

STUDENT HANDOUT – Unit 6: Cultural Values (Functions – Complaining & Apologising)

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

A. Useful expressions

1) Complaining:

- Sorry to say this, but + clause
- I'm sorry to bother you, but + clause
- I have a complaint about + noun / -ing
- I'm not satisfied with + noun / -ing
- I have to make a serious complaint.
- I don't know how to say it, but + clause

2) Apologising:

- I'm sorry.
- I'm so / terribly sorry.
- I'm sorry for + noun / -ing
- I'm sorry about + noun
- I apologise for + noun / -ing
- Please accept my apologies.

Read these mini-dialogues and underline the complaints and circle the apologies.

1) Student: Sorry to say this, but the classroom is very cold.

Teacher: Oh, I'm terribly sorry. I will close the window.

2) Customer: I'm not satisfied with this T-shirt. It is torn.

Shop assistant: I'm really sorry about that. I can change it for you.

B. Match each situation with the most appropriate complaint and apology.

Situations:

1. You are in a restaurant. The soup is cold.
2. Your neighbour makes a lot of noise at night.

3. You arrive late to class.
4. You bought a new phone, but it does not work.

Complaints:

- A. I'm sorry to bother you, but the soup is cold.
- B. Sorry to say this, but you are making too much noise at night.
- C. I have a complaint about this phone. It doesn't work.

Apologies:

- D. I'm terribly sorry for being late.
- E. I'm really sorry about that. I'll heat it for you.
- F. I apologise. I'll try to be quieter.
- G. I'm sorry about this. I can repair it or give you a new one.

Example: 1 → A (complaint) and E (apology).

C. Complete the mini-dialogues with expressions from the box.

Expressions: I'm sorry to bother you, but – Sorry to say this, but – I'm terribly sorry – I'm really sorry about that
– Please accept my apologies – I'm not satisfied with

- 1) You (customer): _____ this jacket. It is dirty.
Shop assistant: _____. I will give you another one.
- 2) You (student): _____, but I can't see the board.
Teacher: _____. I will write bigger.
- 3) You (neighbour): _____, but your dog is barking all night.
Neighbour: _____. I will keep it inside at night.

D. Role-plays

Work in pairs. Choose one of these situations or invent your own. Make a short dialogue including a complaint and an apology.

- 1. You are a passenger. The bus is very late.
- 2. You are in a hotel. The room is not clean.
- 3. Your friend borrowed your book and returned it damaged.

ANSWER KEY – Unit 6: Cultural Values (Functions – Complaining & Apologising)

A. Students' own underlining / circling, but they should identify the complaint in the first sentence and the apology in the second sentence of each dialogue.

B. Suggested answers:

1 → Complaint A and Apology E

2 → Complaint B and Apology F

3 → Complaint (no specific letter; students choose a suitable apology such as D)

4 → Complaint C and Apology G

C. Suggested answers:

1) You: I'm not satisfied with this jacket. It is dirty. Shop assistant: I'm really sorry about that. I will give you another one.

2) You: I'm sorry to bother you, but I can't see the board. Teacher: I'm terribly sorry. I will write bigger.

3) You: Sorry to say this, but your dog is barking all night. Neighbour: Please accept my apologies. I will keep it inside at night.

D. Answers vary – check that each role-play includes at least one complaint and one appropriate apology, using polite language.