Can you prove it?

B1 with A2 support | Adults and teens | Read, question and explain

Facts, clues and guesses

S: The text says it. I: A clue suggests it.
U: We cannot tell. X: The text says the opposite.
For a possible explanation, use may + verb: Lee may need help.
May shows possibility, not proof. Adding may does not create a missing clue.

1. Choose: Lee may need / needs help. A guess is / is not always a fact.

2. Two messages about the same book swap

Message A

Hi Jo, Saturday's book swap starts at 11 in the community room. Thirty people have signed up, but only two volunteers have confirmed. Could you come at 10 to help put out tables? I haven't told visitors they can bring drinks yet. Last time we had no cups left after the first hour. Thanks, Lee.

Message B

Hi Jo, Saturday's book swap starts at 11 in the community room. Thirty people have signed up, and six volunteers have confirmed. The tables are ready, so you can arrive at 11. I've asked visitors to bring their own cups if they want a drink. Last time we had no cups left after the first hour. Thanks, Lee.

Find three shared facts: event / place / visitor start time.
Notice: in A, Jo is asked to help before visitors arrive.

3. Test the claims. Use S, I or U.

A1. Thirty people have signed up. ___

A2. Lee would probably welcome another helper before the event. ___

A3. Lee dislikes serving drinks. ___

B1. Six volunteers have confirmed. ___

B2. Lee has probably tried to avoid the previous cup shortage. ___

B3. Exactly thirty visitors will attend. ___

Compare with a partner: Which words help? What is missing?
Change one U claim so the message supports it.
Then reply as Jo: give an arrival time and ask one useful question.

The clue challenge

Use the written clue to judge the claim. The pictures set the scene.

4. Play in pairs. A chooses a card and reads its clue and claim. B chooses S, I, U or X and explains. A responds: Which words help? Then B makes one new claim that fits the clue. Check together or ask the teacher.
Give 1 point for the label, 1 for a sound reason and 1 for a supported new claim. Swap after every card. Play all six: 18 points together. You can improve an answer. No time limit.

1. At home

Clue: Jo's coat and shoes are gone. A note says: Back at six.

Claim: Jo may have gone out.

2. At work

Clue: Today's meeting is online. Please join from home.

Claim: The office will never reopen.

3. At the bakery

Clue: Sold out today. More bread is expected at eight tomorrow.

Claim: They expect bread tomorrow at eight.

4. A delivery

Clue: Your parcel is with Pat next door. It has not been delivered to your home.

Claim: The parcel was delivered to your home.

5. At the bus stop

Clue: Your bus is delayed by twenty minutes.

Claim: You may arrive later than planned.

6. Dinner at home

Clue: Four people are invited. Two extra plates are on the table.

Claim: Exactly six people will come.

Keep the conversation going

The clue says... / This may mean... because... / Another possibility is...
We cannot tell whether... / That goes too far because...
Finish: Which claim was the easiest to believe too quickly? Why?

A fresh message

Give this page later | Try alone before looking at earlier answers

Film discussion: a message from Kim

Hi Sam, tomorrow's film discussion starts at 6 in the library meeting room. Twelve people have signed up. I've printed twelve discussion sheets and two extra. Please arrive at 5.45 if you can help move the chairs. There's a step at the side entrance; use the main entrance if you need a route without steps. Thanks, Kim.

1. State one fact.

Choose the start time or sign-ups. Show the words that tell you.

2. Suggest a reason.

Why might Kim have printed two extra sheets? Give a clue and a careful explanation.

3. Check what we do not know.

Can we tell whether Sam uses a wheelchair? Explain.

After feedback

Improve one answer. Say what changed and why.
You can use a new example instead of sharing a personal story.

Answers and helpful alternatives

TEACHER ONLY | Keep answers separate until learners have tried

Page 1: messages and claims

1. need; is not. 2. Book swap, community room, 11 for visitors. In A, Jo is asked to help at 10.
3. A1 S: thirty registrations, not guaranteed attendance. A2 I: only two helpers confirmed and Jo is asked to help early. A3 U: delayed drinks information and a cup shortage do not show dislike. B1 S: six confirmed volunteers. B2 I: asking visitors to bring cups plausibly responds to the earlier shortage; the motive is not explicit. B3 U: sign-ups do not guarantee attendance.
Repairs: A3: Lee has not yet told visitors they can bring drinks. B3: Thirty people have signed up.
Reply models: A: I can come at 10. Should I bring cups? B: I can arrive at 11. Would extra books help? Other useful replies count.

Page 2: the clue challenge

1: I. Missing coat/shoes and a return note support a possible outing; they do not prove it. A new stated claim: Jo's shoes are gone.

2: U. One online meeting does not tell us the office's long-term future. Repair: Today's meeting is online.

3: S. The clue explicitly gives the expected delivery time. Keep expect: it is not a guarantee the bread will arrive.

4: X. The clue explicitly says the parcel was not delivered to your home. Repair: It is with Pat next door.

5: I. A delay can affect arrival time, but alternative travel or spare time may prevent that. A new fact: The bus is delayed by twenty minutes.

6: U. Extra plates may be spares or intended for extra visitors; neither proves six will attend. Repair: Four people are invited.

Page 3: fresh-message guidance

1. Starts at 6; twelve have signed up. 2. Kim may want spare sheets for extra visitors or lost sheets. Two extra sheets are the clue; other careful, linked reasons count. 3. No. The message offers a route without steps but does not state Sam's circumstances.
Record the first response before prompting. Give one useful comment, then let the learner retry. This is a small classroom sample, not a CEFR test.

Teacher notes and lesson plan

Outcome: use a clue, explain a cautious claim and repair an unsupported statement

Level: B1 core, with A2 support. Learners: Adults/teens. Time: About 40-50 minutes, plus the later check.
Share: Pages 1-2 first; hold page 3 for later. Keep pages 4-5 with the teacher. Pictures illustrate situations; use the written clue for facts and exact quantities. No audio or extra equipment is required.

0-8 minutes | Facts and possibilities

Use the four simple labels at the top of page 1. Explain may + base verb for a possible interpretation and check the two choices. A supported possibility needs a relevant clue. Something unsupported could still be true; something contradicted has evidence against it. Use X only when the text says the opposite.

8-20 | Read A and B

Check book swap, volunteer, confirm and sign up. Give a first-reading purpose: event, place, visitor time. Learners compare the six short claims and explain a few clues orally. Model one inference before they repeat guesses. Avoid assigning emotions or motives the messages do not establish.

20-28 | Reply and improve

Partners challenge one U claim and repair it. Each gives a two-sentence reply as Jo with an arrival time and a useful question. For speaking-first groups, say the reply rather than write it. Check whether their question seeks genuinely missing information.

28-43 | The clue challenge

Learners take turns reading a card, judging it and making a new supported claim. The reader may challenge the reason; use page 4 to resolve uncertainty. Each pair can earn eighteen points cooperatively. No point is awarded for a label guessed without understanding, but the separate label point can be earned after a correction. Accept different sensible inferences with evidence and suitable certainty. Do not require your exact wording.

43-50 | A better claim

Each learner chooses one claim they initially believed and gives a more accurate version. Give brief feedback on the clue, explanation and degree of certainty. Invite a new spoken attempt. Keep page 3 for later in the lesson if time allows, or the next lesson; record first and helped responses separately.

Online, one-to-one and support

Online: show pages 1-2, then release page 3 separately. One-to-one: teacher and learner swap game roles. At A2, explain one message/card at a time, allow key words and use may + verb as a frame. At B1, invite another possible explanation. Offer enlarged text or oral answers. A picture alone is not proof of someone's feelings, identity or circumstances.

Optional homework

Write a new everyday clue of two short sentences and a claim. Keep your label and reason separate. Next lesson, a partner challenges it and makes a new supported claim. No personal disclosure is needed.