

11.2 *Dear Life Advisor*

Aim: Write letters of advice and debate opinions

Preparation: Make one copy of Worksheet 11.2 for every S.

Comment: Use at the end of Unit 11, Lesson B.

Think and Plan (10 minutes)

- Ss work in small groups. Give each S a handout.
- Ss read the project objective. After eliciting answers to the first *Think* question, have Ss read the example letters.
- Ask Ss for other possible responses to the letter. Point out that letters of advice (responding to a letter about a problem) usually begin by acknowledging the problem and conclude by offering advice. Have Ss find and underline the parts of the example response that do these things.
- Go over the letters under *Plan*. Have groups choose a problem and brainstorm possible responses. Have each S make notes outlining his or her own response to the problem.

Put together and Present (30 minutes)

- At the next class, Ss bring in their letters of response. Have the same groups share their letters and ask questions about the advice each member gave. Groups practice presenting their problem, responses, and answers to each other's questions.
- Have groups present their problems and responses to the class. Encourage questions from the class.
- Finally, ask the class to vote on the most interesting problem and the best responses. Discuss other possible solutions. If you wish, display the letters and their responses around the classroom or have Ss post them on a blog to share with the class.

Objective

Write letters of advice and debate your ideas in front of the class.

Think

Where can you find letters of advice? Read the letter and response below. Do you agree with the response?

Dear Life Advisor,

While eating lunch the other day, I found a piece of metal in my food. I pushed the plate aside and called the waiter over to complain. He apologized, explained I wouldn't be charged for my meal, and began to take the dish away. That's when my co-worker stopped him and said, "Just wrap that up and I'll take it home." I was shocked. I didn't say anything, but my opinion of my co-worker changed. I wish I'd spoken to him about his odd behavior, but do you think I'm the one being too particular?

— "Shocked" in San Francisco

Dear Shocked,

If you'd asked if I'd complain about metal in my meal, I'd tell you exactly what I'd do. I'd complain. It's not being "particular" to refuse food with metal in it. Complaining about it was the right thing to do, but so was keeping quiet about your co-worker's behavior. You really have no idea about what he was planning to do. Perhaps he was going to give it to a pet, or maybe he was hoping to save some money on dinner. It would have been rude to speak up about his behavior without knowing more about his situation.

Plan

1. Choose one of these letters or write one of your own. Brainstorm responses to the problem. Make sure each group member has a different response.

Dear Life Advisor,

When my boss greeted me today, I noticed he had a big piece of lettuce on one of his teeth. I didn't say anything, but later wondered if I should have. Was I right to keep quiet?

— "Grossed Out" in Glendale

Dear Life Advisor,

My cousin dropped out of college last year, and now all she does is stay home and play games online. She seems happy, but I'm worried about her. Do you think I should say something?

— "Want to Help" in Honolulu

Dear Life Advisor,

After a friend canceled our dinner plans because of a cold, I made some soup to take to her. I was walking up her street to deliver it when I saw her getting into someone's car. I didn't confront her, but do you think I should have?

— "Disappointed" in Detroit

2. Now make notes to outline your own letter of response by answering as many of these questions as you can.
 - What's the problem?
 - What advice do you have?
 - Were the letter writer's actions acceptable?
3. Use the notes you made to write your own letter of response.

Put together

1. Share your letters with your group and discuss your responses.
2. Practice presenting your problem and responses without reading from your letters.

Present

1. Take turns presenting your problem and responses as a panel in front of the class. After each person has presented, question each other and debate the problem.
2. Which group's problem is the most interesting?
3. What other possible solutions are there for these problems?