

*The New*

# *Making Polite Noises*

*Social and Functional  
English for communication!*

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# Contents

<b>Teaching Notes</b>	2
Unit 1      Introductions	4
Unit 2      Starting and finishing conversations - Showing interest	6
Unit 3      Asking for information	8
Unit 4      Requests for service - Showing appreciation	10
Unit 5      Asking for things	12
Unit 6      Invitations - acceptance and refusal	14
Revision Exercise 1	16
Unit 7      Offers	18
Unit 8      Suggestions for joint action	20
Unit 9      Asking for Permission	22
Unit 10     Complaints and Apologies	24
Unit 11     Persuasion and Advice	26
Revision Exercise 2	28
Unit 12     Strong disagreement and Exclamations	30
Unit 13     Compliments and Congratulatory	32
Unit 14     Modesty	34
Unit 15     Asking for help	36
Unit 16     Sympathy and Encouragement	38
Revision Exercise 3	40
Unit 17     Offers of help	42
Unit 18     Hesitation and Uncertainty	44
Unit 19     Non-comprehension	46
Unit 20     Polite Distaste	48
Unit 21     Telephone Terms	50
Revision Exercise Telephone Conversations	51
Scenarios - Model Versions	61



# Teaching Notes

There are twenty-one units providing examples of and practice in phrases used for particular social functions. Each unit contains:

**Dialogues** There are two, both on cassette

- 1) a very short conversation, including the most common expressions in use.
- 2) a longer conversation giving wider coverage of the situation with alternative expressions.

**The scenario** is a dialogue where only one half of the conversation is provided. The student supplies the other half choosing appropriate polite noises.

*For example:*

A: My goodness it's cold in here.

You:

A: Thank you, that's very kind of you.

A reply such as

*'Shall I turn the heating on?' or 'Come and sit nearer the fire'.*

*'Would you like to borrow a sweater?'* is appropriate to the whole conversation.

A response such as *'Yes, isn't it?'* or *'Never mind, it'll soon be summer'* would not be acceptable.

**Model versions** are given for reference on pages 61 onwards.

**Situations** are given and the students are invited to give a response and practice their 'polite noises'.

**Revision Exercises** are of two kinds.

**A** After Units 6, 11 and 16 there is a report of an extended conversation. Each revises the functions covered in the preceding section. The students are asked to imagine the actual words spoken by the people involved. They then act out the scene in direct speech. This could be recorded for playback and analysis later. An example is given here:

**Instructions to students:** Read the following description of a conversation, then give the exact words used by the people in this situation. Use your imagination to add details of your own, but do not change our story.

Here is an example:

1. Mr X apologised for not telephoning Mr Y, and explained that his wife had been taken ill that morning.
2. Mr Y expressed his regret at the news and told him not to worry.

You say (or write)), for example:

1. Mr X: *'I'm so sorry I didn't telephone you yesterday, but my wife was taken ill in the morning, and I had to stay with her until the doctor arrived'*.  
Mr Y: *'Oh, I'm sorry to hear that. Please don't worry, it wasn't about anything important. How's your wife now? I hope . . .'*etc.

**B** For revision of individual units there are 'telephone' role-play conversations (page 51 onwards). The **A** exercises contain instructions for the caller. The **B** exercises are for the recipient of the call. You might want to 'play out' these conversations on an internal phone system - and record the result.

**Important Note** In preparing most of the above exercises students will first write down their chosen responses before reading them out. Pronunciation, especially stress, intonation and the indication of feeling, is very important of course in reading out. The teacher will emphasise that if you are supposed to be angry you must, of course, **sound** angry: the same when you are showing interest, sympathy etc. Remember, *'It's not just what you say, it's the way that you say it.'*



Why don't you . . . . ?  
I think you should . . . .  
My advice would be to . . . .  
I'm sure you ought to . . . .  
If I were you, I'd . . . .  
Don't you think it would be better if . . . .  
If you did that, then you'd be able to . . . .  
If you don't do it, you won't be able to . . . .

## Unit 11 Persuasion and Advice

### Dialogue 1

- A: You must take some rest. You've been working much too hard.  
B: But how can I? The deadline is Friday.  
A: Come on, couldn't you take the afternoon off?  
B: Well, if you really think so.  
A: I really think you should. We can manage without you.

### Dialogue 2

- A: Why don't you get a decent job for a change?  
B: But I like my job.  
A: Look, digging gardens is not a job for a University graduate.  
B: But the money's not bad and there's plenty of fresh air.  
A: If I were you, I'd go on some kind of course - teaching, accountancy.  
B: Accountancy? Anything but that. It's too boring.  
A: Come on, you really must think of the future. Why don't you just write a few application forms?  
B: I'll tell you what. I'd really like to be a doctor.  
A: Well, you should think very seriously about that. It means a lot

of study, and then working all sorts of hours.

B: Yes, maybe. But the idea appeals to me.

A: Well then, you ought to get more information about it as soon as possible.

## Scenario

A: Sales this month are the lowest ever. It's a financial disaster. I'm ruined.

You:

A: No, I couldn't. The bank has refused to lend me any more money.

You:

A: Yes, I know I should call in a consultant - but that's expensive. No. I have to go out of business.

You:

A: Think it over? All right. But if I don't get a big cheque soon . .

## Situations

1. You are in New York. You are on the telephone to your head office. You have thirty seconds to persuade them to let you stay for another week.
2. Your daughter tells you she met a wonderful man yesterday and is getting married in the morning. Persuade her to think hard about this sudden decision.
3. You have invited an English friend to visit you in your country but he's decided to go insect collecting in the Borneo jungle instead. Try to make him change his mind.
4. You have got tickets for a dance. At the last moment your girlfriend/boyfriend rings up and says she/he has a headache and can't come. What do you say?