Future Tenses

CEFR C1 · Modality, degrees of certainty and future in discourse

WS1 Modality & Certainty · WS2 Marked Future Forms · WS3 Future in Discourse · WS4 Critical Analysis & Writing · Answer Key

Worksheet 1: Modality & Degrees of Certainty

Name: _____ *Date:* _____ *Level: C1 (CEFR)*

Reference: How Sure Are You?

English has no single "future tense"; it uses modality to grade certainty about what is to come. **will** is confident; **should/ought to** expect a likely outcome; **may/ might/could** mark possibility; **be likely to / be bound to / be due to / be about to** add further shades. Adverbs (*certainly, probably, possibly*) fine-tune the claim.

Certainty	Form	Example
High / confident	will (definitely)	The results **will** be out on Friday.
Expected / likely	should, ought to, be likely to	It **should** arrive by noon.
Possible	may, might, could	There **could** be delays.
Imminent	be about to, be on the point of	The show **is about to** start.
Scheduled / expected	be due to, be set to	She **is due to** speak at three.

Part A – Grade the Certainty

Rank the sentences from most to least certain, and note the marker.

#	Sentence	Certainty level + marker
1	Prices might rise next quarter.	
2	The train is due to arrive at 6:02.	
3	We'll definitely finish on time.	
4	The plan should work, in theory.	

Part B – Rewrite at a Different Certainty

1. Make less certain: "It will rain tomorrow." → _____
2. Make more certain: "They may agree." → _____
3. Make imminent: "The meeting will start." → _____

Score: ____ / 20

Worksheet 2: Marked Future Forms

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: C1 (CEFR)

Reference: Formal, Official and Emphatic Futures

Beyond will/going to, C1 users control marked futures: **be to** (formal plans, official arrangements, instructions, or destiny — *The President is to visit*); **shall** (formal obligation, legal texts, offers/suggestions with I/we); **be bound/certain/sure to** (confident prediction); and the **future continuous** for tactful or assumed futures.

Form	Function	Example
be to	official plan / instruction / destiny	Delegates **are to** assemble at nine.
shall (I/we)	offer, suggestion, resolve	**Shall** we begin? / We **shall** overcome.
shall (legal)	obligation	The tenant **shall** maintain the property.
be bound/sure to	confident prediction	He's **bound to** notice.
future continuous (tact)	assumed / non-imposing	**Will** you **be needing** anything else?

Part A – Choose the Marked Form

1. (official) The minister _____ (visit) the region next week.
2. (suggestion) _____ we take a break now?
3. (confident prediction) With her talent, she _____ (sure / win).
4. (tactful enquiry) _____ you _____ (join) us for dinner?

Part B – Rephrase in a More Formal Future

1. "You must submit the form by Friday." (instruction, be to) _____
2. "The company is going to announce results tomorrow." (official) _____
3. "He'll definitely find out." (bound to) _____

Score: _____ / 25

Worksheet 3: Future in Discourse

Name: _____ *Date:* _____ *Level: C1 (CEFR)*

Reference: The Future Does Interpersonal Work

Future forms manage relationships and text. **will** can express willingness, insistence (*She will keep doing that!*), habitual behaviour, or deduction (*That'll be the postman*). Choice signals politeness, commitment, and stance. In academic and journalistic prose, future forms hedge or assert predictions and structure argument.

Function	Example	Note
Willingness / refusal	She **won't** listen.	insistence/refusal
Deduction about now	That **'ll** be the courier.	present deduction
Habit / characteristic	He **'ll** sit there for hours.	typical behaviour
Promising / committing	I **will** get this done.	commitment
Hedged prediction (academic)	This **is likely to** increase.	cautious claim

Part A – Identify the Function

1. "Don't worry, that'll be Tom at the door." _____
2. "He simply won't apologise." _____
3. "On Sundays, she'll walk for miles." _____
4. "Emissions are likely to fall slightly." _____

Part B – Rewrite for Function

1. (deduction) Someone's knocking. Guess who? → _____
2. (hedge a prediction) Sales will rise sharply. → _____
3. (express refusal) The engine doesn't start. → _____

Part C – Hedging Ladder

Rewrite "Automation will replace many jobs" at three levels: confident, likely, possible.

1. Confident: _____
2. Likely: _____
3. Possible: _____

Score: _____ / 30

Worksheet 4: Critical Analysis & Writing

Name: _____ Date: _____ Level: C1 (CEFR)

Part A – Critical Reading

Predictions about the future say as much about the present as about what is to come. When a report declares that automation will transform the workforce, the modal will does a great deal of quiet work: it converts a contested forecast into something close to fact. A more cautious writer would hedge — automation is likely to reshape some sectors — and the claim, though weaker, would be harder to dismiss. The boldest futures are often the least reliable; the ones that are bound to age well are those that admit they might be wrong.

1. Identify every future/modal form and classify the certainty each conveys.
2. Analyse how "will transform" differs rhetorically from "is likely to reshape".
3. The final sentence contrasts "bound to" with "might". Explain the paradox the writer builds.
4. Evaluate the claim that predictions "say as much about the present". Do the grammatical choices support it?

Part B – Extended Analytical Writing

Write a formal analytical paragraph of 160–200 words on: "The language of prediction is the language of persuasion." You must include and underline: (1) one confident future (**will** or **be bound to**); (2) one **hedged** future (**likely to / may / should**); (3) one marked future (**be to / shall**); (4) one **future perfect or future in the past**; (5) two **epistemic hedges** calibrated to claim strength.

#	Line
1	
2	
3	
4	
5	
6	
7	
8	

Features: _____ / 5 Word count: _____ Score: _____ / 35

Answer Key & Teacher Notes

For teacher use only — C1 Level, Future Tenses

Worksheet 1 – Part A

Most → least certain: "We'll definitely finish" (will + definitely) > "is due to arrive at 6:02" (scheduled) > "should work" (expectation) > "might rise" (possibility).

Worksheet 1 – Part B (model)

1 It might/may rain tomorrow. · 2 They'll definitely agree / They're bound to agree. · 3 The meeting is about to start.

Worksheet 2 – Part A

1 is to visit · 2 Shall · 3 is sure to win · 4 Will … be joining

Worksheet 2 – Part B (model)

1 The form is to be submitted by Friday. · 2 The company is to announce results tomorrow. · 3 He's bound to find out.

Worksheet 3 – Part A

1 deduction about the present · 2 refusal / insistence · 3 habitual/characteristic behaviour · 4 hedged academic prediction

Worksheet 3 – Part B (model)

1 That'll be the postman. · 2 Sales are likely to rise (sharply). · 3 The engine won't start.

Worksheet 3 – Part C (model)

Confident: Automation will replace many jobs. · Likely: Automation is likely to replace many jobs. · Possible: Automation may/could replace some jobs.

Worksheet 4 – Part A (model)

1 "will transform" (high certainty/assertive); "would hedge / would be" (hypothetical, future-in-past conditional); "is likely to reshape" (hedged prediction); "are bound to age well" (confident); "might be wrong" (possibility). · 2 "will transform" presents a contested forecast as settled fact, sweeping and total; "is likely to reshape some sectors" concedes uncertainty and scope, making a smaller but more defensible claim. · 3 Paradox: the predictions most certain to prove sound ("bound to age well") are precisely those that hedge ("admit they might be wrong") — confidence in the meta-claim rests on modesty in the object-claim. · 4 A strong answer links the modal choices (will vs likely to) to rhetorical stance, showing that grammar encodes how much the writer commits — hence the forecast reveals present rhetorical intent as much as future fact.

Worksheet 4 – Part B: Marking Rubric

Criterion	Descriptor	Marks
Confident future	will / be bound to, used aptly	0–5
Hedged future	likely to / may / should, calibrated	0–5
Marked future	be to / shall used correctly	0–5
Perfect / future-in-past	One correct advanced form	0–5

Argument & length	160–200 words; developed with hedges	0–5