Modal Auxiliary Verbs Exercise

Fill in the blanks with an appropriate modal auxiliary verb.

1. You ................................ not play with fire. (prohibition)

must
may
will

2. The children asked whether they ................................ go for a swim. (permission)

would
should
could

3. We ........................................ hear music playing in
Modal Auxiliary Verbs Exercise

the next room. (ability)

- can
- may
- shall

4. If you start now, you ................................ reach there by midnight. (prediction)

- may
- will
- shall

5. I did all that I ............................. (ability)

- can
- could
Either could be used here

6. He said that he ...................... lay down his life for his country. (determination)

    will
    would
    might

7. Work hard lest you ...................... fail. (certainty)

    would
    should
    might
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8. I …………………… pass. I am not sure. (weak probability)

   may

   might

   would

9. To whom ………………………… I address this letter?

   would

   could

   should

10. ………………………………… you mind moving a bit?

   Should
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Would

Could

11. She ............................ not wait any longer. (lack of necessity)

must

need

should

12. I don’t know whether I .......................... have time.

would

will

may
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Answers

1. You must not play with fire.

2. The children asked whether they could go for a swim.

3. We can hear music playing in the next room.

4. If you start now, you will reach there by midnight.

5. I did all that I could.

6. He said that he would lay down his life for his country.

7. Work hard lest you should fail.

8. I might pass. I am not sure.

9. To whom should I address this letter?

10. Would you mind moving a bit?

11. She need not wait any longer.

12. I don’t know whether I will have time.