

Talk a Lot

Spoken English Course

80 Common Functions of Spoken English

*Putting the **FUN** back into Functions!*

Instructions

This pack contains printable worksheets with activities for students at Elementary Level and Intermediate Level. You could also use a mix of the two sets for students at Pre-Intermediate Level. Below are some ideas for using the resources, although of course you could always find your own uses for them.

Lesson aims:

- to understand the concept of functions in spoken (or written) English
- to understand and practise *x* number of functions, e.g. 5, 10, 20, 40, etc.

This work is rewarding: your SS will feel a real sense of achievement when they realise that they are able to recognize and use successfully 20, 40, 60, or 80 different functions in English – that they can communicate effectively in many different ways.

List – 40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Elementary & Intermediate)

- Make sure that SS understand the list; they should check new words in a dictionary.
- Translate each function into students' first language.
- Drill them – check pronunciation; notice how very often two-syllable verbs are stressed on the second syllable, e.g. **advise**, **agree**, **allow**, etc. SS practise reading the phonetic NEA (New English Alphabet) version; notice how often the weak syllable doesn't contain a vowel sound, except a Schwa, e.g. receive = r Seev and suggest = s Jest; find functions that have the same stressed vowel sound, e.g. advise / reply.
- Work with a partner. Say a sentence – your partner guesses which function(s) you are using.
- Write a sentence that shows each function in use – **but without using the verb**, e.g.

allow “You can borrow my jacket.” = ✓ “I allow you to borrow my jacket.” = ✗

- Work with a partner. Create a dialogue which must include a given group (or random group) of functions.
- Write the noun form of each infinitive verb, e.g.

explain – explanation; **insult** – insult; **refuse** – refusal, etc.

Look at how the stress can change between the words; notice suffixes, e.g. a word is always stressed before “-tion”.

- Grammar: look at the kind of language typically used with each function, e.g.

advise should / ought to, etc.
ask can I...? / is it possible to...?, etc.

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Instructions

- Team quiz: separate the SS into two or more teams; give a board pen to one member from each; say a sentence, then they run to the board and write the function – with team members supporting; the winner is the person to write it first with correct spelling; or do it the other way round – say a function and they have to run to the board and write a sentence (with the help of their team members) – or draw a picture to illustrate the function.
- Which functions are similar? e.g. offer / suggest – what is the difference?

Matching Game 1 & 2

- Cut up the cards, mix them up, then match each function to an example sentence.
- Translate each function and/or sentence into your first language.
- Put the function cards into matching pairs of opposite functions, e.g. ask / reply.
- Put the functions into groups – positive and negative functions, e.g.

Positive: agree, allow Negative: attack, cancel

- Mix up the function cards, then put them into alphabetical order, or reverse alphabetical order.
- Put the function cards into groups – functions that you use in your life:

Usually / Often

Sometimes

Rarely / Never

- Discuss with a partner: which functions have you used so far today / yesterday / this week? In each case, say **why** – what was the situation? What happened?
- Use a dialogue or text that you have found online or in a book, and match different functions to different parts of the text.
- Give SS one function card each; get them to walk around the room; when they meet another student they have to say something to illustrate their function and the other student has to guess; SS write down a list of who has which function. Alternatively, the student has a function taped to their back and they have to find out what it is by listening as other students say something which illustrates that function.

Matching Game 1 & 2 – Blank Cards

- Write a sentence that shows each function in use – **but without using the verb**, e.g.

allow “You can borrow my jacket.” = ✓ “I allow you to borrow my jacket.” = ✗

Then mix up all the cards and match each function card with a sentence card. If SS did the writing part in pairs or small groups, they could then swap sets with another pair or group to get a fresh challenge.

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Elementary)

The **functions** of spoken English are reasons for speaking. When we speak, it is usually with a purpose in mind. We may use many different functions in one conversation. (Note: these functions can also apply to written English.)

Complete the table below:

Function:	Pronunciation:	Translation:	Example Sentence:
advise	uh Dvaiz		
agree	uh Gree		
allow	uh Lau		
apologise	uh Po l jaiz		
arrange	uh Reinj		
ask	Arsk		
attack	uh Tak		
cancel	Kan sl		
compare	km Peir		
complain	km Plein		
confirm	kn Ferm		
congratulate	kn Gra ch leit		
criticise	Kri t saiz		
demand	d Marnd		
describe	d Skraib		
disagree	di s Gree		
explain	e Ksplein		
give	Giv		
greet	Greet		
insult	in Sult		
interrupt	in t Rupt		
introduce	in tr Joos		
invite	in Vait		
mock	Mok		
offer	O f		
order	Or d		
part	Part		
persuade	p Sweid		
praise	Preiz		
predict	pr Dikt		
prohibit	pr Hi bit		
promise	Pro mis		
receive	r Seev		
refuse	r Fyooz		
reply	r Plai		
suggest	s Jest		
tell	Tel		
thank	Ttangk		
threaten	Ttre tn		
warn	Worn		

Talk a Lot

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Elementary)

Matching Game 1

Cut up the cards below. Then mix them up and students have to match each function (left) with an example sentence:

advise	You ought to put on some sun cream.
allow	You can smoke here.
arrange	Let's meet at ten o'clock by the lake.
attack	You are so selfish and inconsiderate! You never do anything to help your family!
compare	My phone is better than yours.
confirm	Yes, tomorrow afternoon at four will be fine.
criticise	I don't like your jacket, and you need to get your hair cut.
describe	The garden was large and peaceful.
explain	I was late because I'd lost my train ticket and had to run home to get it.
greet	Hi! How are you doing?
interrupt	Can I just say something...?
invite	Do you want to come to my party tomorrow night?
offer	So we'd like you to work for our company. What do you say?
part	See you.
praise	You are a really wonderful person.
prohibit	You are not allowed to wear trainers here.
receive	It's just what I wanted!
reply	Is she? Good.
tell	My friend is getting divorced.
threaten	You'd better be on time or I'll tell the boss.

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Elementary)

Matching Game 1 – Blank Cards

Cut up the cards below. Students split into groups and each writes some example sentences. Then mix them up and students have to match each function (left) with an example sentence:

advise	
allow	
arrange	
attack	
compare	
confirm	
criticise	
describe	
explain	
greet	
interrupt	
invite	
offer	
part	
praise	
prohibit	
receive	
reply	
tell	
threaten	

Talk a Lot

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Elementary)

Matching Game 2

Cut up the cards below. Then mix them up and students have to match each function (left) with an example sentence:

agree	Yes, you're right.
apologise	I'm so sorry. Can you forgive me?
ask	Can I have a glass of water, please?
cancel	I'm afraid I won't be able to attend on Friday after all.
complain	My feet are killing me! I've been running around all day!
congratulate	Well done for passing your exams!
demand	Give me the remote control!
disagree	I don't think you're right about that.
give	Here you are.
insult	They are complete idiots.
introduce	This is my friend Tom.
mock	This guy I know got 25% on the last test. He's so stupid! He really hasn't got a clue!
order	Do the washing up.
persuade	You have to let me borrow the car. I'll be so careful with it, and I'll try to bring it back with a full tank of petrol
predict	It'll probably rain tomorrow.
promise	I won't tell anyone your secret.
refuse	I won't do the shopping for you. I haven't got time and I don't want to.
suggest	Why don't you try sailing?
thank	Ta very much.
warn	Stay away from that old bridge – it's really dangerous!

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Elementary)

Matching Game 2 – Blank Cards

Cut up the cards below. Students split into groups and each writes some example sentences. Then mix them up and students have to match each function (left) with an example sentence:

agree	
apologise	
ask	
cancel	
complain	
congratulate	
demand	
disagree	
give	
insult	
introduce	
mock	
order	
persuade	
predict	
promise	
refuse	
suggest	
thank	
warn	

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Intermediate)

The **functions** of spoken English are reasons for speaking. When we speak, it is usually with a purpose in mind. We may use many different functions in one conversation. (Note: these functions can also apply to written English.)

Complete the table below:

Function:	Pronunciation:	Translation:	Example Sentence:
accept	uh Ksept		
accuse	uh Kyooz		
admit	uh Dmit		
ask permission	ar skp Mi shn		
assure	uh Shuuw		
beg	Beg		
berate	b Reit		
check	Chek		
choose	Chooz		
claim	Kleim		
clarify	Kla r fai		
condemn	kn Dem		
console	kn Seul		
contrast	kn Trarst		
convince	kn Vins		
curse	Kers		
discuss	di Skus		
disown	di Seun		
embarrass	uhm Ba rs		
encourage	in Ku rij		
express an emotion	e kspre s n Meu shn		
express an opinion	e kspre s n Pin yn		
express likes/dislikes	e kspre Slaikz/Di slaikz		
guess	Ges		
inform	in Form		
justify	Ju st fai		
moan	Meun		
pardon	Par dn		
prefer	pr Fer		
promote	pr Meut		
protest	pr Test		
recommend	re k Mend		
refute	r Fyoot		
regret	r Gret		
remind	r Maind		
renege	r Neig		
sell	Sel		
stress	Stres		
wish	Wish		
wish well	wi Shwel		

Talk a Lot

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Intermediate)

Matching Game 1

Cut up the cards below. Then mix them up and students have to match each function (left) with an example sentence:

accuse	<i>He did it!</i>
ask permission	Can I have a day off tomorrow, please?
assure	Your job interview will be fine, I'm positive!
berate	You shouldn't have come back so late! I had to do everything on my own!
choose	I'll have that one, please.
clarify	So, we're meeting at two, then, not three?
console	Don't cry! It'll be alright! There, there!
convince	You have to believe me, because...
discuss	What do <i>you</i> think, Jeff?
encourage	Keep going – you're doing really well!
express an opinion	I think that exams are getting easier.
justify	We had to discipline Paul, because he was constantly late for work.
moan	It's the weekend and I've got far too much homework to do!
prefer	I like dark chocolate best.
protest	We want better pay and working conditions!
recommend	Have you ever been to Edinburgh? It's wonderful – you really should go there!
regret	If only I'd been there when Grandma had her fall.
remind	Don't forget to make your packed lunch.
sell	And if you bought the whole set you could save up to £35.
wish	I would love to visit Thailand before I die.

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Intermediate)

Matching Game 1 – Blank Cards

Cut up the cards below. Students split into groups and each writes some example sentences. Then mix them up and students have to match each function (left) with an example sentence:

accuse	
ask permission	
assure	
berate	
choose	
clarify	
console	
convince	
discuss	
encourage	
express an opinion	
justify	
moan	
prefer	
protest	
recommend	
regret	
remind	
sell	
wish	

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Intermediate)

Matching Game 2

Cut up the cards below. Then mix them up and students have to match each function (left) with an example sentence:

accept	OK, yes. That's fair enough.
admit	I'm sorry – I was wrong.
beg	Please, please, <i>please</i> let me go with you!
check	What time is it?
claim	The managers made a mistake when they paid me.
condemn	This is the worst hotel I have ever had the misfortune to book into!
contrast	Both courses were delicious, although the dessert was more unusual.
curse	Drop dead!
disown	I don't want anything to do with it.
embarrass	Jane was up all night drinking tequila with her mum's toyboy, weren't you Jane?
express an emotion	I feel so exhausted today.
express likes/dislikes	I love the works of Antonio Vivaldi.
guess	Are you in the kitchen?
inform	The bus leaves tomorrow morning at 9 am.
pardon	I forgive you.
promote	The latest book by Briggs is another masterpiece.
refute	That is absolute nonsense! Rubbish!
renege	I won't be able to make it after all.
stress	Her name is <i>Blyth</i> . That's Blyth, with a "y". B.L. Y.T.H. Have you got that?
wish well	I hope you all have a nice time.

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40 Common Functions of Spoken English (Intermediate)

Matching Game 2 – Blank Cards

Cut up the cards below. Students split into groups and each writes some example sentences. Then mix them up and students have to match each function (left) with an example sentence:

accept	
admit	
beg	
check	
claim	
condemn	
contrast	
curse	
disown	
embarrass	
express an emotion	
express likes/dislikes	
guess	
inform	
pardon	
promote	
refute	
renege	
stress	
wish well	