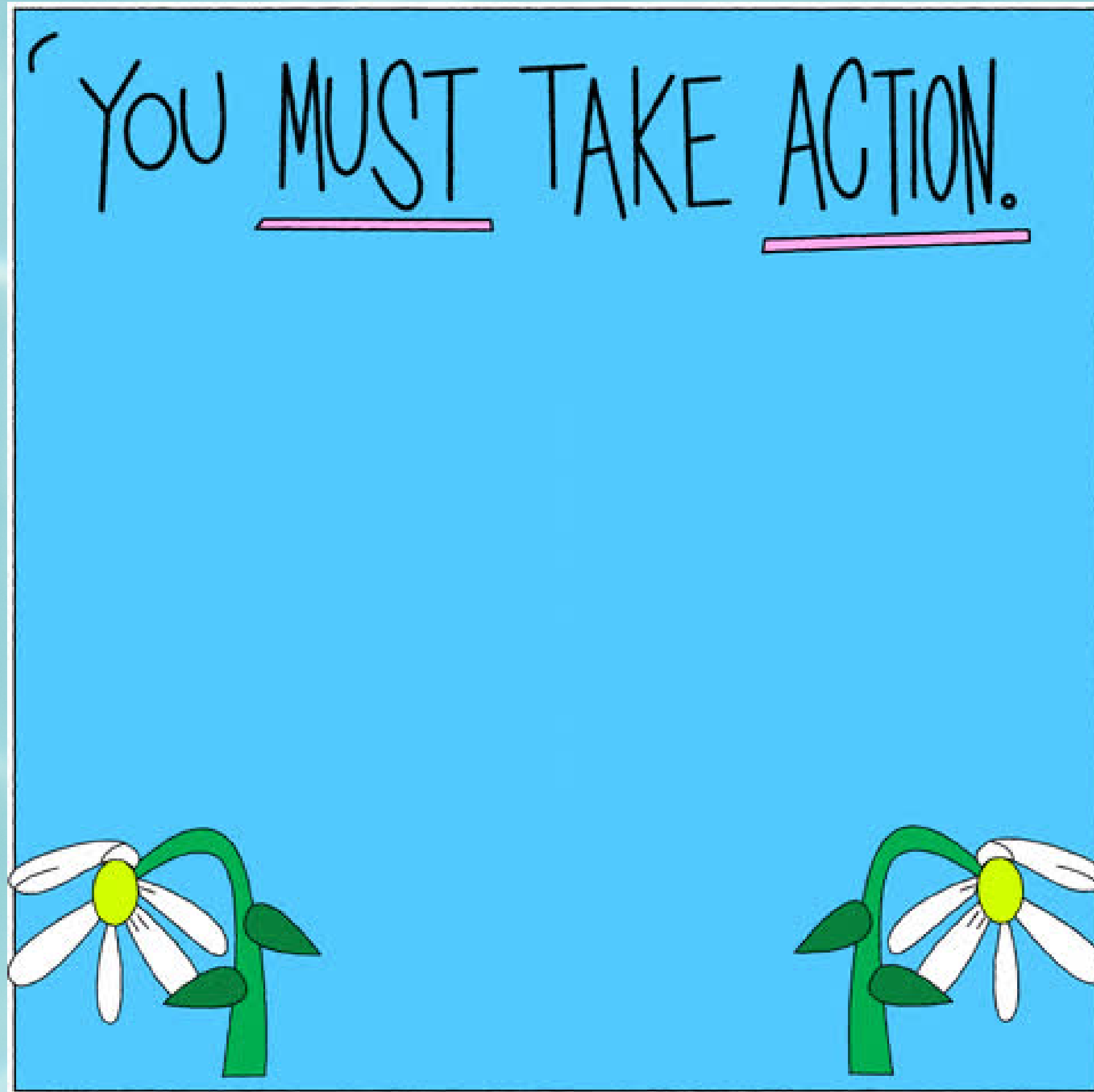
**EXERCISE 3 MATCH:** Combine the words below to form a question  
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<b>Where</b>	<b>Should all the businesses</b>	<b>be turned into a highway or a greenway?</b>
<b>Which library</b>	<b>should</b>	<b>have its hour extended or cut?</b>
<b>How</b>	<b>Should a dilapidated waterfront</b>	<b>a street lamp go?</b>
	<b>should</b>	<b>make change happen?</b>
	<b>would you</b>	<b>be required to pay a living wage?</b>



# Q&A Sesión





**Dedicate time**

**Work hard**

**Practice**

**Focus**

**Have**



**Dedicate time**

**Work hard**

**Practice**

**Focus**

**Have**



# Dedicate time

## Work hard

## Practice

## Focus

## Have



Thank  
you!

