

12 Describing character

1 Positive or negative comments

Mark the following P (positive) or N (negative):

1. She's got so much personality.
2. She's a bit difficult at times.
3. She isn't easy to get on with.
4. She's got a great sense of humour.
5. She's a bit of a pain sometimes.
6. She's great fun.
7. She can be a pain in the neck.
8. She's my kind of person.

Can you think of people you know who fit these descriptions?

2 He's always doing that

Match the first part of these descriptions with the second parts below:

1. Tony isn't very sensitive.
 2. Mark's so aggressive.
 3. Simon's very thoughtful.
 4. He's so absent-minded.
 5. Joe isn't very self-confident.
 6. He's so vain.
- a. He's always buying me little presents.
 - b. He's always looking in the mirror.
 - c. He's always worrying about what people think of him.
 - d. He's always saying the wrong thing.
 - e. He keeps forgetting where he's put things.
 - f. He keeps getting into fights.

4 Opposites

Match the adjectives in sentences 1 – 5 with the opposites in sentences a – e:

1. Tom's really generous. He bought everyone in the pub a drink last night.
 2. Claire's very hard-working. She never leaves the office until after six o'clock.
 3. Tina's very outgoing. She's made friends with everybody else in the class already.
 4. Brian's a very easy-going sort of guy. Nothing seems to worry him.
 5. Jack's such a cheerful little boy. I've never seen him in a bad mood.
- a. Bruno's so shy. I don't think he's spoken to any of the other students yet.
 - b. I don't understand why he's so miserable. He never stops complaining.
 - c. Lucy's very tense. She's always worrying about something or other.
 - d. Don't expect Tom to put any money in the collection. He's much too mean.
 - e. I can't believe Emma's husband's so lazy. He just sits and watches TV all evening.

In British English informal words for men are: *guy*, *bloke* and *lad*; *lad* is only used for young men.

3 He's far too modest

Complete the following dialogues with the following expressions:

- | | |
|----------------|------------------|
| far too modest | far too sensible |
| much too shy | much too proud |
| much too loyal | far too honest |

1. I think Mark took some money from my bag while we were out.
> No, he's to do a thing like that.
2. I'm still waiting for Lisa to say sorry for sending that fax to the wrong address.
> You'll wait a long time! Lisa's to admit anything's her fault.
3. Jenny left a window open when she went out this morning. Anybody could've got in.
> Are you sure it was Jenny. She's to do anything like that.
4. Apparently, Amy asked Tom if he'd like to go out tomorrow night.
> I don't believe you. She's to ask a boy out!
5. Julie got the highest mark in the class, but she didn't say a word.
> No, she wouldn't. She's to say anything about it.
6. I thought Martin was a good friend but he's been telling everybody that I'm boring.
> Are you sure? Martin's to say something like that behind your back.

5 She can be a bit moody

Complete the following dialogues with the words and phrases below:

- | | | |
|----------|---------|----------|
| moody | amusing | stubborn |
| arrogant | selfish | silly |

1. Lucy never thinks about anyone but herself.
> Yes, she can be a bit sometimes.
2. Oh, Laura's impossible. One minute life is wonderful and the next minute she's in her room crying.
> Yes, she can be a bit, can't she?
3. I really don't like Bob. He seems to think that he's more important than anybody else.
> He certainly can be very
4. Martin's such good fun. He's got a great sense of humour.
> Yes, he can be very at times.
5. I wish Joe would stop playing practical jokes all the time. It gets very tiring.
> Yes, he can be really at times. I wish he'd grow up and behave like an adult.
6. I told Emma that she shouldn't leave university but she never listens to me.
> No, she really can be very when she wants, can't she?

6 Don't be so nose

Complete the dialogues below with these adjectives:

- | | | | |
|-------|-----------|-------|-------|
| bossy | sensitive | fussy | nosey |
|-------|-----------|-------|-------|

1. How much do you earn in your new job?
> That's a bit of you!
2. You can do the washing up while I'm out.
> You can be so at times!
3. Jenny's really upset about what you said.
> She's too
4. I can't eat these vegetables. They've been cooked in oil.
> Oh, don't be so

Now go back and add these expressions to the end of the responses:

- a. I was only joking!
- b. I'm not your slave!
- c. It's none of your business, actually.
- d. All you ever do is complain!

7 Types of people

Here are 8 different kinds of people. Use them in the sentences below:

- | | |
|----------------|------------|
| a gossip | a big-head |
| an extrovert | a laugh |
| a couch potato | a snob |
| a coward | a liar |

1. You shouldn't believe a word Justin says. He's a terrible
2. Maria's a terrible She's always talking about everybody else in the office.
3. Roberto's quite an, isn't he? He's got hundreds of friends!
4. Martin's such a He never stops telling people how wonderful he is.
5. You can't keep running away from your responsibilities. You're such a
6. Just because Dave didn't go to university doesn't mean he's any less intelligent than you. Don't be such a
7. Emma's husband's such a He just sits around all day watching TV.
8. Billy knows hundreds of jokes. He's such a !

8 Negative prefixes

Change these words into their opposites by adding un, dis, in, or im:

- | | | |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| . . . reliable | . . . honest | . . . sensitive |
| . . . pleasant | . . . loyal | . . . tolerant |
| . . . patient | . . . mature | . . . friendly |
| . . . decisive | . . . ambitious | . . . selfish |

Add your own words and expressions

13 Adjectives to describe people

That was a silly thing to do

Use these pairs of adjectives in the sentences:

- wise / sensible
- careless / silly
- horrible / nasty
- strange / funny

- I locked my keys in the house this morning.
> That was a very / thing to do.
- I gave my neighbours' little boy some money for his holidays and his parents took it from him!
> Really? What a / thing to do.
- I'm thinking of getting myself a private pension.
> Good idea. That's a very / thing to do.
- They've been married for 25 years and then one day she just walked out and never came back.
> Really? What a / thing to do!

It's very brave of you

Match the beginnings and endings of the following sentences:

- It was a bit cheeky of you
- It's very brave of you
- It was very generous of you
- It was very clever of you
- It was a bit dishonest of you
- to finish this crossword so quickly.
- not to tell them they'd given you too much change.
- to go to India on your own.
- to ask the teacher how old she is.
- to pay for all the drinks.

How complete the following dialogues with the phrases below:

- very kind
- very tactful
- a bit clumsy
- very rude

- I invited Sue and Gerry for dinner. They turned up an hour and a half late and didn't even apologise!
> Really, that was of them, wasn't it?

- 7. Sarah spilt coffee all over the carpet. It made a terrible mess.
> Oh dear. That was of her, wasn't it?
- 8. Mary knew how busy I was, so she offered to collect the kids from school for me.
> That was of her.
- 9. Sue said she had a headache, but she knew that Chris, her first husband, was going to be at the party.
> That was of her. It would have been very embarrassing if she'd turned up.

3 Aren't you being a bit selfish?

Complete the following dialogues with the words below:

- fussy
- pushy
- selfish
- pessimistic
- intolerant
- optimistic

- 1. I know I'm going to get this job – the interview went so well.
> I think you're being a bit Hundreds of people have applied for it.
- 2. I'm trying to persuade Liz to give up her job and come and live with me in Scotland.
> Aren't you being a bit ? You know how important her career is.
- 3. I've looked at fifteen flats and I haven't seen one I really like.
> Don't you think you're being a bit ? You'll never find one that's perfect.
- 4. Why haven't they phoned me back? I know I'm not going to get this job.
> Aren't you being a bit ? You only had the interview yesterday.
- 5. Do you think Ann will come on holiday with me?
> Slow down! You've only just met her! Aren't you being a bit ?
- 6. I hope Bob doesn't become manager. I don't like his accent.
> Don't you think you're being a bit ? You can't dislike him just because of the way he speaks!

4 Wordbuilding

Complete the following sentences with a noun formed from the adjective at the end of each sentence:

- 1. Thousands would have died in last year's famine in Ethiopia, if it wasn't for the of ordinary people. (generous)
- 2. They've always shown me great (kind)
- 3. The theatre's sent me tickets for the wrong day again. I can't believe their (careless)
- 4. Considering how ill I've been, I thought my boss would show a bit more (sympathetic)
- 5. She handled the situation very well. She showed great (sensitive)
- 6. You've been such a great help. I'd like to buy you dinner as an expression of my (grateful)
- 7. I do wish those children would show a little more sometimes. (patient)
- 8. He just told me to shut up and walked off. I've never known such (rude)
- 9. You don't like him because of his accent? You could show a bit more sometimes. (tolerant)
- 10. I think one day we might doubt the of this decision. (wise)

Did you notice how many of these words were used with the verb show? Go back and underline the show + noun expressions.

5 What a nasty thing to say

Which words fit in the two examples below?

- nice
- nasty
- mean
- lovely
- sweet
- unkind
- kind
- rude
- spiteful
- horrible

- 1. He said I was fat.
> Really? What a(n) thing to say.
- 2. I can't believe you're forty-five. You look much younger than that.
> What a thing to say. Thank you.

6 Don't be so impatient

Complete the following sentences with the words below. Then add the comments at the end.

- nosey
- pessimistic
- impatient
- childish

- 1. Haven't you finished? Come on! Hurry up! I've got to go out in ten minutes.
> Oh, don't be so !
- 2. How much do you earn?
> Don't be so !
- 3. Well, if you won't let me watch what I want to watch, I'm not doing the washing up.
> Oh, don't be so !
- 4. I know I won't get this job. I don't know why I bothered applying.
> Don't be so !
a. Why don't you grow up?
b. I've only got one pair of hands!
c. Why not look on the bright side?
d. It's none of your business!

Add your own words and expressions

