

Restaurant Complaints

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The following cards provide scenarios for role play/improvisation in the classroom. Each card provides a scenario for a customer making a complaint in a restaurant. The role play could involve just the customer and the waiter/waitress. It could be further developed by including a companion with the customer (eg. a friend, , partner, mother, child, work companion etc.) and/or a restaurant manager.

There are cards at the end of the resource pack for pupils to randomly select who they will be in the improvisation. If four pupils are taking part, the teacher presents the pupils with the cards upside down and they select a card to decide on their character. If the pupil is selected to be the customer, for example, they can decide if they are a mother, a celebrity, a child, an elderly person etc.

The pupils could prepare the improvisation in advance to start, but as they become more proficient, they could then make it up “on the spot”.

The improvisations don’t really need any special equipment or props – you can “make do” with a pupil’s table for the restaurant table and just use items in the classroom as part of the customer complaints.

The emphasis should be on the scenario being as close to reality as possible. Pupils need to be reminded that you want to hear them speak as they act out the scenario, so it will not work if they laugh their way through the improvisation. The aim of the improvisation should be on fluency of speech, conviction of the argument and the ability to “think on your feet” in reacting to the other person.

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ADDRESSING A COMPLAINT

These improvisations give pupils an opportunity to experience conflict resolution through role play. Making a complaint in a restaurant is commonplace but there are many things to take into consideration:

- Is the customer always right?
- Is the customer always entitled to money off the bill because of the complaint?
- Is the customer being unreasonable, given that restaurants can be very busy places?
- Is it OK for the customer to be rude in making their complaint?
- How does the waiter/waitress react if the customer is being rude?
- The restaurant is the waiter/waitress's workplace so they should be able to do their job without being verbally abused
- Should the waiter/waitress take responsibility for the complaint and apologise on behalf of the restaurant?
- How should the waiter/waitress seek to resolve the complaint?
- Should the customer suggest a resolution?
- What is the restaurant's policy in dealing with complaints? Does the waiter/waitress deal with them or always get a manager to deal with the complaint? Is a record kept of the complaint?
- How does the waiter/waitress make the customer feel that they have been listened to and have had their complaint addressed?
- How does the waiter/waitress/manager make sure that the customer leaves the restaurant, satisfied that their complaint is resolved so that they will remain a customer of the restaurant in the future?

Restaurant Complaints

1



The customer is complaining about the rudeness of the waiter/waitress.

Restaurant Complaints

2



The customer is complaining that the food they ordered an hour ago has still not arrived.

Restaurant Complaints

3



The customer is complaining that the dish they received doesn't look like the photo on the menu.

Restaurant Complaints

4



The customer is complaining that the toilets are messy and have not been cleaned.

Restaurant Complaints

5



The customer is complaining because the waiter/waitress is refusing to accept payment with an out-of-date gift voucher.

Restaurant Complaints

6



The customer is complaining that their table is too close to the next table.

Restaurant Complaints

7



The customer is complaining that the group at the next table is too rowdy.

Restaurant Complaints

8



The customer is complaining that the food has not been cooked properly.

Restaurant Complaints

9



The customer is complaining that the dish that has arrived is not the one that was ordered.

Restaurant Complaints

10



The customer is complaining that the restaurant has no ice for drinks.

Restaurant Complaints

11



The customer is complaining that the music in the restaurant is too loud.

Restaurant Complaints

12



The customer is complaining that the restaurant has run out of the fish on the menu.

Restaurant Complaints

13



The customer is complaining that the food that has arrived is cold.

Restaurant Complaints

14



The customer is complaining that they have to wait an hour for a table that they had booked.

Restaurant Complaints

15



The customer is complaining that the cutlery/glassware is dirty.

Restaurant Complaints

16



The customer is complaining that there is a snail in the salad.

Restaurant Complaints

17



The customer is complaining that they have been overcharged or charged for items that they had not received.

Restaurant Complaints

18



The customer is complaining that the credit card machine is broken and that they have no cash to pay for the meal.

Restaurant Complaints

19



The customer is complaining about noisy children running around the restaurant.

Restaurant Complaints

20



The customer is complaining that they received food poisoning after eating a meal at the restaurant the previous evening.

Customer

Companion

Waiter/Waitress

Manager