



## What does polite mean to you?

**Objective:** By the end of the lesson, learners will have discovered that politeness rules are cultural (not universal) through practicing scanning for specific information in the context of cross-cultural communication and technology's impact on social norms.

**Date:** 30-12-25

**Skills:** Reading

**CEFR Level:** B1

**Teacher:** Ed Rush

**Duration:** 46 minutes

**Materials:** Worksheet with entry ticket (matching task), cross-cultural politeness reading text, rating scale for behaviors, comprehension questions

**Assessment:** n/a

**Lesson Shape:** H (SCR Receptive Skills - Storytelling Framework)

## Lesson Stages

Stage	Aim	Procedure	Time	Interaction
<b>SITUATION: You Already Know What "Polite" Means... Right?</b>				
1	To activate prior knowledge of politeness	<b>Entry Ticket: Tools of the Trade</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Display the entry ticket text on the board (about the school board members and their professions).</li><li>Ask: "What tools do these people use? Match the tool to the person." Give students 2 minutes to complete individually.</li><li>Pair check. Whole-class feedback. Award points.</li><li><i>Transition frame:</i> "Just like every profession has its TOOLS, every culture has its RULES. But do the rules work</li></ul>	4	T-Ss

Stage	Aim	Procedure	Time	Interaction
		everywhere?"		
2	To elicit what students already "know" about politeness	<b>Brainstorm: What Makes Someone Polite?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask: "What makes someone polite? Give me 3 examples."</li> <li>Students call out answers. Write them on the board: Say thank you, Don't interrupt, Turn off phone, Offer seat, etc.</li> <li>Key frame: "Good! These are your RULEBOOK. Let's see if your rulebook works everywhere."</li> </ul>	3	T-Ss
<b>SITUATION: Equip Your Vocabulary Toolbox</b>				
3	To pre-teach essential vocabulary	<b>Vocabulary Drill (3 words only)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>offend</b> /ə'fend/: ทำให้ขุ่นเคือง — If you tip in Japan, you might <b>offend</b> the waiter. (ถ้าคุณให้ทิปในญี่ปุ่น คุณอาจทำให้พนักงานเสิร์ฟขุ่นเคือง)</li> <li><b>acceptable</b> /ək'septəbl/: ยอมรับได้ — Using your phone during class is not <b>acceptable</b>. (การใช้โทรศัพท์ในระหว่างเรียนไม่ยอมรับได้)</li> <li><b>behavior</b> /bi'heɪvjər/: พฤติกรรม — Teachers should model good <b>behavior</b>. (ครูควรเป็นแบบอย่างของพฤติกรรมที่ดี)</li> <li>Drill chorally. Keep it brief (no deep practice yet).</li> </ul>	3	T-Ss
<b>SITUATION: But Wait... Do YOU Think It's Rude?</b>				
4	To create cognitive tension about politeness rules	<b>Section B: Before You Read (Rating Scale)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Direct students to Section B on their worksheet.</li> <li>"Look at these 4 behaviors. Circle how rude YOU think they are. 10 = Very rude, 1 = It's fine."</li> </ul>	4	S

Stage	Aim	Procedure	Time	Interaction
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Behaviors: Speaking on phone on BTS, Interrupting someone, Using left hand to greet, Sending emails during a meeting.</li> <li>Students complete individually. 2 minutes.</li> <li>Don't discuss yet. Key frame: "You have your answers. Now let's see if the WORLD agrees with you."</li> </ul>		
<b>COMPLICATION: Your Rulebook Doesn't Work Everywhere</b>				
5	To trigger the communication breakdown	<b>First Read: Scanning for Cultural Conflicts</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frame: "Imagine you're a DETECTIVE. Your job: Find examples where YOUR politeness rules FAIL in other countries."</li> <li>Task: "Scan paragraphs 2-4. Find 3 examples where what's polite in one place is RUDE in another. Write them down."</li> <li>Examples they should find: Tipping (USA vs Japan), Left hand (Europe vs India), Asking directions (old vs new).</li> <li>Students scan and write. 4 minutes.</li> <li>Pair check. Whole-class feedback.</li> </ul>	6	S → Ss-Ss
6	To deepen the problem (show multiple conflicts)	<b>Section C: Global Reading (Topic Sentences)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Teach the concept: "Topic sentences are like HEADLINES. They tell you the main idea without reading every word."</li> <li>Task 1: "Underline the topic sentence in paragraphs 2-4." (Students do individually, 2 min)</li> <li>Task 2: "Match the main ideas to the paragraphs." (Pair work, 2 min)</li> <li>Feedback: Confirm answers. Emphasize that each paragraph shows a DIFFERENT reason politeness changes (language, culture, technology).</li> </ul>	6	S → Ss-Ss

Stage	Aim	Procedure	Time	Interaction
7	To show the pattern (what's common across conflicts)	<b>Section D: Close Reading (Fill the Gaps)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frame: "Now we're going DEEPER. Like zooming into a photo, we need the DETAILS."</li> <li>Task: "Read again and complete the paragraph with the missing information."</li> <li>Students scan for specific details: "You're welcome" vs "No problem", tipping, left hand, phone at dinner, older people's opinions.</li> <li>Pair check. Whole-class feedback.</li> <li>Key question: "What do ALL these examples have in common?" → Answer: Politeness CHANGES depending on age/place/situation.</li> </ul>	8	S → Ss-Ss
<b>RESOLUTION: Politeness is a COMPASS, Not a Map</b>				
8	To introduce the insight (resolution)	<b>Teacher Input: The Big Picture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Frame the insight using a metaphor: "Your rulebook is like a MAP. It works in Thailand. But if you go to Japan or the USA, the map is WRONG."</li> <li>"What you need is a COMPASS. A compass points you in the right direction. The direction is: ADAPT to the culture."</li> <li>Write on board: <b>Politeness = Context</b> (Age + Location + Technology)</li> <li>Explain: In Thailand, เกรงใจ (kreng jai) = politeness. But in the USA, directness = politeness. Different compass direction.</li> </ul>	4	T-Ss
9	To apply the insight (practice adaptive thinking)	<b>Section E: Critical Thinking (Personalization)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Question 1: "What behavior do YOU find rude? Do you think other people would find any of YOUR behavior rude?"</li> <li>Question 2: "Do you think younger people are less polite than older people? Why/why not?"</li> </ul>	6	Ss-Ss

Stage	Aim	Procedure	Time	Interaction
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pair discussion. 4 minutes.</li> <li>• Whole-class share: Call on 3-4 pairs to share interesting points.</li> <li>• Teacher highlights: Use language from the text (e.g., "acceptable," "offend," "behavior") in your answers.</li> </ul>		
10	To solidify the transformation (reflection)	<p><b>Exit Reflection</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ask: "Before today, what did you think 'polite' meant?" (Expected: Say thank you, don't interrupt, universal rules)</li> <li>• "Now, what do you know?" (Expected: It depends on culture/age/technology)</li> <li>• Key takeaway: "Politeness isn't ONE rule. It's reading the CONTEXT. You need to check: Where am I? Who am I with? What generation?"</li> <li>• Final metaphor: "Be like water. Water ADAPTS to the shape of the cup. Politeness ADAPTS to the culture."</li> </ul>	2	T-Ss

*Total Time: 46 minutes*

---

## Answer Key

---

### Entry Ticket: Tools of the Trade

1. scalpel - **A** (Anna - surgeon)
2. whisk - **No match** (distractor)
3. tripod - **E** (Eric - photographer)
4. guitar - **No match** (distractor)
5. saw - **B** (Ben - carpenter)

*Only 3 matches (A, B, E). Two items are distractors.*

### C Global Reading

2. Match the main ideas:

- A People use different phrases for politeness. - **Paragraph 2**
- B Technology has changed what is thought of as polite. - **Paragraph 4**

- C Politeness varies across cultures. - **Paragraph 3**

## **D Close Reading**

1. "You're welcome"
2. "No problem"
3. tipping
4. left hand
5. having your phone / cell phone
6. older people