

Giving Advice

Topic: Problems and Giving Advice

Aims:

- To introduce and practise 'should' and 'shouldn't' for giving advice
- To encourage students to practise the natural pronunciation features of rhythm and stress
- To increase student – student interaction

Level: Pre-Intermediate/Intermediate

This lesson uses a Grammar Chant to introduce and practise the grammar needed (should/shouldn't) to offer advice, while focussing on natural pronunciation features of stress and rhythm. The students have the opportunity to practise the forms in a fun and meaningful context, which they can then go on to use in a small group activity using problem cards.

Procedure

Introduction:

- Start the class by saying 'I've got a problem'. Think of a real problem you have eg 'I have some work to do tonight but I really want to go out with my friends to the cinema'. Ask, 'What should I do?' Repeat.
- Give the students a few minutes to discuss in pairs and then ask for feedback.

Focus on Target Language:

- As students feedback to you, elicit the use of 'should/shouldn't'. Also, encourage them to listen to each other and ask, 'Is that good advice?' If so, respond with 'Thank you, that's good advice.'

Tip: Write 'Thank you, that's good advice' on the board for future reference.

- Pick up on a couple of pieces of advice and drill the sentences chorally and individually, paying attention to stress and weak forms.

Introduce the character of Mr Lazy:

- Slowly reveal or draw a picture of a lazy man and elicit his name (Mr Lazy). Encourage students to imagine Mr Lazy's world. Eg Does he live in a big house? What does he eat? Has he got a job? etc.

- Elicit some of the problems he might have, and what he should/shouldn't do. Eg Is he healthy? Is he rich? What should he do? What shouldn't he do?

Chant:

- Ask the students to stand up and form a circle with you in the middle of the room. Get a rhythm going by patting your thighs.

Tip: Some students may not have a good sense of rhythm, so clicking fingers or clapping can be distracting for the others. There is also a tendency for ss to get faster and faster!

- Say the 1st verse of the chant line by line. They repeat line by line.

Tip: Do this quite slowly and pay attention to sentence stress Eg He should 'clean his 'flat. He 'shouldn't 'blob.

Get the students to slump their shoulders when they say 'Mr Lazy'.

- Repeat the 1st verse, this time all together.
- Do the same with the 2nd and 3rd verses
- Finally, go through the whole chant together.

Gap-fill exercise:

- Hand out one worksheet to each pair or individual and ask them to fill the gaps with what they remember. (This gives them a chance to record the chant and recap on the target language).
- Show the chant on an OHP or on the IWB for them to check their answers. You may wish to do the chant again to round off.

NB By following this procedure, the students have an opportunity to hear and say before they read and write, which is helpful in producing natural pronunciation patterns because they are not distracted by sound/spelling irregularities or the attention to individual words. Instead they produce language chunks.

Freer practice:

- Tell the students that they are going to play a card game in groups of 3. Demonstrate the activity with 2 students by turning over the first card and reading it to the other 2. Eg 'I want a new mobile phone but I don't have enough money. What should I do?'

The other 2 give me advice. I decide which advice I will follow, say 'Thank you, that's good advice', and give the card to that student.

- Students sit in groups of 3 and take it in turns to turn over a card. The student with the most cards at the end is the winner.
- Monitor discreetly while students play the game.

NB You may want to design your own problem cards which are more relevant to your students' situation.

Whole class feedback:

- Round off the lesson by asking students if they received any useful, interesting, funny advice from the students in their group.

Possible follow up:

- In another lesson, you could introduce the concept of Problem Pages and students could write their own letters and responses.