



# What's the problem?

## Skills and curriculum references

<b>Sc/E1.4d</b>	Give a description
<b>Rs/E1.1a</b>	Read and recognise simple sentence structures
<b>Ws/E1.1a</b>	Construct a simple sentence, using basic word order and verb form
<b>Sc/E2.3f</b>	Give a short description
<b>Sd/E2.1a</b>	Take part in social interaction
<b>Sd/E2.1e</b>	Relate to other speakers
<b>Lr/E2.6c</b>	Take part in more formal interaction
<b>Ws/E2.2a</b>	Use adjectives

## Topic/function

Learners practise describing problems, suggesting solutions and making offers to help.

## Rationale

Workers are expected to notice when a job needs doing and, if it is within their area of responsibility, to be proactive in doing it. In this lesson, learners are encouraged to identify a problem, say what would rectify the situation and offer to help.

## Grammar focus

The following structures are covered in this lesson:

- The present tense of the verb 'to be' (it is, they are)
- The verb 'to need' (it needs, they need)
- The '-ing' form of the verb (it needs wiping)
- Singular and plural nouns (bottle, bottles)
- Object pronouns (it, them)
- 'Shall I' + bare infinitive + 'it' (Shall I wash it?)

## List of materials

The following materials accompany this unit:

- Photocopiable learner's materials – pages 3.7–3.11.

The following materials would also be useful with this unit:

- Realia (a bag of the items to be described).

## Sequence of activities

### Introduction

- 1 Explain to learners that in this lesson they will practise describing problems and then talk about what to do about them.

Draw a table on the board with the following headings:

The problem	The solution	Offer of help

You can assess learners' prior knowledge by giving an example and seeing whether they can use the language, for example:

The teacher holds up a picture of a dirty bowl.

**Teacher:** What's this?

**Learner:** It's a bowl.

**Teacher:** What's the matter with it?

**Learner:** It's dirty.

Write this example on the board.

The problem	The solution	Offer of help
The bowl is dirty		

**Teacher:** It needs...?

**Learner:** ...washing.

Write this example on the board.

The problem	The solution	Offer of help
The bowl is dirty	It needs washing	

**Teacher:** Can you offer to help? It needs washing. Shall I...?

**Learner:** ...wash it?

Write this example on the board.

The problem	The solution	Offer of help
The bowl is dirty	It needs washing	Shall I wash it?

This gives a flavour of the lesson to the learners. The sentences may be written on the board as the presentation progresses, but this slows down the pace of the lesson, so teachers should use their judgement about how much material to write up.

## Presentation and practice

2 Words and sentences should be elicited using the illustrations on page 3.6, using realia as prompts and then drilling the language. The illustrations may need to be enlarged for class use. Teachers could also refer to the answer table on page 3.4 (which provides the answers for sheets A and B) as a prompt.

a) In the first instance, show learners a problem, using a picture or a real object:

**Teacher:** What's the matter? What's the problem? Oh dear!

**Learner:** The cloth is dirty.

Repeat until learners are confident. Note that some objects are plural, for example:

- 'The trays **are** sticky.'

If using realia as prompts, you could consider:

- using a jar of jam and a teaspoon to make the trays sticky
- using real bottles of water with their lids loosened to make the table and floor slightly wet
- filling a waste-paper bin with waste paper until it is overflowing.

b) In the second part of the exercise, ask learners for the solution:

**Teacher:** The cloth is dirty. What needs doing?

**Learner:** It needs washing.

**Teacher:** The trays are dirty. What needs doing?

**Learner:** They need wiping.

Repeat with the prompts until learners are confident.

c) Finally, ask learners to give an example of an offer of help:

**Teacher:** The bowl is dirty. It needs washing. How do you offer to help?

**Learner:** Shall I wash it?

Point out the difference between the object pronouns 'it' and 'them'. Ensure that intonation is correct.

## Written exercise

Distribute copies of sheet A and/or sheet B to learners, depending on level. As the order is the same for both sheets, the sentences can be checked together. Ensure learners use the correct form for plurals.

Answers to sheets A and B can be found on the following page. Sheet A requires learners to choose between two options to complete sentences. Sheet B is more complex and requires a higher level of comprehension ability, as learners have to produce the missing words.

## Answers to sheets A and B

Problem	Solution	Offer of help
The bowl is dirty.	It needs cleaning/washing/wiping.	Shall I clean/wash/wipe it?
The cloth is dirty.	It needs washing.	Shall I wash it?
The floor is dirty.	It needs sweeping.	Shall I sweep it?
The trays are sticky.	They need wiping.	Shall I wipe them?
The table is wet.	It needs drying/wiping.	Shall I dry/wipe it?
The floor is wet/slippery.	It needs mopping.	Shall I mop it?
The surfaces are dusty.	They need wiping.	Shall I wipe them?
The paper is torn.	It needs replacing.	Shall I replace it?
The spoon is bent.	It needs throwing away.	Shall I throw it away?
The plate is cracked.	It needs throwing away.	Shall I throw it away?
The plastic cup is leaking.	It needs throwing away.	Shall I throw it away?
The litter is on the floor.	It needs picking up.	Shall I pick it up?
The bin is full.	It needs emptying.	Shall I empty it?
The room is untidy.	It needs tidying.	Shall I tidy it?

### Role play

- Distribute copies of sheet D and/or sheet E to learners. Sheet D shows an illustration of a very dirty, untidy café and sheet E shows an illustration of a room in a care home. Ask learners to pair up and to count the problems. One learner should say what is wrong in the scene and what needs doing. Their partner should offer to put it right. At the end of the exercise, see how many problems each pair has found.

### Learners' own workplace

- Elicit the sort of tasks the learners have to undertake in their specific work situation in pairs or as a whole class. Sheet C may be used to facilitate this.

## Extension and differentiation

As well as offering to sort out a problem, learners could practise asking for things to be done using 'would you', 'could you' and 'would you mind'.

Think of possible replies to offers of help, for example:

- 'Yes, please.'
- 'Thank you.'
- 'No, just leave it.'
- 'Not now, thanks.'

Other ways of offering to do something could also be explored, for example:

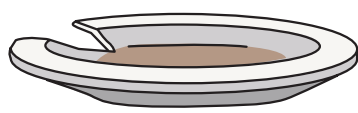
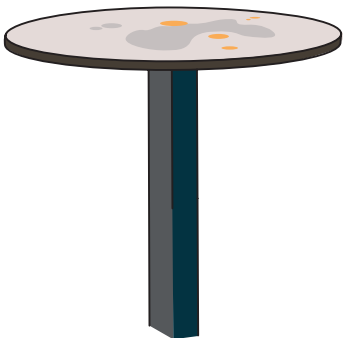
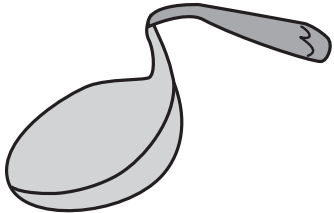
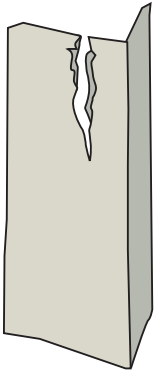
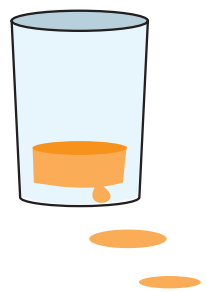
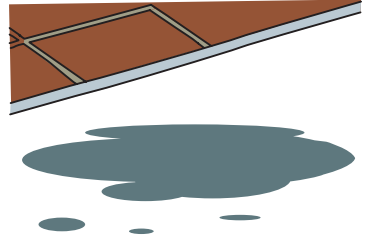
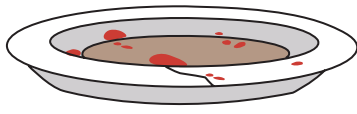
- 'I'll wipe it for you.'
- 'Would you like me to wipe it?'

Some learners may query the word order with statements such as 'Pick it up' and 'Throw it away'. Use an example, such as:

- 'Turn the music up/down.'
- 'Turn up/down the music.'

With phrasal verbs like this, the noun can come after the verb (for example 'Turn the radio up') or after the preposition/particle (for example 'Turn up the radio'). However, the pronoun cannot come after the preposition/particle. It should be 'turn it up', not 'turn up it'.

More-able learners could do extra work on phrasal verbs.





# What's the problem?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Look at the problems and offers of help below. Cross out the word that doesn't fit in each case. The first example has been done for you.

Problem	Offer of help
The bowl <b>is/are</b> dirty.	Shall I <del>dry</del> /wash it?
The cloth is <b>dirty/leaking</b> .	Shall I <b>wash</b> /stick it?
The floor is <b>dirty/torn</b> .	Shall I <b>dust</b> /sweep it?
The trays <b>is/are</b> sticky.	Shall I <b>empty</b> /wipe them?
The table <b>is/are</b> wet.	Shall I <b>wipe</b> /dust it?
The floor is <b>wet/torn</b> .	Shall I <b>mop</b> /empty it?
The surfaces <b>is/are</b> dusty.	Shall I <b>empty</b> /wipe them?
The paper is <b>torn/leaking</b> .	Shall I <b>stick</b> /replace it?
The spoon <b>is/are</b> bent.	Shall I <b>stick</b> it/ <b>throw</b> it away?
The plate is <b>cracked/untidy</b> .	Shall I <b>throw</b> it away/ <b>wipe</b> it?
The plastic cup <b>is/are</b> leaking.	Shall I <b>throw</b> it away/ <b>wash</b> it?
The litter <b>is/are</b> on the floor.	Shall I <b>wipe</b> it/ <b>pick</b> it up?
The bin is <b>full/bent</b> .	Shall I <b>mop</b> /empty it?
The room is <b>bent/untidy</b> .	Shall I <b>tidy</b> it/ <b>throw</b> it away?



# What's the problem?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Fill in the gaps below.

Problem	Solution	Offer of help
The bowl ____ dirty.	It needs _____.	Shall I wash ____?
____ cloth is dirty.	It _____ washing.	_____ I wash it?
The floor is _____.	It _____ sweeping.	Shall I _____ it?
The trays ____ sticky.	They need _____.	_____ I wipe them?
____ table is wet.	It needs _____.	Shall I wipe ____?
The floor is _____.	It _____ mopping.	Shall I _____ it?
The surfaces ____ dusty.	They _____ wiping.	Shall I _____ them?
The paper ____ torn.	It _____ replacing.	Shall I _____ it?
____ spoon is bent.	____ needs throwing away.	Shall __ throw it away?
The plate ____ cracked.	It needs throwing _____.	Shall I _____ it away?
The plastic cup ____ leaking.	____ needs throwing away.	Shall I _____ it away?
The litter ____ on the floor.	It needs picking ____.	Shall I _____ it up?
____ bin is full.	It needs _____.	_____ I empty it?
The room ____ untidy.	It needs _____.	Shall I tidy ____?



# What's the problem?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## At your workplace

What problems need sorting out at your workplace? What jobs need doing? What are the solutions? How would you offer to help?

Fill in the gaps below.

Problem	Solution	Offer of help
1		
2		
3		
4		
5		



# What's the problem?

Name \_\_\_\_\_



In pairs, look at the picture. How many jobs need to be done? Tell your partner what is wrong and what needs doing. Your partner must be very helpful and offer to put it right, for example:

**Learner 1:** The table is dirty! It needs wiping!

**Learner 2:** Shall I wipe it?



# What's the problem?

Name \_\_\_\_\_



In pairs, look at the picture. How many jobs need to be done? Tell your partner what is wrong and what needs doing. Your partner must be very helpful and offer to put it right, for example:

**Learner 1:** The tray is sticky! It needs wiping!

**Learner 2:** Shall I wipe it?