D3.1 Language of probability

This spread will show you how to:

- Understand and use the vocabulary of probability

Keywords

Certain
Chance
Even chance
Event
Impossible
Outcome

- An **event** is an activity, for example, spinning a coin.
- The **outcome** of spinning a coin is either a Head or a Tail.

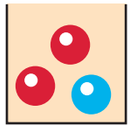
- The **chance** of an outcome happening can be measured using words, for example, likely, certain, impossible.

The outcome of an event may be

impossible

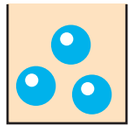
Choosing a blue ball

possible



Choosing a blue ball

certain



Choosing a blue ball

- **You can use words to describe how likely it is that an outcome will happen.**

more and more likely to happen

impossible	unlikely or poor chance	even chance	likely or good chance	certain
The outcome will never happen		The outcome has the same chance of happening as not happening		The outcome will definitely happen

Example

Use impossible, unlikely, even chance, likely or certain to describe these outcomes.

a You get a Head when you spin a coin.
b A baby will be born tomorrow.
c It will snow on the Costa del Sol in Spain next winter. (It did in 2005!)

a Even chance
b Likely
c Unlikely

Exercise D3.1

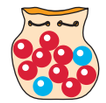
1

impossible — unlikely or poor chance — even chance — likely or good chance — certain

Use impossible, unlikely, even chance, likely or certain to describe these outcomes.

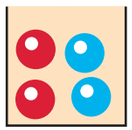
a The day after Christmas Eve is Christmas Day.
b The day after Thursday is Wednesday.
c The sun will rise tomorrow.
d You get a Tail when you spin a coin.
e You are dealt a red card from a shuffled pack of cards.
f It will rain sometime next year.
g You will climb to the top of Mount Everest tomorrow.
h You will roll a 7 on an ordinary dice.
i You will roll an even number on a dice.
j You will roll a 6 on a dice.
k You will pick a red ball from a bag that contains 8 red balls and 2 blue balls.
l You will pick a blue ball from a bag that contains 8 red balls and 2 blue balls.

Hint for **e**:
In a pack of normal playing cards there are 26 red cards and 26 black cards.



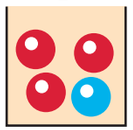
2 Put these events in the order that they might happen, starting with impossible and finishing with certain.

A



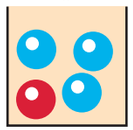
Picking a red ball

B



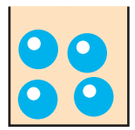
Picking a red ball

C



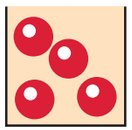
Picking a red ball

D



Picking a red ball

E



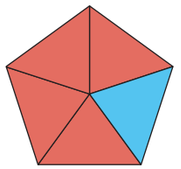
Picking a red ball

3 Five different spinners are shown. For each spinner, state which colour is the most likely. Give a reason for your answers.

a

b

c

d

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