

Pre-Intermediate – Different Ways to Say “Hello”

Aim: To help students understand how to say *hello* to different people in English.

Lead-in: As a quick lead-in, get students to share as many different informal words for *hello* they know in different languages as they can. Explain that *informal* means the kind of thing you would say to a friend. (Suggestions: French: *Salut*; Italian: *Ciao*; Spanish: *Hola*; Taiwanese/Chinese: *Ni-hao*; Japanese: *Konnichiwa*; German: *Hallo*; Greek: *Yiasou*).

Elicit from students different people with whom they would be more polite and others they could address in a more casual manner. Use examples such as: *a teacher, parent, grandparent, adult family friend, friend, brother, sister or cousin, an adult stranger*.

Encourage students to first think about their own language and the kinds of greetings they would use for these different people. Point out that normally when you greet people you would also ask their state of health (e.g., *How are you?* or *How's it going?*). Get some more suggestions from the class, but do not write them on the board.

Discuss with students whether or not there is a polite form in their language. Point out that there is no separate polite form of address in English, but that there are more polite ways of greeting people. Encourage students to suggest all the different ways of greeting people in English and add these to the table. Try to get as many suggestions as possible, including greetings for different times of the day.

formal	Good morning/afternoon/evening, Mr./Mrs. + <i>surname</i> * (e.g., <i>Good morning, Mrs. Henderson</i>) How are you? How do you do?
informal	Hi/Hello/Hey, + <i>first name</i> (e.g., <i>Hi, Jack!</i>) What's up? How's it going?

*Point out to students that in English we don't usually address people with *Mr./Mrs. + first name*. We tend to call people by their first name informally or use no specific address at all in more formal situations. (*Madam* and *Sir* are only used in service situations – in shops, restaurants, etc.)

Finish the activity by getting students to tell you what physical contact they would make with the types of people you've listed. Elicit the answers to: *Who would you hug? Who would you kiss on the cheek? Who would you shake hands with?*

Choose A Scenario: Ask students to work in pairs and to choose a scenario (A–C).

Explain to students that they are going to create a dialogue of not more than four lines based on the scenario, then act it out. Explain that students should write the dialogues together, choose their roles and then act them out.

Point out to students that in order to create their dialogue, they need to decide on the best way to greet each person by referring to the table. They should also take some notes about the appropriate physical behaviour. (*How will they look at them? What address will they use? Will they shake hands or kiss?*)

Once students have prepared their dialogues, they should practise acting them out before presenting to another pair. Remind students to refer to the Reflection Point.

Reflection Point: Explain to students that it's important to behave in the correct way when you greet people because if you get it wrong, it can be confusing. Point out that in different countries different types of greeting are acceptable; for example, the way you look at people or interact with people is different depending on where you are in the world. However, whether you are in an informal or formal situation it's important to remain polite. Explain to students that it's also important to use people's names and, on first meeting a person, to listen carefully for their name and remember it.

Class discussion: Group students with other pairs who approached the same scenario. Ask them to act out their scenarios for each other and to compare the different approaches they used.

Find out from students whether or not they used the same styles of greetings and address. Ask: *Do you greet people your age and older people in the same way? Do you greet friends and other same-age people in the same way?* Discuss some of these questions with the class:

- Are the ways of greeting people very different in your country? How?
- Why is it important to greet people in the correct way?
- If you're not really sure how to greet someone, what do you do?
- Is the expression on your face important when you greet people? Why? / Why not?

Work alone: Ask students to choose a second scenario from A–C but to approach the task alone. When students have finished, pair each one up with another student who approached the same task.

Get them to compare their dialogues and agree on whether or not they have each approached it in the correct way. Then invite volunteers to act out one of their dialogues.

Ask the class to listen to the talks and give each one a mark out of two for each of the following:

- *Correct language*
- *Correct physical contact (hand shake / kiss)*
- *Correct body language (correct smiles and eye contact)*

Round up the activity by asking students who got the maximum six points and who got fewer than six points.

Extension: Suggest students create simple 'Greetings' posters. They can work in pairs or groups to devise a list of *DOs* and *DON'Ts*, or a guide list using imperatives.

To start them off, ask students whether they think these possible suggestions are acceptable in an English-speaking context and ask them why or why not:

- Using your teacher's first name, (*Hi, Sarah* or *Good morning, Greg*)
- Kissing new friends on the cheek
- Hugging strangers
- Looking away when people talk to you
- Looking at people for a long time
- Laughing when people talk to you
- Encourage students to present their posters in the next lesson and compare their lists.