

Activity Type

Speaking Activity:
making statements and
questions from prompts,
role-play, communicative
practice (pair work)

Focus

Complaints, apologies
and requests

Aim

To practice making
complaints, apologies
and requests in different
situations.

Preparation

Make one copy of the
cards for each pair of
students and cut as
indicated.

Level

Intermediate (B1)

Time

20 minutes

Introduction

In this making complaints activity, students role-play making complaints, apologies and requests in different situations.

Procedure

Divide the students into pairs.

Give each pair a set of cards.

Ask the students to shuffle the cards and deal them out evenly.

Explain that the students are going to make complaints, apologies and requests using the words and pictures on their cards as prompts.

Ask the students to look at their six cards and write on the other side who they are complaining to and where they are, e.g. waitress, in a restaurant.

Write an example dialogue on the board, indicating the language the students should use.

Examples:

A: Excuse me! There appears to be a fly in my soup.

B: I'm very sorry about that.

A: Could you bring me a new bowl?

B: Certainly. One moment, please.

Review other phrases for apologizing and responding to requests for students acting as Student B.

Next, students hold their cards so that the picture is facing them and the side they have written on is facing their partner.

Students then take turns making complaints to their partner who looks at who and where they are on the card and apologizes appropriately.

The other student then makes a request and their partner gives a suitable reply.

Afterwards, students exchange cards, repeat the process and then move on to the next cards.

Finally, pairs role-play the complaints to the class.

Complaint: music too loud



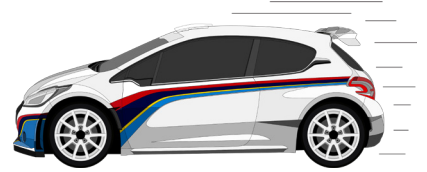
Request: turn it down

Complaint: wait a long time



Request: hurry up

Complaint: drive too fast



Request: slow down

Complaint: slow computer



Request: buy a new one

Complaint: late to class



Request: arrive on time

Complaint: wrong change



Request: one more dollar

Complaint: too hot



Request: turn on the fan

Complaint: fly in soup



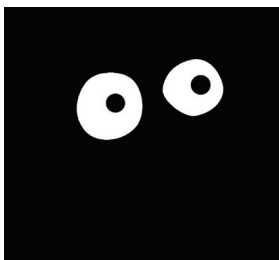
Request: a new bowl

Complaint: ordered tea, not coffee



Request: a cup of tea

Complaint: too dark



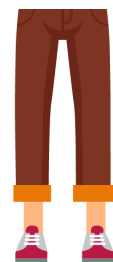
Request: turn on the light

Complaint: room smells



Request: open a window

Complaint: bought a pair of trousers, but they're too short



Request: a new pair