

UNIT 11 PET PEEVE

UNIT OVERVIEW

In this unit, students will:

- 🎧 Read the conversation between Carol, Matt, and Mike.
- Answer open-ended comprehension questions to show understanding of the story.
- 🗣️ Consider three alternative opinions about politeness and rudeness, and express agreement or disagreement with the opinions.
- Study the Opinion Network to learn expressions for expressing strong agreement and disagreement.
- Extend the Topic by talking about behavior that bothers you.
- Read a Culture Corner extract about common pet peeves.
- Share ideas about rude behavior in public.
- Listen to a follow-up video extract from Steve giving his views about what's rude and how perceptions of rudeness change over time.
- Take the Unit Test.

Authors' Introduction

Go to impactseries.com/issues to listen to Joseph's unit introduction.

The Issue

In this unit, Mike, Matt, and Carol are talking about people they think are rude in public. The situations they discuss revolve around smoking and using cell phones. In one instance, strangers asked Matt to stop using his cell phone on the bus. In another situation, a stranger told Carol she shouldn't put out her cigarette on the sidewalk in the park. Matt and Carol feel that people who do these things are rude. Of course, the people who said those things thought that Matt and Carol were being rude. This unit revolves around rudeness, and what it means to be polite or rude in public. People may have different ideas about what is rude or polite.

Questions Raised

- What kind of rude behavior do you see in public?
- Why are some people rude in public?
- What can we do when someone is rude in public?
- Does everyone have the same idea about what is rude behavior? Does what's rude change over time, or does it depend on the person?

To Keep in Mind

- This unit is not about rudeness in general; it's related to rudeness in public. The basic assumption is that when we are in public there are certain rules that people should follow. Of course, not everyone follows them. The question is, *Why not?*
- Many people have seen similar examples of rude behavior, such as talking on cell phones in public. In this case, it can be useful to discuss why people do these things, rather than simply complain about how rude it is.
- Countries and cultural communities have different standards about what is rude. For example, in some countries it may seem rude if a waiter or waitress doesn't smile at customers, while in others they aren't expected to smile.
- If you or your students have trouble thinking of different pet peeves, you can refer to the list of top pet peeves on page 52.

Getting Ready

→ It's important that students understand the word *rude* and what is meant by "rude behavior." If students have trouble with #1 (because it's quite broad), you may want to go over that question and give some examples to the whole class before putting students in pairs and asking them to answer the questions. For #2 (also quite broad), ask students to make a list of things that they think are rude in public.

🕒 **Teaching tip:** When working with broad questions like those in the Getting Ready section, it's often good to give students silent time to think of their own answers to the questions. Some teachers move too quickly from their explanation of the activity to the actual speaking portion. If students haven't had time to think through the questions, they will simply feel pressured and may be unable to perform when it's time to speak. Giving silent preparation time also allows you to circulate to see how students are doing.

Situation

→ There are three people in this dialogue. If possible, have students work in groups of three. Practice the dialogue three times, with one student taking one turn with each of the different characters. If doing the activity in pairs, have student A take the part of Carol, with student B taking the parts of Mike and Matt. (Carol has more speaking parts than Mark and Matt.) The situation should be practiced two or three times.

🕒 **Teaching tip:** As a way to test students' understanding of the story, as well as give them a chance to practice talking about the topic in their own words, have students test each other about the unit content. Instruction and questions that students should ask their partners can be written on the board like this:

Test your partner!

Student A = book open, Student B = book closed.

1. Student A, ask student B "What happened to Matt?"
2. Student A, check student B's answer.

Student B = book open, Student A = book closed.

1. Student B, ask student A "What happened to Carol?"
2. Student B, check student A's answer.

The student with the open book can help their partner if necessary.

Check Your Understanding

Answer Key

1. Yes. (Column one, lines 7 and 8)
2. So it's not a danger to anyone. (Column two, lines 14 and 15)
3. It's bad for the environment. (Column two, lines 18 and 19)
4. Yes. (Column two, last three lines)

What Do You Think?

→ After you check students' understanding of the story using the comprehension questions, students discuss their opinions about rude behavior. Discussion should be done in pairs.

🕒 **Teaching tip:** Before having students work in pairs to discuss the questions in the What Do You Think? section, have them look at the answers given by Luis, Yeon-Suk, and Susan. Have them prepare reasons for agreeing or disagreeing. Being better prepared will help students have more to discuss. This also gives lower level students a chance to be ready and higher level students a chance to elaborate their thoughts more.

📌 **Culture Point:** The expectations for public behavior vary widely from country to country. For example, in North America or Western Europe, couples being affectionate in public (kissing, holding hands, hugging) is more accepted than in some other countries. Another cultural difference in public politeness is the distance to be maintained between persons speaking in public. Many communities in the Middle East commonly tolerate a shorter distance between speakers in public (though often not if the speakers are of the opposite sex). In Switzerland, it's frowned upon for pedestrians to cross the street when the light is red, even if there are no cars coming. In France and Italy, on the other hand, it is widely accepted.

Extending the Topic: Does it bother you?

→ Have students work individually when filling out the questionnaire about behaviors that bother them, and in pairs (or threes) for the follow-up discussion.

Give students plenty of time to read each item on the questionnaire, and be sure that they add their own ideas at the end. The more clearly they have understood these statements and thought of their own ideas, the easier it will be for them to do the following discussion activity. Encourage them to give reasons for why these things bother them or not.

Culture Corner

Have students work in pairs or groups of three. Students read through the list of Top Pet Peeves. Give them an opportunity to ask about unknown words (for example, *cruel*, *trendy*). Then write a few questions on the board for discussion. For example: Which of these pet peeves are mentioned in the Situation? Which of the pet peeves on this list bother you the most? What is your biggest pet peeve?

Sharing My Ideas: A bad experience

→ Choose

Give students time to think about the topic they would like to speak about. If students have trouble thinking of a specific experience, tell them they can give the presentation about a kind of behavior that especially bothers them, and why. They can include details such as “Why do people do those rude things?” “What should you do if you see such behavior?” “How can we get people to stop doing these things?” Putting these types of sentences on the board can help students more easily think of material to talk about.

→ Prepare and Rehearse

When students prepare their outline, it can be effective to have students write it on paper, rather than in the book. This gives them more freedom to add more to the outline than simply answering the questions in the book. Have students write key phrases rather than whole sentences. This gives them oral production practice and also encourages them not to simply read off of the page. During the Rehearse step, have students do the presentation twice — the first time looking at the outline and the second time turning the outline over and only looking at it when necessary. Remind students of the Listener task and be sure to point out the Language Hints.

Sample Presentation

Pushing on the train!

I would like to tell you about people pushing on the train. This type of rude behavior really bothers me! The question in the book asks when this experience happened, but this is not something that only happened once. This happens almost every day. I take a crowded train every morning going to school and coming home. Often when the train is crowded, some people push hard to get into the train. This causes people to get crushed. They should wait for the next train instead of pushing so hard. It makes me angry that people think only about getting on the train. They aren't respecting the people who are getting crushed. Sometimes I want to tell them to stop, but I don't. I'm afraid that will just make the situation worse. I really wish people were not so rude!

→ Present

Have students change partners or put them into small groups. Before students begin presenting, go over the Presentation Tip. You could demonstrate pausing after each sentence by doing the sample presentation above. In this unit there is no specific Listener task, but the presenter is instructed to ask if there are any questions at the end of the presentation. To encourage good listening habits, have the audience prepare one or two questions during the presentations.

If you are using the assessment guide below, go over each point with the whole class before students begin their presentations. (This could also be done during the Rehearse step so that students have time to prepare for or practice each assessment point.) Be sure to remind your students that communicating their ideas is more important than using perfect English!

Assessing the Activity

Have students evaluate the presenter. Create a handout showing a checklist such as the one below, or write it on the board:

- | | |
|---|-----|
| 1 – The presentation was easy to understand. | Y N |
| 2 – There was a clear beginning. | Y N |
| 3 – There was a clear conclusion. | Y N |
| 4 – The presenter showed emotion while talking. | Y N |
| 5 – Did the speaker pause after each sentence? | Y N |

When students are working in pairs, have each student evaluate the other. If a student presents in front of the class, have each student grade him or her.

PERSONAL OPINION

→ If you have downloaded the video clip or have access to the Internet in class, play the video clip. The first time, have the students watch with books closed. Ask questions to see if the students have understood the gist of Steve's opinion. Then have them look at the summary. See if they can fill in the missing words. Play the extract once or twice more. Then check the answers.

Answer Key

Steve

By the time they're adults, people should already know what is considered rude or impolite by other people. But times change. Like when I was a kid, it was OK to smoke in cinemas, on the bus, anywhere, but nowadays it's not acceptable. It's impolite. It's rude.

As a father myself, I think it's important to teach children, as they are growing up, not to be rude or impolite. Like, don't use your cell phone in the bus or on the train. Other people won't like it. On the other hand, as I said, times do change and what is considered rude by me may not be considered rude in the future by somebody else. If someone's being rude in public, what would I do? I would like to be able to approach them and say, "Hey, what are you doing?" But I think I'm actually too timid to do that. I don't know how they would react. They might get angry.

Video Script

I think that people should already know what is considered rude or impolite by other people, but, you know, times change. So, what's considered OK—when I was a kid it was OK to smoke in cinemas, on the bus, anywhere, uh, but nowadays it's not. It's impolite, it's rude. And, as a father, I think it's very important to teach children that, um, when, as they are growing up, not to be rude or impolite—like, don't use your cell phone in the bus or on the train, other people won't like it.

On the other hand, as I said, times change, and what's considered rude by me may not be considered rude, in the future, by somebody else, and so I have to take that into consideration—but I think—I would like to be somebody who approaches someone and says, "Hey, what are you doing? That's not good!" But I think I'm rather timid, so, perhaps I wouldn't do that. The person would lose face and I don't know how they would react.

UNIT TEST

→ **Make copies of the Unit Test** for each student. Distribute the copies and allow about 15 minutes for the class to complete the Test. Correct the Test in class.

A. Understanding the Situation: The focus is on understanding how the three friends feel about rude public behavior. Students answer five multiple-choice questions.

B. Vocabulary: The focus is on understanding three words or phrases from the Situation or the Extending the Topic sections. Students fill in three missing words of a short paragraph that summarizes the Situation.

C. Expressions: The focus is on you check students' understanding of expressions or phrases from the What Do You Think? section. Students answer two multiple-choice questions.

Answer Key

A. 1. a 2. c 3. b 4. a 5. c
B. public, crushed, impolite
C. 1. b 2. a

LINKS

If you would like the class to do additional research on politeness, here are some useful links:

Politeness in different cultures:

<http://www.helium.com/items/112116-differences-in-traditions-of-hospitality-and-politeness-between-cultures-and>

Ten easy etiquette tips:

<http://www.pioneerthinking.com/ara-etiquette.html>

The best responses to rude behavior:

<http://www.realsimple.com/realsimple/gallery/0,21863,1126552,00.html>