

Unit 2: Meeting the Customer's Needs

Day 1

Objectives:

| Customer Service Skills | Job Readiness Skills | Grammar and Pronunciation Skills |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fit the product to the customer.• Talk about size. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• List ideal jobs.• List goals for the future. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use Wh-questions.• Emphasize focus words.• Phrase words into thought groups and pause between the phrases. |

Materials/Preparation:

- A watch with a second hand, a stopwatch, or a timer
- A jacket that fits you well
- Student Book Unit 2

Key Vocabulary:

| | |
|--------------|--------------------------|
| accessories | fit |
| alterations | focus word |
| alternatives | ideal |
| contradict | pause |
| cue | pay off |
| customizing | run (large, small, etc.) |
| durability | thought group |

Notes to Instructor:

Today's lesson includes a focus on thought groups and pausing between phrases. For more ideas on how to teach this topic, and for additional practice activities, see Gilbert pp. 129-138.

Look Ahead:

During Unit 3, the class needs to take a tour of the MontgomeryWorks One Stop. It is a good idea to schedule that now, if it has not been done already.

During Unit 3, the class will need to use the computer lab from time to time. Look over the curriculum for Unit 3 and reserve the computer lab accordingly.

Warm-up: Mystery Shopper Reportback

15 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to get out their *Mystery Shopper 1* sheet and to name what stores they went to.

Process

2. Ask students to get into groups of 3. Each member of the group should take 2-3 minutes to tell the others about their experience. In particular, they should discuss and compare the sales associate's "customer service attitude", what s/he did well, and what s/he could have improved.

Reportback & Feedback

3. Bring the class back together and go through each of the questions on the homework, surveying students for their experiences and encouraging further discussion on useful observations. If students report having heard good open-ended questions or greetings, write them on the board. Write two columns on the board listing things the sales associates did well and things they could improve.

Transition

4. Move from the discussion of sales associates' behavior to the next activity, which helps students further explore their personal employment goals and state their "ideal jobs". Mention that in this class, we are training to become customer service representatives. Sales associate is one of many positions in customer service.

Presentation & Activity: Ideal Jobs

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Write the following three questions on the board:

What three things are most important for you in a job?
Where do you see yourself in five years?
What are your ideal jobs now, and why?

2. Discuss the meaning of the questions first, giving your own answers as examples.

Make sure students understand that the third question should be two or three jobs that are reasonably attainable for them, at least in the next few years. For example, "astronaut" might be an ideal job, but not a reasonable goal for most of our students. On the other hand, "bank teller" is a desirable and attainable position for many students, but they may need more time and training to achieve it.

Process

3. Ask students to stand up and form two lines, facing each other. Explain the rules of the activity:
 - a. They are to take turns answering each of the three questions on the board.
 - b. Each student has 30 seconds to answer each questions. You will watch the time and tell them when to start and stop speaking.
 - c. During his or her 30 seconds, a student must speak continuously. That is, s/he must continue to speak (preferably on the topic, but if they run out of things to say, then any topic is fine) until time is called.
 - d. Partners must give the speaker full attention, and not interrupt. When the speaker is finished, the partner answers the same question for 30 seconds. Then, the pair moves on to the next question.

Keep careful time with your watch or a timer. This is a fluency exercise, so do not interrupt or correct the students who are speaking. Remind them that they must speak for the entire 30 seconds, even if they have to switch topics in order to have something to say. This activity will help students gain confidence in expressing their employment and long-term goals.

4. After this round of speaking has finished, students should move down the line to change partners. Repeat the activity again with the same three questions, though this time they must speak for 60 seconds. A third round can be done with students speaking for a 90 seconds.

5. Now, ask students to get into groups of three (preferably with students with whom they have not been paired) and discuss their answers to the three questions yet again.

6. Finally, ask students to open to **SB 2:2, *Personal Goals & Ideal Jobs***. They should take 12 minutes to write their answers to the three questions on the paper, which you will collect afterwards. One of the questions is new.

Reportback & Feedback

7. Collect the papers after 12 minutes. After class, review students' writing, indicating where corrections in grammar, spelling, or punctuation should be made, and commenting on content where possible. This week, students should do at least one revision of their writing. A final version of this sheet should be photocopied and kept in the students' files.

Note to Instructor: Let students know that a copy of their *Ideal Jobs* list will be given to the SEE Coordinator and the MontgomeryWorks Business Service Team to help develop plans for an employer match or an employer forum. Reassure them that their choices are not now “set in stone” – they can change their minds later. This sheet will simply help the SEE Coordinator and MontgomeryWorks find things that correspond to their interests. Nonetheless, they should take the assignment seriously and give careful thought to it.

Presentation: Fit the products to the customer

20 minutes

Set Up

1. Put on a jacket that fits you well. Ask the class, *Does this fit me?* After you get positive answers, ask, “What does *fit* mean?” Write the word *fit* on the board and elicit definitions. Show that it zips up easily, that the sleeves aren’t too long or too short, etc. It’s a *good fit*.

Process

2. Students will usually define *fit* in reference to clothing. Point out that *fit* can refer to clothing, but it can also refer to any product that suits a customer’s particular needs. *Fit* involves finding exactly the right product for the customer. Give an example of a non-clothing product that fits your own needs:

I travel a lot, so I have to get work done in airplanes and trains. I also teach in several different schools, so I have to do my planning in different places during the day. Therefore, when I have to buy a computer, I keep those needs in mind. What kind of computer fits me best?

Possible answers: Laptop or portable

3. Tell students that you can ask a customer open-ended questions in order to help fit the product to the customer. Use the following example:

You see that a customer is looking at a display of coffee makers. What questions can you ask to help her find the one that fits her best?

*Possible answers: How many people in your family drink coffee?
What kind of coffee do you prefer?
How much counter space do you have?*

Practice & Feedback

4. You can provide further practice by having them come up with questions for customers who looking at displays of children’s clothes, greeting cards, and jewelry. Give individual feedback where appropriate.

Transition

5. Tell students that the article they will read next has to do with finding the right fit for the customer, whether it be a coffee maker, a jacket, or even an additional service that can meet the customer’s needs.

Reading: Fit the Products to the Customer

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Use the transition from the previous activity to set up this reading activity.

Process

2. Ask students to take about 8 minutes to read the article on **SB 2:3**, *Fit the Products to the Customer*. They should read it through once, and then may consult a dictionary as needed.
3. After they have finished reading, ask them to get into pairs or groups of three and complete the questions about the reading, found on **SB 2:4**, *Fit the Products to the Customer: A Second Look*. Circulate and give students feedback.

Reportback & Feedback

4. As a class, review groups' answers. An answer key may be found on **TB 2:39**. Make a list on the board to review the answers to questions 2.

The guidelines on the board should look something like this:

- *Never contradict the customer about his size.*
- *Never guess the customer's size. Let the customer give you his/her size.*
- *Suggest that sizes vary between brands. Offer to bring several sizes.*
- *Give the customer information about the brand. Let him/her know if the brand "runs" small, large, wide, etc.*
- *Ask questions to understand the customer's needs. That will help you make suggestions.*

5. During the discussion of question 2, brainstorm a few stock questions that a sales associate can ask a customer about size. Elicit:

*What size do you wear?
What size do you prefer?
What size is most comfortable for you?
May I help you find a size?*

6. During the discussion of question 4, emphasize the fact that listening is an important customer service skill that takes as much practice as speaking does.

Wrap Up

7. Tell students that the class will explore this skill in more detail tomorrow.

Activity: Fitting Clothing

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to open to **SB 2:5**, *Fitting Clothing*, and read the instructions. Make sure everybody understands the instructions.

Process

2. As students complete the worksheet, circulate to assist. Draw their attention to the fact that questions 1 & 2 should be answered with a question, while questions 3 & 4 should be answered with a statement.

This activity gives students more controlled practice in talking about size. It can be done with students working by themselves. The following activity is less controlled and can be done by small groups working together.

Reportback & Feedback

3. Once students have completed this worksheet, go over the answers together (provided on **TB 2:42**). Then, practice the pronunciation of the expressions first as a group, and then in pairs. Circulate among students to assist and give feedback to individuals.

Activity: Sizing Up Your Customer

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to open to **SB 2:7**, *Sizing Up Your Customer*, and read the instructions. Then, they should get into groups of three.

2. Tell students that this activity will help them come up with the questions and statements they would use to talk about size and fit in these customer service situations. Emphasize that there are no “correct” answers here – just those that are appropriate and those that are less appropriate. Encourage them to talk about the answers first as a group, and then have one person in the group write the answers that they agree upon.

Process

3. Circulate to assist with spelling, grammar, and expression as the students work. Provide guidance toward appropriate answers and give feedback to individuals.

Reportback & Feedback

4. As a large group, review the answers, writing the best ones on the board. The suggested answers can be found on **TB 2:40**, *Sizing Up Your Customer*.

5. Practice the pronunciation and intonation of the questions as a group. Then, ask students to get back into groups and practice asking each other the questions. Circulate to assist with pronunciation and intonation.

Activity: Thought Groups and Focus Words

25 minutes

Note to instructor: Today in class, students have practiced many different questions and expressions concerning size and fit. If there is time left in class, revisit some of these questions and phrases with an emphasis on the pronunciation of thought groups. If you do not have 15 minutes in which to do this activity, save it for a day when you come up short, or for the next review day.

Set Up

1. Write the following stock phrases on the board:

Good afternoon, Sir. How may I help you?

2. Ask a volunteer or two to say these phrases, and then say them yourself for the class. Remind students that in English, we use emphasis to help people understand what we are saying. Ask students to identify where they hear the emphasis in these phrases, and underline those places:

Good afternoon, Sir. How may I help you?

Process

3. Point out that the underlined words are the *focus* words in the phrases. Ask students to remind you how we emphasize focus words in English – that is, how do we make them easier to hear?

1. We make the vowel in the stressed syllable a little longer than other, and pronounce it clearly.
2. We raise the pitch of the stressed syllable.

Say the phrases again to illustrate these techniques.

4. Explain that, in English, we also separate groups of words in *thought groups*, and we separate those groups with a *pause*. Each thought group has its own focus word.

Ask students how many thought groups are in the phrases on the board (2). Say them again and show students where the pause is. Explain that the pause makes it easier to understand the two thought groups. In written English, commas, periods, and questions marks are often used to indicate where a pause should take place (but not always). Have students practice the pause.

5. Ask students to open to **SB 2:6, Thought Groups and Focus Words**. They should practice saying the sentences and questions individually, and then in pairs, taking turns. When they are in pairs, their partner should listen carefully and give feedback on the pronunciation. You should circulate and do the same.

Reportback & Feedback

6. Follow up by asking individuals to say a phrase aloud from **SB 2:6, Thought Groups and Focus Words**. Make sure every student in the class gets at least one opportunity. Remind students to keep thought groups, focus words, and pauses in mind as they practice English in this course.

Wrap-up

5 minutes

Ask students to remind you what the class discussed today:

- Ideal jobs and goals for the future
- Fitting the product to the customer
- Talking about size
- Pronouncing thought groups and using pauses

Tell students that the reading emphasized how important it is to listen to the customer. The next class session will begin with a focus on listening to the customer.

Also, remind students to make sure they have completed **Portfolio Workbook p. 2** (to have been completed on Day 3 of Unit 1.) They should bring it to the next class.

Unit 2: Meeting the Customer's Needs

Day 2

Objectives:

| Customer Service Skills | Job Readiness Skills | Grammar and Pronunciation Skills |
|--|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listen actively to the customer.• Read and summarize an article about listening actively. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Introduction to the reference list• Ask someone for permission to use them as a job reference. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practice clear speech. |

Materials/Preparation:

- Telephones to use as role play props (optional – see cabinet in SSLC classroom)

Key Vocabulary:

anticipate
check with
get to the point
inefficient
influence
listen actively
reference
wanders

Notes to Instructor:

Students will need to have completed the *Jobs Skills Worksheet* on **P:2** of the **Portfolio Workbook** (assigned on Day 3 of Unit 1) in order to get the most out of the Reference List presentation and activity today. This activity stimulates students' thinking on who would make good job references for them.

Warm-up: Whopper With Cheese

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Begin the class by asking students a few questions to get them thinking about fast food:
Do you ever go to fast food restaurants? Which ones?
What do you like to order?
Who takes your order in a fast food restaurant? (cashier)
Have you ever worked at a fast food restaurant? How did you like it?

Process

2. Explain that, for this warm-up activity, they should imagine that they are cashiers at Burger King, ready to take your order. You are a customer, trying to decide what to order.
3. Ask students to open to **SB 2:8, Burger King Menu**, and take a minute to read the menu and combo options at the bottom of the page. Then, they should listen to you place your order, without taking notes. Read the following monologue aloud **ONCE ONLY** at a normal-to-fast speed – as if you were a customer in a hurry.

Hi. Um...I'd like a cheeseburger. You know, whatever your biggest cheeseburger is. And a medium fries, and a large soda. No, make that a large fries, the largest you have, and maybe the soda can be smaller. That will make up for those calories. And some sort of dessert - maybe an apple pie. Let's see...yes, I definitely don't need a large soda. Ok, how much is that?

4. Now, ask students to look again at the combo meal options. Based on what they heard, which combo would they suggest to you? Have them take a couple minutes in small groups to discuss it, and then poll students for their answers. (The correct answer is #2.)

Reportback & Feedback

5. After the correct combo has been identified, ask students what was challenging about that activity. Students may suggest:
 - a. You spoke quickly and/or unclearly.
 - b. You changed your mind a couple times.
 - c. You only said the order once, so they had to understand the first time.

Ask students whether they think that this situation is common or uncommon when working in customer service. Point out (or attempt to elicit) that good listening skills were key here. Even a native speaker of English would have had to listen closely to suggest the correct combo.

Transition

6. Tell students that today in class, we are going to discuss the importance of developing good listening skills. Another way to say this is *listen actively*.

Reading Activity: Being a Good Listener

30 minutes

Set Up

1. Building on the discussion from the last activity, ask students:

What does a good listener do?

What does a poor listener do?

Do you think that you are a good listener?

In answer to the question, *What does a good listener do?*, try to elicit some or all of the following responses:

A good listener...

makes eye contact.

uses body language to indicate attention.

responds periodically to show comprehension, saying things such as “I understand” or simply “Mmm Hmm”, “Yes”, etc.

Process

2. Ask students to open to the reading on **SB 2:9**, *Speak, Listen, and Learn*, look at the title, and read the first sentence of each paragraph. Ask them:

What do you think the topic is?

What do you already know about this topic?

What questions do you have about this topic?

3. After writing their questions on the board, give students time to read the article and look for the answers to those questions. Ask them to read it through once, and then they can use a dictionary if they need to.

4. While students are reading, write the following three additional questions on the board:

According to the writer, what can you do to become a better listener?

What can you do to help someone who is listening to you?

Was there any useful advice for you in this article? What was it?

Reportback & Feedback

5. When they are finished, review the underlined vocabulary with them, eliciting definitions and practicing pronunciation. Then, ask students to work in pairs to discuss and note the answers to the questions on the board. Circulate to listen and give individual feedback. Discuss as a class.

Writing Practice

6. Give students 10 minutes to write a 1-paragraph summary of the article. Emphasize that, in writing a summary, they should:

a. Include only the most important ideas in the article.

b. Be brief. Keep it to 1 paragraph of 5-7 sentences.

c. Use their own words.

7. When they are finished, collect the papers in order to give feedback later on their writing and summarizing skills. (Adapted from All Star p. 136.)

Presentation and Activity: Preparing the Reference List

1. Introduction to the Reference List

10 minutes

Ask students to take out their Job Skills Worksheet and begin a brief discussion of the fact that the people listed in the third column could be thought of as *References*. Write this word on the board and explain to students that they are going to write their own *Reference List*. Ask students to tell you what a reference list IS and WHEN it is usually used in the United States. Make sure the following are included:

- a. A reference list is a list of people who have worked with you or seen you work.
- b. A potential employer will contact the people on the list to ask questions about you....questions about the quality of your work, your character, your abilities.
- c. Usually, you provide a reference list to the employer *upon request*. That is, you don't provide the reference list until they ask you for it. But, you should have it ready and updated in case somebody asks you for it.

2. Guidelines for the Reference List

20 minutes

Make two column headings on the board like those below and begin a brainstorming session/discussion with students. Ask them questions about who to choose and NOT to choose for references, and what other things are important to keep in mind about references. Write their points on the board in the appropriate column as they are volunteered. Make sure the important points listed in the columns below are covered in your class:

Your reference should:

- be someone you have worked with OR someone who has seen you work
- ideally, be an ex-supervisor or boss, but can be a co-worker if necessary
- be able / willing to give you a good reference
- be someone you worked for in the last 4-5 years.
- include at least three people (if possible)

Your reference should NOT:

- be a family member
- just be a friend who hasn't worked with you
- be someone in another country

Note to Instructor: Here are three questions that students might ask, as well as some possible answers:

Q: *What if I never worked in this country?*

A: Think of places that you may have volunteered. Church, a community center, an immigrants' group, the library, your children's schools. You may be able to list the volunteer coordinator, or a fellow volunteer, in your reference list.

You should not list people in other countries because an employer would probably not make an international call and also because of a possible language barrier.

Finally, you can ask the Customer Service ESOL instructor if he/she can be listed in your reference list (**and/or** the director of the SSLC). See the sample reference list included in the Portfolio section for an example of this.

Q: Should I put my reference list in my resume? Should I always include my reference list when I apply for a job?

A: No. In the United States, the reference list is usually separate from the resume. You may include a line at the bottom of your resume that says, "References available upon request". You don't provide the list unless you are asked for it.

Note to Instructor: If there is no room on the resume, this can be omitted. Current convention dictates this is not necessary because it is assumed the applicant will provide the references if requested.

Q: What if I do not have three references?

A: It is standard to have at least three references. However, if you only have two, that is fine for now. After your next job, be sure to add to the reference. Also, remember that you can ask your instructor or the SSLC director if they are willing be listed among your references.

2. Asking Permission

15 minutes

Ask students, "What must I do before I put somebody in my reference list?" Elicit the answer that they must *check with* the person before putting them on the list. They should also let the reference know each time the list has been given to a potential employer, so the reference will not be surprised to receive a call and will be prepared to give a good recommendation.

In this part of the lesson, elicit from students the steps in calling a potential reference and asking for permission to include him or her. Then, elicit the language that would be used in the interaction. The steps - with appropriate language – are listed below:

Calling a potential reference:

1. Identify yourself and make sure the reference remembers you.

"Hello! Good afternoon. This is Carmen Hernandez. I worked for you at Smith's Auto Parts in 2004. Do you remember me?"

2. Ask the person if he/she will be an employment reference for you.

"I would like to ask if you would be an employment reference for me?"

3. Thank the person. Then, gather all the information you will need to include him/her on your reference list. A sample list follows:

"How do you spell your last name?"

"What phone number should I use?"

"What is your title?"

"What are the best times to reach you?"

4. Tell the person you will keep him/her updated on your job search. Thank the person again and end the call.

"I will keep you updated about my progress. I will let you know if I give the list to an employer. Thanks again."

Note to Instructor: Tell students that it is a good idea to follow up by offering their reference a current copy of their resume so that person can more accurately and fully provide a reference statement if asked by an employer.

3. Role Play: Calling A Reference

20 minutes

Ask students to get into pairs and take turns role-playing a call to one of their potential references. They can use cell phones or other phones as props.

4. The Reference List Worksheet

15 minutes

Students should use **P:3** of the **Portfolio Workbook**. They should fill out as much as they can from memory. They will have to take it home and finish it as homework, since they will need a lot of specific information that they are probably not carrying with them.

Refer students to the example reference list included in the **Portfolio Workbook P:4**. They can use this as a model when they begin type their own (in the next class – not today). The same heading should be used for both the reference list and their resume, which they will write later.

5. Writing and Wrap-up

30 minutes

The rest of the class today can be devoted to filling out the *Reference List Worksheet* and/or finishing up activities from other days.

At the end of class, remind students of what was covered in class today, emphasizing the fact that the skill of listening will be practiced throughout the course. Assign the homework.

Homework

Fill out the rest of the *Reference List Worksheet*, **Portfolio Workbook P:3**. This worksheet will need to be completed by the next class session.

Unit 2: Meeting the Customer's Needs

Day 3

Objectives:

| Customer Service Skills | Job Readiness Skills | Grammar and Pronunciation Skills |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify features and benefits. Describe products. Read and write an advertisement. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Introduction to the SSLC computer lab. Begin to type the reference list. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Practice clear speech. |

Materials/Preparation:

- Copies of **TB 2:43**, *Descriptions*, cut into stacks of cards. Make one stack per pair of students.
- a hairdryer (preferably with several speeds)
- many small products for use in the features activities below: toys, pieces of clothing, packages of office supplies, a teapot, a watch, a toaster, a CD player, etc. Bring enough so that each group of three students can have two different products.
- A computer disk and disk label for each student.
- Set up a flipchart or a white board in the classroom. Make sure you have appropriate markers.

Key Vocabulary:

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|------------|
| ad | feature | persuasive |
| advertisement | function | |
| benefit | merchandise | |
| brand | persuade | |

Notes to Instructor:

Half of today's class involves an introduction to the use of the SSLC computers. Computer use is a challenging part of our course, since students often vary widely in computer skills and experience. After an introduction to the policies and procedures for using the SSLC computers, some students will be able to begin typing their reference lists right away. Others will need further training. See the lesson below and the instructor notes in the Computer Supplement for suggestions on addressing these needs.

Also, because of the patterns of use of the SSLC computer lab, it is possible that your class will not be able to use the lab today. Whenever this is the case during the course, simply move ahead in the lesson plans for the unit, and schedule a day in the lab as soon as possible to return to the lesson that requires use of the computers.

In today's class, you will also introduce the concept of product features. Review [Crisp Series Workbook 5: Explaining Features and Benefits](#), pp. 21-38, for a detailed discussion of features, benefits, and the key differences between them.

Warm-up: Descriptions

15 minutes

Set Up

1. Prepare cards from **TB 2:43**, *Descriptions*. You should have 1 set per pair of students.
2. Start the class by briefly describing a recent in your life that you enjoyed: a vacation, a nice weekend evening, or a recent holiday you enjoyed. Make sure your description includes several descriptive details.

Process

3. Now, ask students:

What were some characteristics of my vacation (holiday, etc.)?

Elicit a list of characteristics and write them in one corner of the board. For example, students might remember that it was *two weeks long, in Spain, fun, and relaxing*.

4. Tell students that today we will begin the class with conversation practice, focusing on descriptions of things and events. They should try to make their descriptions as detailed as possible, just like you did. Ask them to get into pairs and give each pair a face-down stack of cards. They should take turns pulling one card and asking their partner the question on the card. Circulate to listen and give individual feedback.

Reportback & Feedback

5. When they are finished, lead a class discussion about the answer to a few of the questions. Begin with the descriptions of the events and be sure to end with a description of a product (preferably the car). Make sure students can understand and pronounce the following words:

features advertisement persuade

Work with students on the comprehensible production of the phonemes in these new words. Note those sounds that are difficult for students to pronounce. On the next review day, you can take even more time to focus on the sounds that are causing students difficulty.

Transition

6. The discussion of the car question provides a opportunity to smoothly transition into a more in-depth presentation on product features.

Presentation: Product Features

30 minutes

Set Up

1. As students describe the features of the car they would like to buy (see step #5 of the warm-up above), write them on the board. Form two **unlabeled** columns on one side of the board, putting the features of the car (*model, color, etc.*) in one column, and any benefits they mention (*dependable, economical*) in the other. For example:

| | |
|--------------------|-------------------|
| | |
| <i>red</i> | <i>beautiful</i> |
| <i>convertible</i> | <i>dependable</i> |
| <i>small</i> | <i>economical</i> |

Process

2. Ask students:

What is the difference between the words & phrases in the two columns?

Try to elicit the answer that one column lists the car *features*. That is, the things about the car that make it special or different from other cars (the color, model, antilock breaks, etc.) The other column lists *benefits*. The benefits are actually positive results of the features themselves. For example, the fact that a car gets 30 miles to the gallon is a *feature*. A *benefit* of this feature is that the car is economical.

3. Show students a hair dryer. Ask them to name the product and then try to come up with a list of features. When you write their ideas on the board, organize them in such a way that you can later point out and distinguish features or feature categories (e.g., color) with examples of that feature (e.g., black, white, pink). See the example below:

Example: product --> hair dryer

| <u>Feature</u> | <u>feature example(s)</u> |
|----------------|--|
| function | variable speeds: low, medium, high variable temperatures: cool, warm, hot |
| color | black |
| size | travel |
| material | plastic |
| brand | Panasonic |
| price | maybe \$15.00 |
| style/model | unknown |

4. Now, ask students to suggest some possible benefits of the features of the board. Elicit a few and write them in a separate column. Here are some examples:

| | |
|-------------------------------|---|
| <i>easy to carry with you</i> | <i>dries your hair but doesn't flatten it</i> |
| <i>inexpensive</i> | <i>durable</i> |
| <i>sleek and attractive</i> | |

5. Make the following 2 points about features and benefits:

- a. A good retail salesperson always knows all of the features and some benefits of the various products s/he is selling.
- b. There are many different possible features and feature examples, depending upon the items you are selling. Generally, however, the features listed on the board (function, color, size, material, brand, price, style/model) are the ones you should get to know.

Wrap Up

6. Leave the hair dryer example on the board. It will help students do the next few activities.

Activity: Describe The Merchandise

10 minutes

Set Up

1. To reinforce the points covered in the presentation above, ask students to open to **SB 2:10**, *Describe The Merchandise*, and read the instructions.

Process

2. Students should take a few minutes to do the activity individually. Circulate to assist.

Reportback & Feedback

3. Go over the answers as a class. Take the opportunity to discuss any new vocabulary, including the word *merchandise*. Note that some features can be used to describe more than one item pictured.

Wrap Up

3. As a final step, ask students to identify which feature category the feature words correspond to. They can use the list on the board to help.

Examples: size → size 10
 → 16 oz. package

 material → wool
 → silk

Activity: Know Your Features and Benefits

30 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to get into groups of 3 and open to **SB 2:11**, *Know Your Features and Benefits*. Pass out one of the items you have brought to class to each group (see Materials/Preparation for Day 3, above). Ask groups to identify the items. Take time to discuss and practice the pronunciation of any new words as a class.

Process

2. Ask groups to spend a few minutes putting together a list of the features of their item, placing them in the chart on **SB 2:11**. Circulate to assist. Make sure the feature category headings are on the board and that there is a good amount of writing space under or around each one.

Reportback & Feedback

3. When all groups are finished, a representative of each group should present their item to the class and describe its features as thoroughly as possible. As groups present, list the feature examples under the appropriate feature category headings on the board. Give groups feedback as they present, eliciting/suggesting more appropriate vocabulary where necessary and pointing out things done well and those features that have been omitted.

4. After each group presents, take a few minutes to brainstorm the benefits of each item as a class. Write those benefits on the board. Encourage them to be as creative as possible. This is an excellent opportunity to introduce new and useful vocabulary.

5. Now that all the features and benefits are on the board, take time to practice the pronunciation and discuss the definitions of some of the more important and/or difficult words.

Work with students on the comprehensible production of the phonemes in these new words. Note those sounds that are difficult for students to pronounce. On the next review day, you can take even more time to focus on the sounds that are causing students difficulty.

Transition

Ask students to tell you where they usually learn about the features and benefits of a product (in advertisements).

Reading and Writing Activity: Advertisements

30 minutes

Note to instructor: This activity ends with a writing assignment, the results of which will be used as a warm-up to the next class. If you have time in class today, allow students to begin the assignment in class, while you circulate to provide assistance and early feedback. Then, they can finish it later as homework if necessary. However, if you are running low on class time, the writing activity can be just assigned as homework.

Set Up

1. Bring up the fact that a store or company will use advertisements to present the features and benefits of their products. Ask students where they see/hear product advertisements – you will surely elicit a long list! (television, radio, billboards, t-shirts, buses, newspapers, flyers, etc.)

Process

2. Ask students to take a few minutes to read the advertisement on **SB 2:12**, *The ClearTone 500*.

3. Ask students to pair up and answer the questions that follow the ad.

Reportback & Feedback

4. Review students' answers as a group, creating a column of features and a column of benefits on the board. Possible answers to this post-reading activity are on **TB 2:44**.

Point out the fact that this ad did not actually say what product was being advertised (a telephone). Students were able to figure out the product because the features and benefits described all could be used to describe a telephone.

4. When reviewing the answer to question #4, write the words *persuade* and *persuasive* on the board. Discuss their meanings and practice their pronunciations. Encourage students to give concrete examples of persuasive writing in the advertisement. Point out that retail sales associates can use their knowledge of product features and benefits to gently persuade the customer to buy (while at the same time, not being pushy!)

Writing Practice

5. The writing assignment is listed at the bottom of **SB 2:12**. Discuss the instructions as a class. Emphasize the requirement that the type of product advertised should not be mentioned in their ad (though an invented brand name is fine). Instead, they should describe the product with features and benefits, just like in the advertisement they read. That way, their classmates will have to try to figure out what product they are describing. Whether or not you are able to give students time to work on this in class, announce that they should finish the assignment at home and be prepared to read it to the class tomorrow (or the next class day).

Note to instructor: There are large white envelopes on the SSLC Resource shelves that contain advertisements cut out from newspapers and magazines. One envelope contains ads that include printed descriptions of product features, while another just pictures the products without text. You can use these resources to create additional or alternative activities about ads and product features.

Presentation: Introduction to the SSLC Computers

30 minutes

Note to Instructor: Students at all levels of computer literacy will need to be a part of this brief introduction to the SSLC computers, the computer lab, and creating and saving a document on disk. Then, those with higher computer literacy will be able to move on to *Writing the Reference List*, below. However, many students may need additional assistance and training in order to go to the next activity. Ask those students to use adjacent computers. While the others move on to writing, you can continue the tutorial with those who need it. Depending upon the needs of your students, you may also consider providing a short computer tutorial outside of class time.

Make sure a flipchart with markers or a whiteboard are set up in the computer lab.

Set Up

1. Ask students to go into the computer lab and choose a computer. Those who have little experience with computers (and therefore think they may need help using the computer) should all sit in the same area. If you have more people in the class than there are computers, students

will have to double up. Pair up those who have a lot of computer experience with those that have very little.

They should bring notes, a writing utensil, their *Reference List Worksheet (Portfolio Workbook P:3)* which they should already have filled out, and the *Sample Reference List (Portfolio Workbook P:4)*.

Process

2. Once students are in the lab and sitting at a computer, show them how to log in to the SSLC computers. Write the username and password on the flipchart in the computer room. As of the writing of this document, these are the terms:

Username: *student*

Password: *trainingctr*

3. Students signed an SSLC policies agreement on the first day of class. Review the computer lab policies and guidelines:

- No food or drink in the SSLC computer lab.
- Computers are to be used only for job search or educational purposes.
- Computers may be used during the hours that the SSLC is open, when there is no other class or event in the computer lab. It is best to call the SSLC and find out the schedule if you are unsure if it is free that day.
- Never download anything onto the SSLC computers.
- You will be given a disk that should always stay at the SSLC. If you use it in other computers, we risk transmitting viruses to the SSLC computers.
- Be careful never to save anything on the SSLC computers. Use only your disk to save documents. All saved documents are erased from the computers at night.
- Four extra class hours are built into the SSLC Customer Service ESOL curriculum. That means that over the 8-week course, students need to spend 4 hours *outside of class* using the computers at the SSLC. These hours can be used to type the reference list and resume, search for jobs, learn to type using the Mavis-Beacon program, practice English, or related activities.

4. Sit at the most accessible computer in the room and ask students to stand in a close semi-circle around you, so that everybody can see. Go through the following groupings of vocabulary words, showing each one and, where applicable, demonstrating how it is used. Go through and practice each grouping before moving on to the next. Keep students involved by asking them to name the items or action before you do:

Grouping 1:

| | | |
|----------------|---------------|-----------------|
| <i>CPU</i> | <i>screen</i> | <i>keyboard</i> |
| <i>monitor</i> | <i>mouse</i> | <i>disk</i> |

Grouping 2:

| | | | |
|----------------|------------------|--------------------------|----------------|
| <i>desktop</i> | <i>point</i> | <i>click (on)</i> | <i>icon</i> |
| <i>arrow</i> | <i>highlight</i> | <i>double-click (on)</i> | <i>program</i> |

Grouping 3:

| | | | |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------------|-----------------|
| <i>open</i> | <i>A Drive</i> | <i>save</i> | <i>maximize</i> |
| <i>close</i> | <i>C Drive</i> | <i>drop-down menu</i> | <i>minimize</i> |

Your task during this vocabulary demonstration is to create a new document in Word entitled *Reference List_Your Name*, and save it to your disk in the A Drive. Tell students that this is the beginning of their reference list, and everybody will need to accomplish at least the document creation today.

4. After students have watched the demonstration, ask them to go back to their computers. Give each student a disk and label and ask them to put their name and telephone number on it right now. The disks must stay at the SSLC in the container provided for them.

Transition and Wrap Up

5. Those who are able should feel free to move on to the next activity, *Typing the Reference List*. They should feel free to copy the model on **Portfolio Workbook P:4**. Tell them just to type the document. You can help them with formatting later.

If there is a group in the class that needs additional computer help, you may wish to spend extra time with a small group of them or work with the SEE Program administrator to refer them individually to computer courses at MontgomeryWorks. All students in the course need to develop, at the minimum, enough skills to type up and save their reference list and resume. The instructor can provide a lot of support in these two tasks, as well as do the final editing and formatting with the student, since these are skills that may be too advanced for some.

Activity: Typing the Reference List

15 minutes

Students will have class time to type their reference list. However, they are responsible for finishing it by the date you give (we suggest that the reference list be finished by the end of Unit 3.) As such, they may have to work on the reference list before or after class, or on Fridays.

The instructor will likely have to help students complete the final draft of the reference list by assisting with formatting and editing. Clearly, handing an employer a misspelled and poorly formatted reference list would be just as bad as not having a reference list at all, so the instructor should take the time to make sure each student's final draft is ready to be given to employers.

When a student has completed his/her final draft, make at least three copies of it – one for the student's SSLC file, and two for the student to keep in his/her portfolio. You should also assist the student in emailing himself or herself a copy of the document from his disk, so that he can save it to another computer if necessary.

Wrap-up

5 minutes

Briefly review the day's topics. Remind students about their writing homework. In the next class, they will present those advertisements to their classmates.

Note to Instructor: In the next class session, students will do the Size, Features, and Benefits role play. Remember to pack or lay out the realia needed for class! Some of the items are available at the SSLC. See the Unit 2, Day 4 lesson introduction on the next page for a complete list of the items that will be necessary.

Unit 2: Meeting the Customer's Needs

Day 4

Objectives:

| Customer Service Skills | Job Readiness Skills | Grammar and Pronunciation Skills |
|--|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present an advertisement. • Identify features and benefits. • Learn about the products you sell. • Read a product label. • Role play: Talking about size, features, and benefits. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Give constructive feedback to others. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Wh-questions. |

Materials/Preparation:

- A variety of packaged foods and clothing with clear labels – each pair of students will need to use one food package and one item of clothing.
- Copies of *Size, Features and Benefits Role Play Cards*, **TG 2:45-46**, cut out and placed in sets.
- Items that correspond to the role play cards: a pair of shoes, a pair of blue jeans, a shirt, a few matching cups, and a matching metal butter knife, fork, and spoon.
- Copies of the *Instructor Role Play Evaluation* (**TG 2:47**– one copy for each student in the class.)

Key Vocabulary:

country of origin
fade
fiber content
shrink
wear

Notes to Instructor:

Today's lesson plan is tight, but all of it should be able to be accomplished in three hours if you plan your time accordingly. Make sure students come back promptly from break.

Warm-up: Advertise

30 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to take out the advertisement that they wrote last night. You may need to give students a few minutes at the beginning of class to finish the assignment and to ask you questions. Those who are finished could take this time to practice reading their ads to each other. Each student in the class should practice reading his or her ad at least once.

Process

2. Tell students that they will take turns presenting their ads in front of the class. They should try to speak clearly. You may want to take a moment to discuss what this means (pay attention to thought groups and stress, clear pronunciation of the ends of words, the use of *schwa* in many unstressed syllables, etc.)

During the presentations, students should listen actively. You may want to take a moment to discuss what this means, as discussed in class (make eye contact, show interest, try to anticipate what the person is going to say, etc.)

Reportback & Feedback

3. After each student reads his or her advertisement and the classmates guess at the product described, take just a few moments to review the ad as a whole class and give feedback to individuals. Ask:

What were the features of the product?

What were the benefits of the product?

Do you think the advertisement was persuasive? Why or why not?

Presentation: Learning about the Products You Sell

30 minutes

Set Up

1. Transition from the warm-up into this activity by asking students how else, besides through advertisements, they can learn about the products they sell when they are retail sales associates. Elicit the following:

- a. Read product labels and packaging
- b. Talk to co-workers or supervisors about the products
- c. Vendors/Companies – the people who provide the products to the stores
- d. Brochures about the products

Process

2. After eliciting all possibilities, focus students mainly on Point A, above. Show students a label from a piece of clothing you have brought. Ask them to tell you what kind of information they can find on clothing labels. Elicit the following and give examples:

- a. fiber content (100% cotton)
 - b. country of origin (Made in China)
 - c. care instructions (Dry clean only)
3. Make the following points, eliciting them if possible:
- a. These three categories of information are required by law on all apparel labels in the United States.
 - b. The highest percentage of fiber content is always listed first, with all others following in descending order.
 - c. Fiber content will help customers know how comfortable it will be for them and how it will withstand wear (stains, time, etc.)

Here are some common questions that customers might ask about clothing care:

Will this shrink?
Will this color fade?
Can I put this in the dryer?

Discuss these three questions and the words *shrink* and *fade*. Discuss which fabrics might shrink in the dryer or fade with time or washing (100% cotton, natural fibers...). As a group, practice the intonation of the questions.

4. Now, hold up a food package and ask what types of information one can commonly find on a food label. Elicit:

- a. serving size
 - b. nutritional information
 - c. calories and fat content
 - d. product ingredients
5. Make the following points about food labels, eliciting them if possible:
- a. These things are also listed by law on most food labels.
 - b. The ingredients list the highest-percentage ingredient first, with all others in descending order.
 - c. Information about fat, calories, and nutrition can be very important for customers with special dietary needs or allergies. Clearly, it is important to give customers correct and clear information about these things.

Transition

6. Tell students they will have the opportunity to practice reading food labels in the next activity.

Activity: Reading Labels

15 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to open to **SB 2:13**, *Reading Labels*, and take a few minutes to read both labels pictured there.

Process

2. They should work individually or in pairs to answer the questions based on the labels.

Reportback & Feedback

3. Review the answers to the questions as a whole class. Discuss any difficulties and practice the pronunciation of new words. The answers to this worksheet are listed below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. 100% linen | 5. Popcorn |
| 2. USA | 6. 130 |
| 3. use a washing machine, warm water; separate from other colors | 7. No |
| 4. Yes. Use the medium cycle. | 8. 9 grams [4.5 grams per serving; 2 servings per package] |

Activity: Asking about products

30 minutes

Set Up

1. Ask students to get into pairs, and give one student in each pair an item of clothing that you have brought. That student should read the clothing label while the other student writes four questions s/he has about that product on **SB 2:14**, *Asking About Products*. With a student volunteer, model one set of questions for the class:

*Where was this shirt made?
What is the fiber content?
Can I put this in the dryer?*

Process

2. The students with questions should interview the students with products, and note their replies on **SB 2:14**, *Asking About Products*. Circulate to assist with question formation and intonation and give feedback.

3. Now, ask students in pairs to switch roles. Pass out packaged foods and have the partner who wrote the questions now read the label. The other partner should write three questions on **SB 2:14**. With a student volunteer, model one set of questions for the class:

*How many servings of soup are in this can?
How many calories does this soup have?
Does it contain peanuts?*

4. The students with questions should interview the students with products, and note their replies on **SB 2:14**, *Asking About Products*. Circulate to assist with question formation and intonation and give feedback.

Reportback & Feedback

5. Write the following headings on the board:

Fiber content

Care instructions

Highest-percentage ingredients

6. Bring the class back together and ask students to use their notes to help you make lists on the board of all the vocabulary they found for label information. Discuss the meanings of the new words and practice the pronunciation. Give individual feedback where possible.

Role play: Size, Features and Benefits

55 minutes

Note to Instructor: It is very important that students have the necessary realia to do these role plays. See the list of materials needed for today's lesson plan.

Set Up

1. Tell students that today's role play will help them practice talking with customers about features and benefits, and also about fit and size. Remind students that open-ended questions can help a sales associate fit the product to the customer. Also, refresh students' memories about important considerations when helping a customer with clothing fit and size:

- Never contradict the customer about his size.
- Never guess the customer's size. Let the customer give you his/her size.
- Suggest that sizes vary between brands. Offer to bring several sizes.
- Give the customer information about the brand. Let him/her know if the brand "runs" small, large, wide, etc.
- Ask questions to understand the customer's needs. That will help you make suggestions.

2. Review some of the stock questions students can use to ask about size:

What size do you wear?
What size do you prefer?
What size is most comfortable for you?
May I help you find a size?

Process

3. Ask students to get into pairs and give each pair a set of *Size, Features and Benefits Role Play Cards* from **TB 2:45**. Also give each pair the corresponding realia for their role play. Pairs should choose who will play the customer and sales associate first, keeping in mind roles will switch.

4. Tell students to first make a quick list of the features of their product. That will help them talk about the features during the role play. They should also brainstorm some questions for the

customer to ask. **They should not script the entire role play.** However, a little preparation will be useful. Emphasize that they should end the role play when they get to the part where they would pay for the items. This will be covered later in the course.

5. Give students time to practice their role play 3-4 times. Circulate to observe and assist where necessary. Note problems to address later, but do not interrupt a role play in action. Pay special attention to all aspects of clear speech.
6. After the activity, bring the class back together. This may be a good time to briefly address any general problems that arose during the activity.

Performance & Feedback

7. Ask students to open to **SB 2:15**, *Role Play Peer Evaluation*. Give them a few minutes to read the form. Remind students to avoid writing during the role plays. They should be very quiet and give their full attention to each pair. They should also remember the polite ways to give feedback that we have practiced in class.

8. One by one, pairs should perform their role play in front of the class, taking turns being the customer and the sales associate. Be sure the class is completely quiet and attentive before allowing each pair to begin.

You (the instructor) should quickly fill out the instructor version of the *Evaluation*, **TG 2:47**, for each “sales associate” during and right after the role play, during the feedback discussion.

Afterward each role play, first ask the class, *What did they do well?* Discuss the responses. Then, ask the class, *What could they improve?* Discuss the responses. Be sure to ask the role players what they themselves felt they did well, and what they could improve.

9. After the first round of role plays, students should return to their pairs. Give them a new set of role play cards and realia, and repeat the process. This way, everybody has an opportunity to play the sales associate.

Wrap Up

10. Wrap up the role plays by discussing any loose ends and/or practicing those elements that seemed most challenging, including any pronunciation challenges. Pass out the Feedback Forms at the end of class.

Wrap-up

5 minutes

Remind students what was covered and accomplished in class today. As students are leaving, pass back their copies of the Feedback Form. Tell them when you are available to discuss their role plays in more detail, if they would like to do so.

Be sure to lay out or pack the realia needed for the warm-up for the next class session. See the list in the introduction to the lesson for Unit 2 Day 5, below.

Unit 2: Meeting the Customer's Needs

Day 5

Objectives:

| Customer Service Skills | Job Readiness Skills | Grammar and Pronunciation Skills |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Describe features.• Compare products.• Express preferences.• Make suggestions. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Learn about interviews in the United States.• Role Play: Practice the handshake. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use comparatives and superlatives.• Emphasize focus words.• Phrase words into thought groups and pause between the phrases.• Use Wh-questions. |

Materials/Preparation:

- A few small items of the same type to use in presentation on comparisons: 2 necklaces, 2 cups, 3 pens, 3 picture frames, etc.
- Pictures of Comparable Products envelope (white) – SSLC Resource Shelf in teacher office
- SSLC Audio Tape: *Making a Suggestion*

Key Vocabulary:

| | |
|-------------|-----------|
| lightweight | recommend |
| interview | shape |
| pattern | suggest |
| posture | |

Notes to Instructor:

Comparatives and superlatives are introduced in today's lesson. It is expected that students will have already been introduced to this grammar in previous English classes, so no attempt is given here to fully explain the formation and use of comparatives and superlatives. Instead, we practice their use in a retail sales setting. However, if you find that your students need a more in-depth review of comparatives and superlatives, take some time during the upcoming Review Day to draw from the activities in *Stand Out 4 (Unit 3)*, or another grammar textbook.

Warm-up: Features Grab Bag

20 minutes

Set Up

1. Show students the bag filled with items that you have prepared. Announce that, as a warm-up, volunteers can come up to the front of the room, place their hand in the bag to choose an item, and describe only the *features* of that item. They should not mention the benefits of the item or what it is used for. Their classmates will have to guess what they are describing.
2. Model one description. Place your hand in the bag and slowly describe its features. For example, if you choose a fork, you can describe it as follows:

This item is made of metal. It is long and slender, flattened slightly. One end of the long piece of metal is rounded. The other end is divided into three long metal spears that are pointed, but not sharp. This item is lightweight and silver.

Process

3. Take volunteers to come up, one by one, and choose an item to describe. While each one does so, you can stand at the board and write the features that that are mentioned. You can also assist with vocabulary where necessary, or hint at other features that might be helpful, if students are having trouble guessing.

Feedback & Wrap Up

4. Finish the warm-up by reviewing some of the important new descriptive vocabulary words, both in terms of meaning and pronunciation. Talk about new features that might have come up (shape, weight, pattern). Emphasize the fact that a good sales associate knows her products well and can describe them in detail.

Transition

5. Point out that sometimes a sales associate needs to compare the features of two or more products in order help a customer decide which to buy. In the activity we will do now, we will read about how a sales associate in a grocery store compares items to help a young couple.

Reading and Presentation on Comparative & Superlative: Buying Breakfast

Pre-reading

10 minutes

1. Set up the reading by explaining that they are going to read a story about two newlyweds who have to go grocery shopping together for the first time. They have a lot of choices to make. Ask students a few discussion questions:

*Do you and your spouse want different things at the grocery store?
Do you prefer different kinds of bread, cereal, or milk?
What kinds of milk can you buy at the grocery store?
What kinds of breakfast cereal do you like? What kinds do you dislike?*

Point out that, often, consumers have many choices. A sales associate can help people select from all the different choices available.

Reading

10 minutes

2. Ask students to open to **SB 2:16**, *Buying Breakfast*, and read the story about Susan and James. Circulate to assist. Remind them to read the story through once, and then they are free to use dictionaries if they would like to.

Post-Reading

20 minutes

3. After students finish reading, ask a few comprehension questions about the reading:

What do Susan and James need to buy? (milk and cereal)
What kind of milk do they choose? (with extra vitamins, large carton)
Who helps them choose their cereal? (the sales associate)
What is the first question the sales associate asks them? (How can I help you?)

4. Ask students to go back to the reading and work individually or with a partner to underline all the places in the reading where Susan, James, or the sales associate *compare* two items.

5. Ask volunteers to come to the board and write the comparative & superlative sentences or questions that they found. Have the volunteers read the sentences out loud for their classmates.

6. Show students that the comparisons in the reading take two basic forms. Write the forms on the board in the following manner so that students can see the grammatical structures they can use to compare any items:

This one is _____ than that one. (bigger, shorter, less expensive, etc.)

This one is/has _____, but that one is/has _____.

This one is the _____. (superlative)

Activity: Which do you prefer?

35 minutes

Set Up

1. Write on the board:

Which do you prefer? Why?

2. Take out the items that you brought to class. Hold up two like items and use comparatives to talk about your preferences. For example, if you hold up two necklaces, you could say:

This necklace is more expensive than that one. This one is made of gold, but that one is made of silver. However, I prefer that one, because it is prettier.

Hold up different sets of items and ask a few students the question on the board. Encourage students to use the comparative and superlative structures and features and benefits to compare the items.

Process

3. Now, ask students to get into pairs. Pass out the cards from the *Pictures of Comparable Products* envelope. Students should ask and answer the questions, *Which do you prefer?* and *Why?*, giving as much detail as possible about the features and benefits of the products and using comparatives and superlatives. Circulate to assist and give feedback to individuals.

Reportback & Feedback

4. Collect the cards and bring the class back together. Show a few of the cards (make sure all students have a chance to see the pictures) and ask one of the students from the pair who discussed it earlier, *Which do you prefer?* and then, *Why?* Encourage students to answer with as much detail as possible.

Listening Activity: Making a Suggestion

25 minutes

Set Up

1. Lead into this activity from the previous discussion by changing the questions you ask students about the cards. Instead of asking, *Which one do you prefer?*, ask *Which one do you suggest?* Accept students' answers and write the language they used to make the suggestion on the board. Try to elicit these stock phrases:

I suggest _____.

I recommend _____.

Why don't you try _____.

2. Point out that, up to this point in the course, we have been focusing on how to find out about a customer's needs. However, after a sales associate knows the customer's needs, she may need to make a product suggestion based on that information.

Process

3. Now, ask students to listen to the taped listening segment, *Making a Suggestion*. Play the taped segment twice. Answer any questions they have about what they heard. Ask the following comprehension questions:

What store does the sales associate work in? [Radio City]

What is the customer's special occasion? [Her daughter's wedding shower]

What is a wedding shower? [A party for the bride before her wedding. Usually only female friends and relatives attend and they all bring gifts for the bride.]

What product the sales associate suggest? [a digital camera]

Why? [It is dependable, takes high quality photos, records movies, and it is something the daughter and her new husband can enjoy together.]

Does the customer take the suggestion? [She is definitely considering it.]

4. Then, ask students to open to **SB 2:18-19**, *Making A Suggestion*, read the transcript of the conversation and note the missing elements. Play the tape a third time and have students listen and fill in the blanks. You may need to play the tape a fourth time.

Reportback & Feedback

5. As a class, go over the answers (the tapescript is on **TB 2:48**). If the stock phrases listed in #1 above have not yet all been elicited, take the time to write those on the board and practice their pronunciations.

During the discussion of the answer, ask students why the sales associate says things like, *Oh, congratulations!*, and *How nice!*, in response to the customer's statements. Point out that the sales associate uses to polite openers to build a friendly rapport with the customer, as well as to open to the door to asking for and giving important information.

6. Finally, focus on the pronunciation of the dialogue. Have students repeat the entire conversation chorally after you. Remind students to focus on the pronunciation of thought groups and the inclusion of pauses between each one. If you have time in class, ask them to go through and write where they believe the pauses should occur. Then, have students practice the dialogue in pairs, taking turns playing the sales associate and the customer. Circulate to assist and give individual feedback.

Presentation: The Interview

45 minutes

Set Up

1. Begin with a whole-class discussion. Ask a few of the following questions:
 - *What is an interview?*
 - *What happens in an interview?*
 - *Have you had a job interview in the United States? In your country?*
 - *What did you find difficult or interesting about your interviews (in either country)?*
 - *Have you noticed any differences between interviews in your country and the U.S.?*
 - *How do you feel when you go to a job interview?*

During this discussion, point out that some jobs do not require an interview. Some customer service positions have minimal or no interviews, while others have traditional interviews. In this class, we will be able to discuss students' experiences with all kinds of interview formats. However, we will practice a traditional interview format, since most job seekers encounter this type of interview at one point or another. It is very common in the United States and can be challenging for a job candidate with limited English proficiency.

Process

2. Transition from this general discussion to a more specific discussion of how students prepare for a job interview. Ask students to work in small groups and come up with a list of 5 “Preparation Tips for the Job Interview”.

Reportback & Feedback

3. Ask groups to report their tips to the whole class. Write them on the board (excluding duplicates). Discuss each as it is raised. Be sure to elicit or bring up any important tip (listed below) that students do not volunteer.

1. Dress professionally. [**Note:** This will be covered in the next Unit.]
2. Always say positive things about yourself and others (including former jobs/bosses/co-workers)
3. Smile and make eye contact.
4. Don't apologize for your English (i.e., stay positive!)
5. Research the company/position beforehand and *prepare some questions* for your interviewer(s). Research industry trends.
6. Try to stay calm! (Discuss how *students themselves* do this. For example: breathe deeply, be prepared, remember that you're interviewing them, too....)
7. Speak clearly. That includes speaking slowly and loudly enough.
8. Maintain good *posture* in both standing and sitting (Demonstrate this and have students practice it. Good posture in a chair includes sitting upright on the front part of the seat.)
9. Have at least 2 copies of your resume and reference list in a folder.
10. Carry pen and paper to take notes.
11. Practice before the interview with common interview questions and their answers.
12. Arrive early – at least 15 minutes.

Note to instructor: Students may have general questions or comments about the process of an interview. Discuss those at this time, as they are raised. You may need to discuss the facts that interviews in the U.S. can be formal or relatively informal and involve one or more interviewers. The interviewee usually waits for the interviewer to invite him/her to sit before doing so.

Some jobs require that you fill out an application before being considered for an interview, while others may not require much of an interview at all.

Finally, discuss inappropriate and illegal interview questions with students. Employers in the United States should not ask about the following topics during a job interview, because to not hire someone on the basis of any of them is discriminatory: **race, color, sex, religion, national origin, birthplace, age, disability, marital or family status**. It is likely that your students are not aware of the fact that questions about some or all of these topics are inappropriate in the U.S.

4. **The handshake.** A firm handshake is often an important sign of professionalism in the U.S. Point out that it is acceptable in the U.S. to initiate a handshake with an interviewer – it is not necessary to wait for him or her to initiate it (though that is more common). Also, women shake hands with men as well as with women – there are no gender differences in regard to

handshakes **as there are in some countries** – and a woman can initiate a handshake. For example, Chinese students at the SSLC have mentioned in past courses that the Chinese woman is expected to shake hands using only the first 1/3 of her hand.

Emphasize that the handshake should be reasonably firm, involving the entire arm, and that women especially should be sure to remember this. No limp or weak handshakes!

Practice

5. Model the firm handshake with each member of the class. Then, have students get up and circulate, shaking hands with everybody else in the room. Pay special attention to the handshakes of the women students, who sometimes are unaccustomed to shaking hands or to shaking hands in this way.

Wrap Up

6. End the discussion by stating that, in the coming weeks, students will have an opportunity to prepare answers for and role play common interview questions. By the end of the course, students will have role played interviews many times – and possibly even had some real interviews at job fairs - and this will help them gain fluency and confidence in their skills.

Wrap-Up

If there is any extra time in today's class period, allow students to use it to type their reference lists. End the class by reviewing the main points covered today.

Unit 2: Meeting the Customer's Needs

Day 6

Objectives:

| Customer Service Skills | Job Readiness Skills | Grammar and Pronunciation Skills |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Review |

Materials/Preparation:

- Depends upon the plan for today, which is a review day.
- Copies of **TB 2:50**, *Expressing Preferences – Mix and Mingle*. Cut into cards.

Notes to Instructor:

Today is a built-in review day. You can use the day in the following ways:

- Catch up on material you have not been able to finish in class.
- Prepare additional grammar and pronunciation practice activities around areas where you have noticed that students have had difficulties, especially those areas that have been objectives in previous lessons of this curriculum. Use the textbooks listed in the References section for ideas.
- Do a role play that requires students to use the knowledge and skills gained since the course began.
- A game of “pictionary” or “taboo” involving vocabulary words learned thus far in the course.
- Work on Reference Lists.

Warm-up: Expressing Preferences – Mix and Mingle

15 minutes

1. Ask students to remind you about what you covered yesterday in class (among other things, expressing preferences and comparing items).
2. Give each student one of the *Mix 'n' Mingle* cards from **TB 2:50** and give them time to read it. Answer any vocabulary questions they may have. Then, ask students to walk among their classmates and ask each other the questions. They should try to poll at least five classmates. Ask them to try to remember peoples' preferences, so they can report on them afterwards.

Also, if necessary, you may need to remind students about the comparative structures that you discussed yesterday and encourage their use:

This one is _____ than that one. (bigger, shorter, less expensive, etc.)

This one is/has _____, but that one is/has _____.

3. Ask students to return to their seats. Follow up on the activity by asking each individual to briefly say what they learned from their classmates. What are the differences between the climate in the U.S. and the climate in other students' countries? What are the differences between having a large family and a small family? Encourage further discussion.

In-Class Review

This is up to you, the instructor. See the *Notes to Instructor* on the previous page for a list of suggestions.

Homework:

Assign the *Mystery Shopper 2* activity on **SB 2:20**. Go through the instructions (which are familiar now that they have done one Mystery Shopper activity already). Answer any questions they may have. Emphasize that it is important have the Mystery Shopper activity done by the next class session so that you can review their experiences together. It will only take between 10-15 minutes of their time. You may even want to let students out of class 15 minutes early with the instructions to go into the mall in pairs and complete their Mystery Shopper activity before they leave today.

Fit the Products to the Customer: A Second Look
INSTRUCTOR KEY

Instructions: After reading the article, answer the following questions with a partner.

1. Some important words in the article are underlined. Without using a dictionary, take a guess at their meaning. Try to think of other ways to say each of the words in English and write them below:

contradict: to say the opposite; to deny

customizing: make changes to a product so that it suits special needs

alternative: another choice or option

alterations: changes; make something a different size

cue: a hint, a clue, a signal

accessories: items that complement or are used along with a product

durability: the ability to last long time

pay off : bring good things; be worth a it

2. Fit and size are topics that can sometimes make people feel uncomfortable. Write three suggestions for sales associates who have to talk about size with a customer. One example is done for you:

Example: Never contradict the customer about his size.

(Answers will vary – try to elicit some form of the following:)

- **Never guess the customer’s size. Let the customer give you his/her size.**
- **Suggest that sizes vary between brands. Offer to bring several sizes.**
- **Give the customer information about the brand. Let him/her know if the brand “runs”* small, large, wide, etc.**
- **Ask questions to understand the customer’s needs. That will help you make a suggestion.**

***Note to Instructor:** Be sure to discuss the meaning and use of “run” in this context.

3. What are three extra services you may be able to offer to your customer, in order to provide a good fit?

special-order customizing alteration
(You can also suggest accessories.)

4. Re-read the last three sentences of the article. What should you do after you ask questions and mention additional services to your customer?

Listen to the customer!

Sizing Up Your Customer INSTRUCTOR KEY

Instructions: Work with a partner or two. What questions could you ask the customer in these situations? Then, one person in your group should write the answers.

1. A customer is searching for panty hose and you want to help her select the right size. Since panty hose is sized according to height and weight, it would be insensitive to simply ask “How much do you weigh?”

Instead, you might say:

Have you worn this brand before?

If customer says “yes”, ask: What size was the most comfortable for you?

If customer says “no”, ask: Let’s look at the size chart – where do you see yourself according to their recommendations?

2. A customer is looking for Italian sausage in your specialty foods store. She does not yet have any other items in her grocery basket, so you can’t guess what she is planning to prepare. You don’t know if she is shopping for her family’s dinner, or for a dinner party with a lot of guests.

You might say:

We have several types of Italian sausage...what are you preparing? OR How many people are you feeding? OR My mother always uses this in her lasagna...are you fixing a favorite family recipe? OR This is so good...what’s the occasion?

3. An elderly woman is looking for comfortable shoes. She needs a good fit, but you also want to be sure that she chooses shoes that she can put on easily and ones that provide good balance.

You might say :

Will you be walking a great deal in these shoes? Do you prefer shoes that slip on, lace up, or that have Velcro closures? What brands have worked well for you in the past? What kind of socks will you be wearing with your shoes? Will you be wearing these mostly on carpeting or on slippery surfaces such as wood?

Fitting Clothing
INSTRUCTOR KEY

Instructions: Choose an expression from the box to match each of the situations below.

Excuse me, sir. Can I help you find a size?

Are you looking for yourself, or for a gift?

I'm not sure. Let me check for you.

Let me show you to the Misses department.

1. A very tall woman is looking at a blouse in the petite section. What could you ask?

Are you looking for yourself or for a gift?

2. A short and slender man is browsing in the menswear department. You think that he should look in the Young Men's department because the men's pants will be too big. What could you ask?

Excuse me, Sir. Can I help you find a size?

3. A young woman is shopping in the Career Professionals sections. She wants to find a T-shirt to wear to a party on the weekend. What can you say?

Let me show you to the Misses department.

4. A large man asks you if you have any pants in a size 32 waist. What should you say?

I'm not sure. Let me check for you.

Descriptions
Warm-up Exercise

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>How do advertisements persuade people to buy products?</p> | <p>Imagine you are a scientist. What new product would you create?</p> |
| <p>Imagine you want to buy a car. What features are important to you?</p> | <p>Describe the most beautiful thing you have ever seen.</p> |
| <p>What features does your watch have?</p> | <p>Describe your dream vacation.</p> |
| <p>Describe your favorite holiday or special occasion.</p> | <p>What is the most unusual place you have ever seen an advertisement.</p> |
| <p>Would you wear a T-shirt that advertised a product? Why or why not?</p> | <p>Imagine that you opened a new bakery. How would you persuade people to come try your products?</p> |

The ClearTone 500
INSTRUCTOR KEY

Instructions: Read the advertisement below. Then, work with a partner to answer the questions that follow.

The ClearTone 500 will improve your or your loved one's life! This 5.8 gigahertz cordless is lightweight, portable, and – at \$49.99 – surprisingly affordable. Features include customizable ring tones, flashing ring indicators, and background noise reducers, specially designed for those with hearing difficulties. It's available in black, white, and silver, colors that make it an attractive addition to any room in your home. And this offer comes with our exclusive money-back guarantee. Order yours while they last!

1. What product is the ClearTone 500? **A telephone**
2. What are some the features of the ClearTone 500?

price: \$49.99

color: black, white, silver

material: plastic

function: 5.8 gigahertz, customizable ring tones, flashing ring indicators, background noise reducers

style/model: cordless

3. What are some of the benefits of the product?

Lightweight, portable, affordable, special design for those with hearing difficulties, attractive, money-back guarantee

4. Do you think this ad is persuasive? Why or why not? Give examples from the ad to support your opinion.

Answers will vary.

Writing Practice:

Write an ad for a product you have in your home. Describe the features and benefits of the product – try to make your ad as persuasive as possible. Just like the ad above, do not say what the product is (for example, a telephone, a toaster, etc.) Just describe the product well and let your classmates guess the product when they hear the ad.

Size, Features, and Benefits Role Play Cards

Note to Instructor: Photocopy and cut these roles into card sets. Give each pair of students a set along with the corresponding realia. Make sure you have prepared all realia required.

| | |
|--|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Customer</u></p> <p>You are looking for a pair of shoes. When the sales associate asks you, you can give this information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The shoes are for you.- You wear a size ____.- You need the shoes for a wedding. <p>Ask the sales associate questions about the features of the product he/she recommends.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sales Associate</u></p> <p>You work in a shoe store. Find out what your customer is looking for.</p> <p>Ask open-ended questions to find the best fit for your customer, and be sure to tell the customer about the features and benefits of the shoes you recommend.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Customer</u></p> <p>You are looking for a pair of pants. When the sales associate asks you, you can give this information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The pants are for your husband/wife.- He/She wears a size 10.- The pants are for wearing to the office, and should be lightweight enough for summer. <p>Ask the sales associate about the features of the product he/she recommends.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sales Associate</u></p> <p>You work in Macy's. Find out what your customer is looking for.</p> <p>Ask open-ended questions to find the best fit for your customer, and be sure to tell the customer about the features and benefits of the product you recommend.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Customer</u></p> <p>You are looking for a dress. When the sales associate asks you, you can give this information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The dress is for your sister.- She wears a size 8.- The dress is a birthday present.- The dress is for parties. <p>Ask the sales associate about the features of the product he/she recommends.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sales Associate</u></p> <p>You work in a women's clothing boutique. Find out what your customer is looking for.</p> <p>Ask open-ended questions to find the best fit for your customer, and be sure to tell the customer about the features and benefits of the product you recommend.</p> |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Customer</u></p> <p>You are looking for a set of matching cups. When the sales associate asks you, you can give this information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The cups are for you and your family.- You are looking for cups that are inexpensive and durable.- The cups are for home use, but also for picnics. <p>Ask the sales associate about the features of the product he/she recommends.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sales Associate</u></p> <p>You work in Target. Find out what your customer is looking for.</p> <p>Ask open-ended questions to find the best fit for your customer, and be sure to tell the customer about the features and benefits of the product you recommend.</p> |
| <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Customer</u></p> <p>You are looking for a set of silverware. When the sales associate asks you, you can give this information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- The silverware is for you and your family.- You are looking for silverware that is fancy and attractive, to use with company.- You prefer silverware made with real silver. <p>Ask the sales associate about the features of the product he/she recommends.</p> | <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Sales Associate</u></p> <p>You work in Macy's. Find out what your customer is looking for.</p> <p>Ask open-ended questions to find the best fit for your customer, and be sure to tell the customer about the features and benefits of the product you recommend.</p> |

Size, Features, and Benefits Role Play Evaluation

Date: _____

Instructor: _____

Name of student playing Sales Associate: _____

| Sales Associate: Checklist | | | |
|---|-------------------------|---|---|
| Rating Scale: 1 – needs improvement 2 – good 3 – excellent | | | |
| <i>The sales associate...</i> | <i>Circle a rating:</i> | | |
| Greeted the customer promptly | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Maintained a smile | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Maintained eye contact | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Was polite and friendly | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Spoke clearly | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Observed the customer’s behavior in order to choose the most appropriate questions. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Used open-ended questions to find out more information. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Referred to features and benefits. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Spoke about size appropriately. | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| Additional Comments: | | | |

Making a Suggestion
TAPESCRIPT

- Sales Associate: Good afternoon! Welcome to Radio City. Are you looking for something special today?
- Customer: Well, I'm mainly just browsing. Thanks.
- Sales Associate: Ok. Let me know if you need any help.
- Customer: Actually, I am having a little trouble deciding what to buy my daughter for her wedding shower.
- Sales Associate: Oh, Congratulations! When is the shower?
- Customer: Thank you. It's in two weeks.
- Sales Associate: I see. What do you have in mind?
- Customer: I'm trying to decide between that MP3 player and the Sony digital camera. She needs both of those things for her honeymoon.
- Sales Associate: Where is she going?
- Customer: Mexico.
- Sales Associate: How nice! Well, both of those items are excellent choices. They're portable and both will help her enjoy her honeymoon. However, I recommend the digital camera. It is a little more expensive than the MP3 player, but Sony is a more dependable brand. This model takes high quality photos and even records movies. Also, the camera is something that your daughter and her new husband can enjoy together.

Customer: Hmmm. That's a good point. Maybe I will get the camera. Thanks.

Sales Associate: I'm happy to help.

Expressing Preferences – Mix ‘n’ Mingle

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>What are the differences between a house and an apartment? Which do you prefer?</p> | <p>What are the differences between learning in a classroom and studying by yourself? Which do you prefer?</p> |
| <p>What are the differences between schools in your country and in the United States? Which do you prefer?</p> | <p>What are the differences between the climate in this area and in your country? Which do you prefer?</p> |
| <p>What are the differences between being married and living alone? Which do you prefer?</p> | <p>What are the differences between TV and movies? Which do you prefer?</p> |
| <p>What are the differences between living in the city and living in the country? Which do you prefer?</p> | <p>What are the differences between having a large family and having a small family? Which do you prefer?</p> |
| <p>What are the differences between driving and taking public transportation? Which do you prefer?</p> | <p>What are the differences between working at home and working at a store or office? Which do you prefer?</p> |