

Unit 3: Online forums

SUMMARY

You can use this summary to guide the learning objectives and target setting for your class.

Can-do statements:

By the end of this unit, students will be able to say:

- I can understand advice relating to a specific problem.
- I can judge the sincerity of a piece of written advice.
- I can understand some idiomatic phrases and expressions.

Skill focus

Skimming **Part A 1**, **B 1 2**

Reading for specific details and information:

Part A 2, **B 1 5 6**

Reading for tone: **Part B 3**

Vocabulary

Phrasal verbs: *put someone down*, *mess with*, *get away with*, *get to*, *shoot up*, *even out*, *hang out with*, *take up*, *turn to*, *distance yourself*, *work out*

Idioms: *get on someone's nerves*, *make a big deal out of something*, *go out of your way to*, *grin and bear it*, *take something to heart*

Usage

Recommending: *If I were you I'd ...*, *I would advise you to ...*, *I suggest + verb +ing*, *It might be time to ...*

CLASSROOM EXTENSION IDEAS

You can use some or all of these ideas to check and enhance your students' understanding as they work their way through *Unit 3 of Reading B2+ Upper Intermediate* in class.

Using *Getting Started*

1. Hand out the photocopiable sheet *Getting advice*. Ask students to read the topics and give them five minutes to think of an example of advice people might ask for each one, e.g. *Equipment: Which laptop should I buy?* Then put students into small groups to compare their ideas and to try to find a question for each topic. Feed back as a class. Are there any topics that students struggled with? Which group completed the most boxes?
2. Ask students to work in pairs and talk about:
 - where they get advice on these topics
 - why they choose to get advice here
 - whether or not they visit online forums to get advice.

Ask some students to tell the class about their partner.

Using *Part A*

1. Before starting *Exercise 1*, complete the following *pre-reading* task. Tell students to look at the webpage and ask them if they have ever been on a website like this. If so, do they prefer to give or ask for advice? Discuss some ideas as a class.
2. Ask students to complete *Exercise 1*. Refer them to *Appendix 4 - Abbreviations* if they need help with *Question 3*.
3. Put students into small groups to discuss their answers to *Exercise 2*. Ask three different groups to report back on a different question to the class.
4. Tell students to list vocabulary from Misty's post under the following topics:
 - appearance (*taller, curvier, big, frizzy, dragged through a hedge backwards*)
 - feelings (*get on my nerves, not very confident, self-conscious*)
 - behaviour (*putting me down, bullying, teasing, do sth for fun, working out, make fun of s/o, stop being friends with s/o, make new friends*)

Students can compare their answers in pairs before feeding back as a class.

Using *Part B*

1. Ask students to note down briefly what they would advise Misty to do. They can then compare their answers in groups and discuss what they think about each other's advice. As a whole class, listen to some of the students' advice.
2. Write or display the table below on the board. Go through each piece of advice, asking students to raise their hands if they think it is the best one. Tick the relevant boxes in the table to summarize class opinion.

Get new friends	Do nothing	Talk to your friends	Improve your appearance	Treat your friends the same way

3. Tell students to read the advice in *Exercise 1*. Help students with vocabulary that they may be uncertain about, e.g. *make a big deal out of* (*make a problem bigger than it needs to be*), *go out of their way to* (*make a special effort to do something*), *gorgeous* (*lovely*), *push someone into something* (*force someone to do something*). Ask students to decide in pairs what they think the writer of each piece of advice is advising Misty to do, according to the table. (Answers: **a** Do nothing **b** Get new friends **c** Treat your friends the same way, **d** Talk to your friends **e** Do nothing **f** Improve your appearance)

- Ask students to read the seven responses on the forum and decide what each writer is advising Misty, according to the table. (Answers: **Kitty 14** Get new friends / Talk to your friends **Matt_W** Treat your friends the same way; **Hannah999** Do nothing **Sergio** Get new friends **SportFan** Get new friends / Improve your appearance **Thomas_B** Treat your friends the same way **SuperGirl** Get new friends / Talk to your friends)
- Ask students to complete *Exercises 1* and *2*. Check answers as a class.

Using the Reading Tip

- Ask students to re-read the advice on the webpage and choose which one(s) they agree with most, and which one(s) they like least. They can compare their opinions in pairs or groups, giving reasons for their choices.
- Ask one or two students to explain why they chose a particular piece of advice over the others, specifying whether it was the content or the way the advice was written which helped them decide. Discuss, as a class, how people can write advice in a way that convinces others.
- Direct students to the *Reading tip*. Tell them to discuss in groups what else they would add to the list. Feed back as a class.
- Ask students to complete *Exercise 3*. They will already have discussed some of these questions, so tell them to focus on identifying the phrases and features in the texts which show sympathy and lack of sympathy. Discuss ideas as a class.

Vocabulary work

- Ask students to scan the posts on the webpage and highlight the phrases used to give advice. Ask 'What is the most common way to give advice – a. imperative b. modal verbs or c. other verbs (Answer: imperative).
- Remind students that the phrase you use to give advice can affect the tone, e.g. *I would advise you to ...* sometimes sounds more formal than the imperative form. *It might be worth ...* sounds more cautious than the others.
- Get students to complete *Exercise 4*. Students can practise saying the sentences using different phrases used to give advice each time.
- Complete *Exercises 5* and *6*. Check answers as a class.
- Vocabulary from *Exercises 4*, *5* and *6* can be practised in one or more of the following ways:
 - Students take turns giving one piece of advice to Misty, using phrases from *Exercises 4*, *5* or *6*. This can be a pair, group or whole-class activity.
 - Students write six more questions to test vocabulary, either in the style of *Exercise 5* or *Exercise 6*. Students

then give their questions to other students to complete. This activity can be set as a homework exercise.

- Students prepare a conversation between Misty and one of the advisers. They act out the conversation. Students watch and guess which adviser is talking to Misty.
- Ask students to read through the posts and note down all the phrasal verbs. Once done, make each student responsible for finding out the meaning of one phrasal verb, either by deducing meaning from context, using the mini-dictionary on page 106 or their own dictionary. Students peer teach their phrasal verb to their group or the whole class.

(Suggested phrasal verbs: push into, mess with, get away with, get to, shoot up, even out, hang out with, take up s/t, turn to s/o, distance yourself from)

Optional extension work: Reading, Writing, Vocabulary and Speaking

This activity expands the themes into reading, writing, vocabulary and speaking skills. Hand out the photocopyable page *Problems and advice*. Ask students to write problems which match the advice given, and advice to match the problems given. This task can be completed as homework. As a follow-up activity, have students act out and extend the mini-dialogues in pairs. Ask for one or two pairs to perform their role-play to the class.

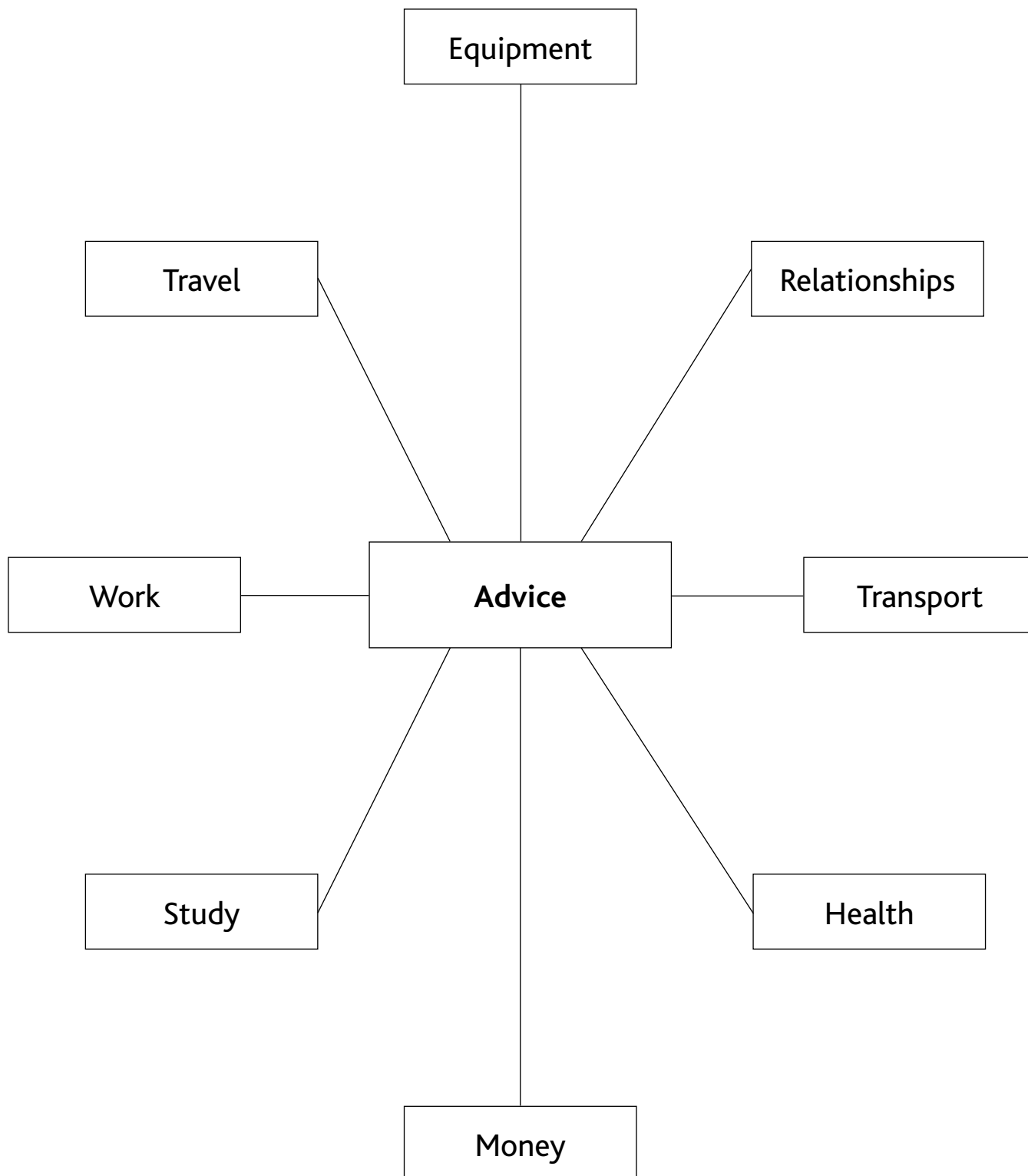
Using Next steps

- If you have access to computers, you can do this part during class time. If not, you can set it as homework. Write up the following types of forum on the board, along with any others which may interest your students:

<i>beauty advice forum</i>	<i>career advice forum</i>
<i>TV and movie forum</i>	<i>PC help forum</i>
<i>relationship forum</i>	
- Put students into groups and ask them to discuss:
 - what sort of advice they might find on each of these forums.
 - who might use these forums.
 - which of the forums they would be interested in using.
 - which forums they have visited in the past.
- Hand out the photocopyable sheet *Advice on forums*. Ask students to visit a forum of their choice. An online search using the types of forum above will take them directly to forums they can use. Students should complete the worksheet by noting down three problems, three pieces of advice for each problem and useful language they come across during their search.

PHOTOCOPIABLES

1 Getting advice



PHOTOCOPIABLES

2 Problems and advice

Complete the speech bubbles to make mini-dialogues asking for and giving advice. Use vocabulary from the unit where possible.

<p>a.</p> <p>My daughter's hair looks as if she's been dragged through a hedge backwards. How can I get her to smarten herself up?</p>	<p></p>
<p>b.</p> <p></p>	<p>I'm afraid that happens to everyone. You'll just have to grin and bear it.</p>
<p>c.</p> <p>I saw my friend bullying a little kid. What can I do?</p>	<p></p>
<p>d.</p> <p></p>	<p>It sounds like it's just a bit of fun. You shouldn't take things so much to heart.</p>
<p>e.</p> <p>My best mate has a new friend and she doesn't want to hang out with me any more.</p>	<p></p>
<p>f.</p> <p></p>	<p>You need to go out of your way to show how much you care.</p>
<p>g.</p> <p>My boss is giving me a hard time at work and I don't know who to turn to.</p>	<p></p>

PHOTOCOPIABLES

3 Advice on forums

Forum name: _____		
		Useful language: Language of recommendation, idioms, expressions, phrasal verbs, etc.
Problem 1:	Advice 1:	
	Advice 2:	
	Advice 3:	
Problem 2:	Advice 1:	
	Advice 2:	
	Advice 3:	
Problem 3:	Advice 1:	
	Advice 2:	
	Advice 3:	