We use modal auxiliary verbs to express various ideas such as obligation, necessity, possibility, ability, prohibition and permission.

Complete the following sentences using appropriate modal auxiliary verbs. Hints are given in the brackets.

1. He ……………… play tennis very well. (ability)
2. ………………… you pass the fruit basket to me? (polite request)
3. We ………………… win the match. (weak possibility)
4. I ………………… get up at six in the morning. (past habit)
5. ……………….. I go now? (permission)
6. You ………………… work harder. (duty)
7. You ……………………. not wait any longer. (necessity)
8. The horse ………………… jump high fences. (ability)
9. You …………………. leave now. (permission)
10. You ……………………. reach home by eight o’clock. (strong obligation)
11. He ………………… go for a walk in the evening. (past habit)
12. She ………………… mend her ways. (obligation)

Answers

1. He can play tennis very well. (ability)
2. Could you pass the fruit basket to me? (polite request)
3. We might win the match. (weak possibility)
4. I used to get up at six in the morning. (past habit)
5. May I go now? (permission)
6. You should work harder. (duty)
7. You **need** not wait any longer. (necessity)

8. The horse **can** jump high fences. (ability)

9. You **may** leave now. (permission)

10. You **must** reach home by eight o’clock. (strong obligation)

11. He **would** go for a walk in the evening. (past habit)

12. She **should** mend her ways. (obligation)