

# 3

## Changing suppliers

### Coverage of Literacy Curriculum

#### *Practise listening and speaking*

- Listening and identifying relevant information from explanations and presentations on a range of straightforward topics SLlr/L1.1
- Listening for and understanding explanations, instructions and narratives on different topics in a range of contexts SLlr/L1.2
- Speaking clearly a way which suits the audience SLc/L1.1
- Making requests and asking questions to obtain information in familiar and unfamiliar contexts SLc/L1.2

#### *Practise reading and writing*

- Tracing and understanding the main events of continuous descriptive, explanatory and persuasive texts Rt/L1.1
- Recognising how language and other technical features are used to achieve different purposes Rt/L1.2
- Identifying the main points and specific detail, and inferring meaning from images which is not explicit in the text Rt/L1.3
- Planning and drafting writing Wt/L1.1
- Judging how much to write and the level of detail to include Wt/L1.2
- Using language suitable for purpose and audience Wt/L1.4
- Using format and structure for different purposes Wt/L1.5
- Proof-reading and revising writing for accuracy and meaning Wt/L1.6
- Using implicit and explicit grammatical knowledge along with own knowledge and experience to predict meaning, trying out plausible meanings, and to read and check for sense Rs/L1.1
- Punctuating sentences correctly, and using punctuation so that meaning is clear Ws/L1.3
- Recognising and understanding the vocabulary associated with different types of text, using appropriate strategies to work out meaning Rw/L1.2
- Spelling correctly words used most often in work, studies and in daily life Ww/L1.1
- Producing legible text Ww/L1.2

#### *Key functions*

- Extracting information from written text
- Communicating using recorded messages
- Examining and writing formal text, language and structure in letters, contracts and e-mails
- Using pronouns and negatives

#### *Key grammar*

- Pronouns
- Negatives

## ***Resources to support this unit***

- A stereo system and headphones
- A class set of dictionaries
- Pre-prepared audio scripts
- Access to computers with an Internet link

## ***Materials preparation***

- Audio clips
- Fliers and brochures for utility companies
- Dictionaries
- Highlighter pens
- Help and extension exercises
- Sample texts and forms
- Role cards

**Reading strategy:** The text in this unit is designed to reflect real, authentic material found in an adult environment. It therefore contains some words and structures that may be difficult for learners at Level 1. It is essential that all learners practise a number of reading strategies to decode and decipher unfamiliar words and their meanings. Examples of reading strategies are given on page 9.

**Spelling strategy:** In this unit, learners will concentrate on the spelling of **plurals** and on strategies for remembering **spelling patterns**.

## Page 1

### Unit aims

#### To begin

- Clarify the content, purpose, objectives and outcome of the unit: to follow and understand instruction and to make requests for information, and to read and understand technical vocabulary in contracts and agreements.
- Show how the core curriculum skills for each page are itemised on each page of the learner's material.
- Demonstrate how the core curriculum skills represent progression from Entry 3 and reflect the ILP.

#### Specific to this unit

- Elicit information about learners' experiences of using the telephone.
- Talk about different utility suppliers.
- Lead learners to identify the skills they may need to communicate with appropriate people at utility companies.

Ensure that this opening discussion is short and to the point. The purpose is to focus on the topic and move quickly and smoothly on to the first skills page.

## Pages 2 and 3

### Calling to complain

#### Materials

- Audio clip 1
- Sample forms for note or message taking (help)
- Blank role cards (extension)
- Pre-prepared form with Peter's answers (help)
- Pre-prepared headings for activity E (help)

#### Rationale

- To listen for and understand information on the telephone
- To speak clearly on the telephone
- To make requests on the telephone

## Activity A and B

### Speaking, reading and writing

#### Pre-task

- Introduce the idea of telephoning a company to make a complaint.
- Talk about learners' experiences of making a complaint.
- Discuss the difficulties they found.
- Stress the need to take notes of what is said so that they can remember accurately.
- Revise note-taking as necessary.
- Remind learners of work on note-taking at previous levels and in other units, and draw their attention to the model in the learner's material.

#### Task

- Direct learners to the pictures. Talk about how the pictures relate to the experiences learners have already described about telephones and associated difficulties.
- Encourage learners to share experiences of talking to someone face-to-face and on the telephone. Ask them to think about the differences between the two and the advantages and disadvantages of each.
- Ask learners to write notes about the differences between talking face-to-face and on the telephone. Stress that that key words rather than full sentences will suffice. Point out the need to record thoughts and to be able to understand them later.
- Ask learners to use their notes to complete these answers. Prompt them to concentrate on the checkbox to help them.

#### Extension

- Ask more-confident groups to record their own ideas about the differences between face-to-face and telephone communication before the discussion.
- Discuss their findings.
- Ask learners to add to their points following the discussion.

#### Help

- With a less-confident group, keep a record of the discussion, using broad headings on the

white board or flipchart as it progresses, perhaps in a table of differences.

- Ask learners to use these broad headings as a guide to their own recording.

## Activity C

## Listening

### Pre-task

- Explain to learners that they are going to listen to a man complaining about his telephone bill.
- Ask learners to suggest the kinds of things he might complain about and the kind of answers he might expect.

### Task

- Play audio clip 1 and ask learners to note answers to the questions.
- that they have all recorded the answers. Replay the audio clip if necessary.

## Help

- Discuss the questions with learners before playing or replaying the audio clip.
- Ask learners to predict some possible answers. Play the audio clip and ask learners to listen for specific information.

## Activity D

## Listening

### Pre-task

- Ensure understanding of the term **key information**.
- Talk about the kinds of information that Peter and the customer service adviser will need.

### Task

- Confirm understanding that Peter's name and address are counted as key information.
- Replay audio clip 1.
- Direct learners to the key information prompts under Activity C, point 3. Ask them to complete the notes as they listen.
- Discuss other information learners might expect the customer service adviser to record. Talk about how these headings might be presented as a form, for instance through spacing, lines for answers, neatness and clarity.
- Ask learners to complete the task, using the blank space in the learner's material or a word processor to set out the form.

- Ask learners to exchange forms with another person.
- Replay the audio clip.
- Ask learners to complete the form given to them by the other person.
- Ask learners to read the script at the end of the learner's material and to check that they have recorded the necessary information.

## Help

- Provide examples of note or message forms.
- Provide a pre-prepared form for Peter's recorded answers as a model.
- Ask learners to follow the model as they set out their headings for the customer adviser.
- Ask them to swap forms with another person.
- Replay the audio clip as often as necessary for them to record the answers.

## Activity E

## Speaking and writing

### Pre-task

- Remind learners that they are making short notes; spelling and punctuation does not matter for this activity.

### Task

- Talk to learners about their experience of making complaints.
- Divide the group into pairs.
- Ask learners to pick a complaint and to make short notes under the headings: 'What happened', 'Why were you angry?', 'What did you want them to do?'
- Be prepared with ideas for complaints in case there are none forthcoming.

## Page 4

## Tips for telephone enquiries

## Activity A

## Speaking and writing

### Pre-task

- Explain that it is important to prepare questions you want to ask on the telephone and to have key information to hand.
- Stress the need for checklists and for notepads and pens.

- Prepare learners for role-play.
- Stress the importance of taking short notes to make sure important information is not missed and that they can later use the notes to clarify any details that are unclear.
- Go through how to make short notes. Explain that these will be very rough notes. As long as the information is clear and they can understand what they have written, the notes may only be one or two words.

### Task

- Ask pairs to read the tips for telephone enquiries and to discuss a checklist.
- Share the suggestions from each pair with the whole group.
- Record a full checklist on the board.
- Ask learners to write the list for future reference in the box provided.

## Activity B Speaking and listening

### Pre-task

- Prepare learners for role-play by explaining the activity in detail. Check that all learners are confident to carry out the activity.
- Learners who are not comfortable with role-play can act as observers, writing down the information as they listen to another pair.

### Task

- In the same pairs, ask learners to play either speaker A or B. Encourage them to prepare notes for a role-play.
- Run the role-play exercise.

|                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Speaker A – Customer                 | Makes the complaint.<br>Notes down: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● any reference number</li> <li>● reference, name of customer advisor</li> <li>● any further action to be taken</li> </ul> |
| Speaker B – Customer service advisor | Receives the complaint<br>Notes down: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● customer information</li> <li>● reason for the complaint</li> <li>● actions recommended</li> </ul>                     |

### Extension

- Ask learners to prepare for, make and take notes from a telephone complaint to a real company of their choice.
- Ask them to feed back their experience to the group.

### Help

- Ask each pair to convert their notes for speaker A into written questions they will actually ask, or statements.
- Ask them to plan and write some replies for speaker B.
- Encourage them to memorise what they have written and to conduct the role-play from memory or using the written questions and answers as prompts.

## Activity C

## Writing

### Pre-task

- Talk about occasions when learners might be asked to put a complaint in writing.
- Discuss why a company might ask for this and talk about learners' responses.
- Explain that, before a formal complaint can be made, certain information is needed, e.g. who to complain to, how to complain, where to get a form from, what should happen next etc.
- Remind learners that dealing with a company is a formal situation and that polite, formal language is appropriate.
- Recap for learners the difference between formal and informal language. Talk about the language used in the pub if they were complaining and the language used in an official situation. Ask learners for their ideas on where they would use formal and informal language.
- Extract from learners examples of language used in formal and informal situations and write their examples on the board under two headings.
- Ask learners if any of the words or phrases would be useful for a complaint to a telephone company. Elicit from learners how formal the language would need to be.
- Explain that making the complaint formal makes it less personal. Ensure they are aware that the problem is probably not the fault of the person they are speaking to.

## Task

- Read through the examples of formal question starters with learners.
- Explain that 'would' and 'could' are formal and more polite than 'will' and 'can', and that 'please' adds further degrees of politeness.
- Ask learners to write a list of questions that they would need to ask.

## Extension

- Ask learners to make a real phone to find out how to submit a written complaint.

## Help

- Provide learners with prepared headings to prompt written questions.
- Ask learners to discuss the questions they would like to ask and to practise role-playing them with another person.
- With the other person, ask them to explore ways of making the questions more polite.
- Encourage learners to draw up a list of rules about polite, formal communications, e.g. not being personal, not blaming the individual they are speaking to etc. Ask them to write down their improved questions.

## Pages 5 and 6 Call options

### Materials

- Audio clip 2
- Examples of special offers / companies to phone
- Pre-prepared flowcharts (help)
- Blank flowchart (help)

### Rationale

- To listen for information from an answering machine.
- To listen to and understand instructions.

## Activity A

## Listening

### Pre-task

- Discuss the use of automated responses with learners.
- Consider why companies use them, i.e. to filter problems and requests to the right department.
- Building on previous discussions about the difficulties of listening on the telephone, ask learners about their experiences with these recorded messages and why they are more difficult to deal with than an operator, e.g. often fast, cannot ask to repeat particular sections, cannot break down into chunks.
- Stress that there is usually the option that takes you to an operator or even to the beginning again so there is no need to be stressed – just patient!

### Task

- Play audio clip 2.
- Ask learners to listen and to make a note of the options in the boxes provided.
- Replay as necessary for learners to add the appropriate numbers.
- Check answers with learners.

### Extension

- Ask learners to find other examples of potential problems and to decide which option would be appropriate.

### Help

- Break the recording down into chunks, asking learners to listen to each of the options and record the option and the number.
- Lead learners in a discussion on each of the three questions, reach a group decision and ask learners to record the answers in the learner's material.

## Activity B

## Listening

### Pre-task

- Discuss the workings of automated services, i.e. the initial options are often narrowed down further by a second or third level and that the message you hear depends on your response to each set.

- As a group, discuss the range of options you may hear when calling another type of institution, e.g. another supplier, a bank or building society or an insurance company.
- Emphasise again the importance of note-taking.
- Recap on flow charts, referring to work done at Entry 3.

### Task

- Replay audio clip 2.
- Ask learners to complete the boxes.
- Encourage them to convey the buttons to press as a flowchart.

## Activity C *Speaking and writing*

### Pre-task

- Explain to learners that they are going to put their new skills into practice by calling a real company with an automated answering system.
- Discuss possible telephone calls they need / want to make.
- Stress that there will be no commitment if they make the call.
- Ensure that everyone has selected a number to call and has planned where they will make the call.
- Provide examples of companies / special offers as prompts, such as: mobile phones, landline telephones, e-mail / Internet, gas / electricity, cable / satellite TV suppliers etc.

### Task

- Ask learners to complete the task and to complete a flowchart.
- Discuss the results and problems. Elicit possible solutions and record them on the board.

### Help

- Familiarise yourself with the message route of a particular company.
- Prepare a flowchart to show the message route.
- Read and discuss it with the group. Ask learners to telephone the company, using the flow chart to help them.
- Direct them to another company with a similar message route on the automated answer service, and ask them to telephone and take notes on a pre-prepared blank flowchart.

### Extension

- Discuss other possible real-life companies with an automated response which learners want / need to call.
- Encourage them to call and record the route and relevant details. Discuss their findings.

## Pages 7 and 8 Reading the small print

### Materials

- A selection of complaints forms
- A selection of contracts
- Pre-prepared e-mails (help)

### Rationale

- To read and gather information from the small print in a contract
- To judge how much to write and for what purpose on a complaint form and an e-mail

## Activity A

## Reading

### Pre-task

- Focus on telephone suppliers.
- Discuss what might happen after learners have telephoned in response to a special offer.
- Refer to their experience so far. Talk about what they might do next.
- Lead the discussion to possible referral to a website.
- Elicit learners' experiences of using websites to order goods.
- If possible, look at some real examples of websites from which goods or services can be ordered.
- Give out examples of contracts and ask learners to share their experience of contracts with the group.
- Ask them to decide why the texts are of a particular length and detail. Ensure understanding of the term **small print**.

### Task

- Ask learners to discuss the three questions in the learner's material.
- Encourage learners to focus on the simple

bulleted text on the web page, which gives general information, and the detailed text in the contract, which has to be very specific.

## Help

- Support less-confident learners in reading the contract by encouraging them to use appropriate **reading strategies**.
  - For this and other activities in the unit, use reading strategies such as:
    - skimming for the main points
    - reading and working out words sentence by sentence and paragraph by paragraph
    - whole word recognition
    - phonic knowledge
    - breaking down into syllables
    - working out from context and from grammatical function
    - relating to other similar known words
    - using dictionaries.

## Activity B *Reading and writing*

### Pre-task

- Explain that most contracts have lists of terms and conditions which give details of the various offers and services.
- Stress that these are legal documents and have to include a lot of detail, which often make texts difficult to read.
- Emphasise the need to identify the main points from the dense text of a contract.
- Recap on the practice of identifying main points.

### Task

- Ask learners to read the first paragraph of the contract as it appears in the learner's material and to discuss the main points before looking at the points noted in the box.
- Talk about how well their assessment of the main points agreed with the model given.
- Talk about what can be learnt from the model in terms of note-taking.
- Ask learners to read the text and to extract the main information from each paragraph to complete their notes.

## Extension

- Encourage more-confident learners to apply this technique to paragraphs from other real-life contracts.

## Help

- Divide the group into pairs.
- Ask learners to read paragraph 2 of the contract and to discuss the important information in it.
- Ask learners to highlight the key words and phrases.
- Discuss what learners have highlighted and talk about how they might note this down as the *main points*. Then ask them to write the main points quickly. Talk about them.
- Ask learners to complete the box. Repeat this exercise for paragraphs 3 and 4 if learners still lack confidence.

## Activity C *Reading and writing*

### Pre-task

- Explain that you are now going to look at a specific problem encountered with small print.

### Task

- Ask learners to look at the web page given. Encourage them to discuss both its appeal and its limitations. Direct them to the contract extract. Ask them to highlight key words and phrases if they wish, then to make notes in the boxes.

## Page 9 Writing to complain

### Activity A

### Writing

### Pre-task

- Discuss learners' experiences of filling in complaint forms.
- Bring out any problems they found, such as space limitation, finding the right words, putting in all the main points etc.
- Show some examples of complaint forms or the complaint section of a website, e.g. [www.oftel.gov.uk](http://www.oftel.gov.uk).

- Explain that complaint forms usually have limited amounts of space and that complaints have to be concise and relevant.
- Give examples of the type of detail that may and may not be appropriate.

### Task

- Ask learners to read the section of the complaint form and to discuss its shortcomings.
- Focus on what should / should not be there and what 'key information' is.
- Ask learners to highlight the key information and then to re-write the form with the appropriate level of detail.

### Extension

- Encourage more-confident learners to complete some real complaint forms with imaginary complaints. This could be done using a selection of forms or online.

### Help

- Ask learners to read the extract from a complaint form in pairs and to check understanding.
- Suggest learners cross out all irrelevant detail with a pencil and transfer the remaining information to the new form.

### Activity B

### Writing

#### Pre-task

- Discuss the use of e-mail as a method of communication.
- Consider the advantages, e.g. speed, automatically keeps a copy etc.
- Explain that e-mails are an effective way of dealing with companies.
- Discuss why, although short and less formal in layout, the content of an e-mail to a company is still formal.
- Remind learners of the need to plan and draft their writing.

#### Task

- Ask learners to make a list of the points they wish to make and to check approximately how much space they should use.
- Ask learners to write their e-mail or to type it into a computer and send it to a group member.

- Ask learners to share their e-mails with each other (print out messages) and check for unnecessary detail.

### Extension

- Ask more-confident learners to plan, draft and send a reply to another person's e-mail.

### Help

- Give out, as a model, a pre-prepared e-mail describing a different problem.
- Discuss its features with learners.
- Ask learners to complete the task using the model provided.

## Pages 10, 11, 12 and 13 Closing your account

### Materials

- Examples of formal letters (help)

### Rationale

- To use pronouns and formal language

### Activity A

### Reading

- Read and discuss Alan Stephens' summary with learners.
- Direct learners to the corrected extract. Ask them to comment on the differences.
- Discuss pronouns and ensure understanding of their grammatical purpose.
- Direct learners to the task and compare the results.

### Activities B and C

### Reading

- Ask learners to compare Basma's first letter with the formal example.
- Discuss the meaning of formal language.
- Direct learners to the examples.
- Go through the second letter and highlight the features of formal layout and language.
- Explain that different language is used in different situations.
- Stress that informal language sounds much more like everyday conversation, while there are

specific words and phrases that only occur in formal language.

- Stress that the contracted form of the verb and contracted negative form of the verb are not used in a formal letter.
- Ask learners to highlight formal words and phrases in the company's reply.

### Help

- Prepare a bank of formal words and phrases with learners.
- Look at other examples of formal letters with learners and identify formal expression.

### Activity D

#### Writing

- Ask learners to write the sentences in formal language.

### Activity E

#### Writing

#### Pre-task

- Recap on letter formats, and planning and drafting from Entry 3.
- Recap on verbs. Explain what is meant by the word 'negative'.
- Demonstrate how a letter of complaint often requires negative statements.
- Provide examples of negative sentences with a variety of verb tenses.
- Try some simple positive-to-negative sentence transformations with the whole group

#### Task

- Ask learners to study the sample letter and to write a letter using this model.

### Extension

- Ask learners to plan, draft and write a formal letter of their own, relating to a real situation. Encourage them to send it.

### Help

- Ask learners to practise writing paragraph by paragraph.
- Encourage them to discuss each paragraph with another person and with you.

- Ask them to check against the bank of formal expressions they have collected and to edit as a result of discussion.

### Extension

- Encourage learners to type the e-mail and send it to each other, then to write a reply, changing negative sentences into positive ones.

### Help

- Ask learners to complete a pre-prepared exercise in changing positives to negatives.

## Pages 13 and 14 Spelling

### Materials

- Word banks of plural nouns
- Dictionaries

### Rationale

- To use and remember spelling patterns in plurals

### Activity A

- Ask learners to read the sentence from the 'terms and conditions' document, focusing on the highlighted words.
- Check that learners recognise these as nouns, and point out that they are plurals.
- Demonstrate the difference between singular and plurals using visual, concrete aids.
- Ask learners to study the examples and to write down the spelling rules in the appropriate boxes.
- Study the irregular plurals with them and discuss ways of remembering them. Revise spelling strategies.

### ↓ Activity B

- Ask learners to complete the task as revision.

## Activity C

- Divide learners into groups of four.
- Ask each group to prepare plurals and to read them out for another group to write and spell correctly.

## Help

- Set further simple spelling exercises in which learners practise changing singular to plural.

## Extension

- Set further spelling exercises in which learners convert whole sentences from singular to plural.
- Include a good selection of irregular spellings.

## Page 15 Integrated skills

### Materials

- Offers, leaflets and fliers from utility companies

### Rationale

- To bring together the skills developed and practised throughout this unit
- To provide an opportunity to practise the skills learnt outside the classroom
- To provide evidence of learning for portfolio, progress record and ILP review

### Task

- Tell learners that they are going to investigate the advantages and disadvantages of changing utility companies.
- Ask learners to collect (or provide for them), a range of fliers and brochures for different companies, including a range of information downloaded from the Internet.
- Explain that they need to create a display that would help someone who is considering changing their telephone, gas or electricity supplier.
- Draw learners' attention to the list in the learner's material of the key features of the display, reminding them of the various sections of the unit in which they met each of the elements.

- If learners have access to the Internet, ask them to complete the online forms to compare prices.
- Ask them to add information about the cheapest suppliers in a particular area to their displays.

## Extension

- Ask learners to repeat this activity for different levels of annual expenditure and to produce a chart to show how much different people could save.

## Help

- Encourage learners to treat the list in the learner's material as a 'recipe' and to complete each of the sections individually.
- Encourage learners to use the models in the unit and adapt them for different suppliers, e.g. adapt the letter cancelling the telephone contract to be a generic letter for electricity companies.
- Encourage them to collect information required for online comparisons and then ask them to complete the comparison on forms printed from websites as practice before attempting the task online.

## Page 16 Check it

### Rationale

- To check and consolidate key learning
- To ensure that learners can complete the **Check it** page

## Help

- Prepare additional tasks for those who are still unsure. Recap as necessary.

**Review**

Refer learners back to page 1 of the learner's booklet. What objectives have been covered? How has the work of the unit reflected the needs identified in the ILP?

What new skills and knowledge has the learner acquired? What makes the learner feel more confident?

What skills still need to be practised? What needs clarification? What should the learner do next?

There are four other units at this level. There are five more units at Level 2. Direct the learner to the next stage.

## Photocopiable resources

### *Photocopy 1*

### *Telephone contract from Southern Communications*

1. Local calls are free for residential telephone customers to other residential telephone customers only, on weekdays between 8:00 pm and 8:00 am, all weekend and UK Public Holidays. Excludes calls for Internet access. Free local calling terms only apply to calls for Southern Communications customers to other Southern Communications customers.
2. Call charges for all other local, regional and national phone calls are 3p a minute daytime (8.00 am – 6.00 pm Monday to Friday), 2p a minute evenings (6.00 pm – 8.00 am Monday to Friday and all UK public holidays) and 1p a minute weekends (midnight Friday – midnight Sunday). Standard rates apply to non-geographic (e.g. 0645, 0845, 0870, 0990 etc.) mobile, premium rate, international and calls to Internet points of presence. A call connection fee of 5p per call is charged for each call other than for free local cable-to-cable calls as described above.
3. One-off connection charges apply. Connection of residential phone lines is subject to a £20.00 connection charge per visit. Connection charges are payable in advance, by credit or debit card only.
4. All pricing and other information is correct as from 1st April 2002. All prices include VAT. Payment by direct debit will save a £2 monthly administration charge. Billing is one month in advance from the date of connection and monthly thereafter. Charges may be varied from time to time.
5. General conditions apply. All offers and services are subject to status and availability and may be withdrawn. Packages are subject to a minimum contract of 12 months. You must be over 18 years of age.

