

# MAKE SPECULATIONS

Speculating is an essential skill in English, especially when you need to talk about uncertainty, probability, or imagined situations. We use speculative language when we are not completely sure about something but still want to express an opinion in a careful, logical way.

This skill is particularly important in exams. In writing tasks like essays and reports, you are often expected to discuss possibilities, interpret evidence, or consider hypothetical outcomes. In speaking exams, you may be asked to speculate about future events, past situations, or what *might* happen in a given scenario. Using the right words and phrases for speculation helps you sound accurate, thoughtful, and confident.

In this lesson, you will learn a range of common words and phrases used for speculation in English, along with clear examples to help you use them naturally in both spoken and written English.

## Words for speculation

Possibly is an adverb that indicates that something might happen or be true, but it is not certain. It is often used to express speculation, uncertainty or potential outcomes.

- *The letter will possibly arrive by the end of the week.*
- *He was possibly the last person to see her before she disappeared.*

Likely is an adjective or adverb used to say that something is probable or expected to happen.

- *It is likely that we will finish the project by the end of the week if everyone works together.*
- *Mary is likely to win the competition as she has been training very hard.*

Potentially means that something has the capacity or possibility to happen or to be true, but it is not guaranteed.

- *The collaboration between the two companies could potentially lead to innovative breakthroughs in the medical field.*
- *She is potentially the best candidate for the position, but more interviews are needed.*

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Probably expresses a high degree of probability or likelihood.

- *Given the current trends, housing prices are probably going to increase.*
- *The parcel has probably been delayed due to the weather.*

Presumably is an adverb which means that something is believed or assumed to be true based on reasonable grounds or logical reasoning.

- *The product is not available on the website, so presumably, it is out of stock.*
- *The results are not yet published, so presumably, the research is still ongoing.*

Apparently means that something appears to be the case based on available evidence or outward appearances, even if it is not conclusively verified.

- *Apparently, he has decided to accept the job offer, as he was seen discussing it with his future colleagues.*
- *Apparently, the store is closing down, but there hasn't been an official announcement yet.*

Hypothetically means that the statement is based on a hypothesis or an imagined situation, often to explore potential outcomes or to discuss theoretical possibilities.

- *Hypothetically, if we were to implement this new policy, how do you think it would impact the company's productivity?*
- *Hypothetically, if the market continues to grow at this rate, our profits could double by next year.*

## Phrases for speculation

Here are different phrases and sentence starters for making speculations:

**It is possible** that the meeting will be postponed.

**There is a chance that** she might be promoted soon.

**It could be that** the results are delayed due to technical issues.

**One might consider that** his absence indicates something important.

**It seems likely that** the project will be completed on time.

**Hypothetically speaking**, if we invest in this project, we could see significant returns.

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**If we assume that** the data is correct, the conclusions are quite clear.

**Suppose that** we encounter delays, what would be our contingency plan?

**Given the circumstances, one might speculate that** the decision was influenced by external factors.

**Considering the evidence, it could be inferred that** the new policy is effective.

**There is a possibility that** we might need to revise our strategy.

**It is reasonable to assume that** the company will grow significantly in the next year.

**This may suggest that** there are underlying issues that need to be addressed.

**One might consider that** the team's consistent performance is a result of strong leadership.

**It could be argued that** providing free education leads to a more informed and productive society.

**Could it be that** the unexpected success is a result of the new marketing strategy?

**Based on the information available, it seems plausible that** the increase in sales is a result of the new advertising campaign.

**In all likelihood,** she will be promoted due to her exceptional performance.

**It is reasonable to assume that** she will excel in her new role given her experience.

**It seems likely that** the weather will improve over the next few days.

**Looking at the trends, we might conclude that** the demand for electric appliances is steadily increasing.

**We might conclude that** the project's delay was caused by unforeseen technical issues.

## Final thought

Speculative language allows you to express ideas carefully without sounding too certain or too vague. It helps you show balance, logic, and awareness of alternative possibilities – all qualities that examiners look for in higher-level English. Try to practice these words and phrases in short writing tasks, opinion paragraphs, and speaking answers. The more naturally you use speculative language, the more fluent and advanced your English will sound.

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## Language of speculation

### **Possibly**



He was possibly the last person to see her before she disappeared.



### **Likely**

It is likely that we will finish the project by the end of the week if everyone works together.

### **Potentially**

The collaboration between the two companies could potentially lead to innovative breakthroughs in the medical field.



### **Probably**

Given the current trends, housing prices are probably going to increase.

### **Presumably**



The product is not available on the website, so presumably, it is out of stock.



### **Apparently**

Apparently, he has decided to accept the job offer, as he was seen discussing it with his future colleagues.

### **Hypothetically**

Hypothetically, if we were to implement this new policy, how do you think it would impact the company's productivity?

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#### **Reference:**

My Lingua Academy. Academy, M. L. (2025) Words and Phrases for Speculation. My Lingua Academy.

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