

Asking for Directions

In this lesson, you will practice asking for directions and helping people who need directions.



Pre-Reading

A. Warm-Up Questions

1. Do you sometimes ask people for directions on the street? Why or why not?
2. When was the last time you got lost?
3. Do you use a map when you are out of town?

B. Vocabulary Preview

Match the words on the left with the correct meanings on the right.

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| ___ 1. post office | a) to take someone's attention away from something or someone |
| ___ 2. out of town | b) it's easy or plain to see |
| ___ 3. interrupt | c) a place where you mail letters and buy stamps |
| ___ 4. block | d) one section of a street, a section between two crossroads |
| ___ 5. traffic light | e) a red, green, or amber light that tells people to stop, go, or slow down |
| ___ 6. you can't miss it | f) in a place where you are not a local resident |
| ___ 7. repeat | g) I understand |
| ___ 8. I've got it | h) to say again |

Dialogue Reading

Read the dialogue with your partner a few times. Take turns being each character. Practice your intonation and pronunciation. Circle any new words or phrases that you need to practice.

Man on the street: Excuse me. **Can you tell me how to get to the post office?**

Second man: **I'm sorry. I don't know. I'm from out of town.**

(a minute later)

Man on the street: Excuse me. Do you know where the post office is?

Woman: **Sure. It's not far from here. Walk straight ahead** until you get to Main Street. Then...

Man on the street: Sorry to interrupt you. **How many blocks is that?**

Woman: **It's about two or three blocks. It's the first traffic light** you come to. When you get to Main Street, turn right and walk one block to Broadway. Then **turn left** and go about half a block.

Man on the street: Which side of the street is it on?

Woman: Coming from this direction, **it'll be on your right side.**
It's in the middle of the block, next to the Sweets Ice Cream Shop.
You can't miss it. Do you want me to repeat any of that?

Man on the street: **No, that's okay. I've got it.** Thanks a lot.

Woman: You're welcome.

Practice

Work with your partner. Role-play the dialogue on page 2, substituting the different expressions below. Then switch roles.

1. **Can you tell me how to get to the post office?**
 - Can you tell me where the post office is?
 - Do you know where the post office is?
2. Can you tell me how to get to the **post office**?
 - ...the museum
 - ...the zoo
 - ...the school
 - ...the train station
 - ...the theater
3. **I'm sorry. I don't know.**
 - I'm afraid not.
 - I'm afraid I can't.
4. **I'm from out of town.**
 - I don't live here. I'm just a visitor.
 - I really don't know the city very well.
5. **Sure. It's not far from here.**
 - Yes. It's quite close to here.
 - It's only about a ten-minute walk from here.
6. **Walk straight ahead** until you get to Main Street.
 - Walk down the street...
 - Walk three blocks...
 - Walk up the block...
 - Keep walking in this direction...
7. **How many blocks is that?**
 - How far is that?
8. **It's about two or three blocks.**
 - It's about a five-minute walk.
9. **It's the first traffic light** you come to.
 - It's the second intersection...
10. **Then turn left** and go about half a block.
 - Then turn right...
11. Coming from this direction, **it'll be on your right side.**
 - ...it's on your left.
12. **It's in the middle of the block...**
 - It's at the end of the block...
 - It's on the corner...
13. **...next to the Sweets Ice Cream Shop.**
 - ...beside the bank.
 - ...between the pharmacy and the bank.
 - ...across the street from a big church.
14. **You can't miss it.**
 - It's easy to find.
15. **Do you want me to repeat any of that?**
 - Did you catch all of that?
 - Do you understand?
16. **No, that's okay. I've got it.**
 - Yes. It's very clear.
 - It's okay. I understand.

Listening Practice

Listen to the recording of the dialogue from page 2. Fill in the missing words as you listen. Listen again. Now look back at page 2 and check your work. Did you fill in the correct words? Did you spell everything correctly?

Man 1: Excuse me. Can you tell me _____ the post office?

Man 2: I'm sorry. I don't _____. I'm from out of town.

(a minute later)

Man 1: Excuse me. Do you know _____ the post office is?

Woman: Sure. It's not far from here. Walk _____ until you get to Main Street. Then...

Man 1: Sorry to interrupt you. How many blocks is that?

Woman: It's about two or three blocks. It's the first traffic light you come to. _____ Main Street, turn right and walk one block to Broadway. Then turn left and go about half a block.

Man 1: Which side of the street is it on?

Woman: Coming from this direction, _____ on your right side. It's in the middle of the block, next to the Sweets Ice Cream Shop. You can't miss it. Do you want me to repeat any of that?

Man 1: No, _____. I've got it. Thanks a lot.

Woman: You're _____.

Review

Your teacher will now assess your ability to ask for and give directions.

Task 1

LISTEN & ANSWER

Listen to the conversation and answer the questions.
Your teacher will tell you if you have to write or say the answers.

1. Why is the first speaker talking to people he doesn't know?

2. Why can't the first man help the man who is looking for something?

3. How far away is the post office?

4. What does the woman say to do after getting to Main Street?

5. What does the woman offer to do after giving the directions?

Task 2

GIVE DIRECTIONS TO YOUR HOME

Explain to a classmate or your teacher how to get to your home from school. Explain it as if you just met this speaker on the street.

Answer Key

LESSON DESCRIPTION:

In this lesson, a man wants to get directions to the post office. A woman on the street gives him directions. Students learn expressions to use when asking for and giving directions, and they have multiple chances to practice through speaking tasks and writing their own dialogues.

LEVEL: Low Int – Int

TIME: 1.5 hours

TAGS: directions, asking for directions, map, travel, tourist, assessment, assessment task

Pre-Reading

A. WARM-UP QUESTIONS

Discuss as a class or in small groups. Answers will vary.

B. VOCABULARY PREVIEW

- | | | | |
|------|------|------|------|
| 1. c | 3. a | 5. e | 7. h |
| 2. f | 4. d | 6. b | 8. g |

Dialogue Reading

Give your students time to read the dialogue in pairs.

Practice

Have your students read the dialogue again and practice subbing in some of the different expressions.

Listening Practice

Have students complete the dialogue by listening to the recording or by having three students read the completed dialogue from page 2.

Write Your Own Dialogue

Encourage your students to use vocabulary from the model.

(continued on the next page...)

Answer Key cont.

Review (Assessment Tasks)

The following tasks can be used for assessment purposes and/or review practice. You can save all of the tasks until the end or assess your students throughout the lesson.

TASK 1

Play the audio from this lesson. Then assign the questions. You can decide if you want your students to say or write the answers.

1. The man on the street is looking for directions to the post office.
2. The first man is from out of town, so can't help the man find what he is looking for.
3. The post office is not far away. It's only a few blocks away.
4. The woman says to walk up to Broadway and turn left.
5. The woman offers to repeat the directions.

TASK 2

Check that students are giving directions correctly. You may also want them to submit a written version if you have a big class and can't monitor everyone at once.

SPELLING NOTE:

This lesson shows the American spelling of the words *Theater* and *Practice*. Most other English-speaking countries spell these words this way: *Theatre* and *Practise* (when used as a verb; *Practice* when used as a noun). Make it a challenge for your students to find these words in the lesson and see if they know the alternate spellings.

