Darth Vader lightsaber sets record at auction

LEVEL A2/B1


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I. WARM-UP

1. Have you ever watched a Star Wars film? Which one?
2. What movie items would you like to see in a museum?
3. What is the most you would pay for a special object? Why?

II. KEY VOCABULARY

auction
a public sale where people bid to buy things

prop
an object used by actors in a film or play

estimate
to guess a number or price before you know for sure

record
the best or highest level ever reached

scene
a part of a film in one place or time

collector
a person who gathers and keeps special items

puppet
a small model of a person or creature moved by hand

surpass
to be higher or better than something else

III. READING

A lightsaber used by Darth Vader in Star Wars sold for $4.875m. The event was called the Ultimate Star Wars auction and was run by Heritage Auctions in the US. The auction house had estimated it would sell for over $1m. The prop appeared in the 1980 film The Empire Strikes Back and the 1983 film Return of the Jedi.

It was used in the famous "I am your father" scene. Heritage Auctions said the sale set a world auction record for any on-screen Star Wars prop. It surpassed the house's previous sale of Luke Skywalker's lightsaber and severed hand from The Empire Strikes Back, which sold for $3.75m in July.

Other items in the auction included a blaster used by Boba Fett and a Yoda puppet hand used during Yoda's first appearance. A senior director at the auction house said the Darth Vader saber was like a "Holy Grail" for a Star Wars collector. He said it came from the most iconic sequence.

Reading text adapted from reporting by **The Guardian***: "Darth Vader's lightsaber, used in Star Wars...". Original article linked at theenglishwire.com.*

IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How much did Darth Vader's lightsaber sell for?
2. Which company ran the auction event?
3. What price had the auction house estimated before the sale?
4. Name one Star Wars film where this prop was used.
5. Which earlier sale did this one surpass, and for how much?

V. DISCUSSION

1. Why do some people pay so much for film props?
2. Which item from any film would you like to own? Why?
3. Does a record price make an item more special?
4. Should museums or private collectors keep movie history?

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Can / could

Use can + verb for ability or possibility now. Use could for past ability and for polite requests. Form: can/could + base verb.

*"Collectors **can bid** for Star Wars props online."*
*"In the films, Darth Vader **could fight** with this saber."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with can or could + the verb in brackets.

1. Fans (see) ___ photos of props online now. _____
2. In 1980, viewers (watch) ___ Vader in new scenes. _____
3. At an auction, bidders (buy) ___ Star Wars items. _____
4. Excuse me, (you tell) ___ me the final price? _____
5. Today, few people (afford) ___ a $5m prop. _____

Teacher's Notes

TEACHERS ONLY

These notes are designed to help you get the most out of this lesson. Please do not share this page with students.


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I. LESSON GUIDE

- Timing: 8–10 minutes warm-up, 8–10 minutes vocabulary, 10–12 minutes reading, 8–10 minutes comprehension, 10 minutes grammar, 10 minutes discussion.
- Pre-teach or check: auction, prop, estimate, record, scene, collector. Use pictures of a lightsaber, a film set, and an auction room to anchor meaning.
- Reading flow: first skim for the main idea (what sold and for how much). Then scan for numbers, film titles, and who ran the sale. Pair-check answers before class feedback.
- Differentiation: stronger students summarise paragraph two in one sentence; others underline key facts (price, films, record) and tell a partner.

II. DISCUSSION FACILITATION TIPS

1. Elicit first reasons (fandom, rarity), then push for examples from the text to support them.
2. Run a quick show-and-tell: students describe the item and where they would display it.
3. Poll the class yes/no, then pair opposite views to swap reasons and find a middle ground.
4. Set up a mini-debate: half argue for museums, half for private owners; then switch sides.

III. EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Writing: In pairs, write a 70-word auction listing for the Darth Vader saber, using facts from the text.

Role-play: In trios, act out a short auction: an auctioneer and two bidders compete for a Star Wars prop.

IV. ANSWER KEY OVERVIEW

Comprehension questions: short factual answers from the text.

Grammar exercise: Can / could

Discussion: open-ended. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

Answer Key

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These answers are for teachers only. Please do not share this page with students.


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IV. COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

1. How much did Darth Vader's lightsaber sell for?
   $4.875m.
2. Which company ran the auction event?
   Heritage Auctions in the US.
3. What price had the auction house estimated before the sale?
   Over $1m.
4. Name one Star Wars film where this prop was used.
   The Empire Strikes Back or Return of the Jedi.
5. Which earlier sale did this one surpass, and for how much?
   Luke Skywalker's lightsaber and hand, for $3.75m.

V. DISCUSSION

Open answers. Accept any reasonable ideas supported by examples and reasoning.

VI. GRAMMAR FOCUS

Key point: Use can + verb for ability or possibility now. Use could for past ability and for polite requests. Form: can/could + base verb. (Examples constructed.)

"Collectors **can bid** *for Star Wars props online."*

"In the films, Darth Vader **could fight** *with this saber."*

VII. GRAMMAR EXERCISE

Complete each sentence with can or could + the verb in brackets.

1. Fans ___ photos of props online now. **can see**
2. In 1980, viewers ___ Vader in new scenes. **could watch**
3. At an auction, bidders ___ Star Wars items. **can buy**
4. Excuse me, ___ me the final price? **Could you tell / Can you tell**
5. Today, few people ___ a $5m prop. **can afford / could afford**