

### BEING POLITE

1 Look at the three photos. What kind of help might you ask for in each situation?



2 Read the three conversations. Match each conversation to the correct photo.

#### Conversation 1

- A: Excuse me. Could you tell me where platform 4 is, please?
- B: Of course. It's just over there, on the right.
- A: Thank you. And do you know whether the trains to London go from there?
- B: Yes, they do. I think the next one's in twenty minutes.
- A: Thank you very much.
- B: You're welcome.

#### Conversation 2

- A: How are you feeling now? Is your throat still sore?
- B: It's not too bad now, thanks.
- A: Would you like me to call anyone for you?
- B: Yes, please. Do you think you could call my mum? I've got her number here.

#### Conversation 3

- A: Excuse me. Do you know if that's the City Museum over there?
- B: Yes, it is.
- A: Thank you. And have you any idea where the main entrance is?
- B: Yes. It's just there, on the left.
- A: Thank you.

3 Read the conversations again. In which conversation does someone ...

- 1 ask if someone is OK?
- 2 give information about a time?
- 3 ask for information about a building?
- 4 offer to do something for someone?
- 5 ask someone to do something?
- 6 respond after someone has said 'thank you'?

### KEY LANGUAGE FOR BEING POLITE

#### Getting someone's attention

*Excuse me.*

#### Asking for information

*Can/Could you tell me who/what/where/when ...? Do you know if/whether ...? Have you any idea who/what/where ...?*

#### Asking someone to do something

*Do you think you could ...? Would you mind ...ing?*

#### Offering to do something

*Would you like me to ...?*

#### Thanking someone

*Thank you (very much).*

#### Responding when someone thanks you

*You're welcome.*

4 Read the Key Language box. Which questions and expressions do the people use in Conversations 1–3?

- Conversation 1: .....
- Conversation 2: .....
- Conversation 3: .....

5 Put the conversations in the correct order.

#### Conversation 1

- A: Thank you.
- B: Excuse me. Could you tell me where the ticket office is, please?
- C: You're welcome.
- D: Sure. It's over there, on the left.

#### Conversation 2

- A: I just feel a bit unwell. I think I need to sit down.
- B: No, that's very kind, but I'm fine. Thank you.
- C: OK. There's a seat over there. Would you like me to call someone for you?
- D: Excuse me, are you all right?

**6 Write the words in the correct order to make indirect questions.**

- 1 walk / think / you / can / you / do  
.....?
- 2 what / idea / time / have / it / is / you / any  
.....?
- 3 tell / me / where / can / you / the bus stop / please / is  
.....?
- 4 know / whether / you / the zoo / open / today / do / is  
.....?
- 5 helping / mind / you / me / would  
.....?

**7 Rewrite the questions as indirect questions, to make them more polite. Use the word in brackets.**

- 1 Where is the reception desk? (tell)  
.....
- 2 Is there a supermarket near here? (know)  
.....
- 3 Where is your friend? (idea)  
.....
- 4 Can you call a taxi for me? (think)  
.....
- 5 Shall I help you? (like)  
.....

**8 Complete the conversations with the correct word from the Key Language box.**

**Conversation 1**

- A:** <sup>1</sup> ..... me. Could you <sup>2</sup> ..... me where the nearest underground station is, please?
- B:** Sure. It's just along there, on the left.
- A:** Thank you <sup>3</sup> ..... much.
- B:** You're <sup>4</sup> .....

**Conversation 2**

- A:** Do you <sup>5</sup> ..... if this is the bus to the airport?
- B:** Yes it is. <sup>6</sup> ..... you like me to help you with your bags?
- A:** Oh, yes please. Do you <sup>7</sup> ..... you could put them up on the luggage rack for me?
- B:** Of course.
- A:** Thank you.

**9 Work in pairs. One of you is Student A and the other is Student B. Read your instructions and practise Role-plays 1 and 2 using indirect questions and other phrases for being polite. Then swap roles and practise again.**

**Role-play 1**

**Student A**

You are visiting a new city and are in the tourist information office. You want some information about the science museum (where it is, opening times, price, etc.). Find out as much information as you can. Thank the person for their help.

**Student B**

You work in the tourist information office. Answer Student A's questions with this information about the science museum.

Science museum – next to the railway station  
Open 7 days a week, 9 am to 6 pm  
Admission free

**Role-play 2**

**Student A**

You are at the bus station and you suddenly feel ill. Answer Student B's questions and ask them to call your friend for you. Thank them for their help.

**Student B**

You are at the bus station. You notice that someone looks unwell. Ask if they are OK and offer to help. If they ask you to call someone, ask for the number.

**Active listening**

Listen while your partner is speaking. What indirect questions does your partner use? What other phrases for being polite does he/she use?