



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

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

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

Stage	Aim	Procedure	Time	Interaction
7	To show the pattern (what's common across conflicts)	<p>Section D: Close Reading (Fill the Gaps)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frame: "Now we're going DEEPER. Like zooming into a photo, we need the DETAILS." Task: "Read again and complete the paragraph with the missing information." Students scan for specific details: "You're welcome" vs "No problem", tipping, left hand, phone at dinner, older people's opinions. Pair check. Whole-class feedback. Key question: "What do ALL these examples have in common?" → Answer: Politeness CHANGES depending on age/place/situation. 	8	S → Ss-Ss

RESOLUTION: Politeness is a COMPASS, Not a Map

8	To introduce the insight (resolution)	<p>Teacher Input: The Big Picture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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." "What you need is a COMPASS. A compass points you in the right direction. The direction is: ADAPT to the culture." Write on board: Politeness = Context (Age + Location + Technology) Explain: In Thailand, เกรงใจ (kreng jai) = politeness. But in the USA, directness = politeness. Different compass direction. 	4	T-Ss
9	To apply the insight (practice adaptive thinking)	<p>Section E: Critical Thinking (Personalization)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Question 1: "What behavior do YOU find rude? Do you think other people would find any of YOUR behavior rude?" Question 2: "Do you think younger people are less polite than older people? Why/why not?" 	6	Ss-Ss

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