

FR1 | STUDENT 1 | Requests, refusals and clarification

A request starts a conversation

Suggested A2-B1 | Adults and teens | About 45 minutes

When did you last ask for help or borrow something? What did the other person need to know? Invent an example if preferred.

1. Read for the outcome

Two colleagues are preparing a presentation. What help is agreed? What is not agreed?

- A:** Could you check my six slides before half past one?
B: Sorry, I cannot check all six. I can look at one after lunch.
A: What time exactly?
B: At quarter past one.
A: That works. Slide four, please. Just check the figures.
B: Right: slide four, the figures, at quarter past one. I will send comments before half past one.
A: Thanks. I will check the other slides myself.

Find the specific request, the limit, the meaning check and the final agreement. Why is after lunch worth checking? Which part of the original request was refused?

2. Rehearse the meaning

Read the exchange in pairs. Stress **one**, **quarter past one** and **slide four** to make the important details clear. Cover it and explain what each colleague will do.

Useful whole phrases

- Could I borrow ... from ... to ...?
 Could you help me with ... before ...?
 Sorry, I cannot do that. / It is unavailable then.
 Do you mean ...? / What time exactly?
 Would ... work instead? / Thanks, but that will not work.
 So, we have agreed ... / We have not found an option that fits.

Choose your wording: Can I ...? and Could I ...? can both work. Think about the relationship, delivery and situation. A clear no can be a successful reply; a reason or alternative is optional.

FR1 | STUDENT 2 | PRIVATE ROLE A

Can we make it work?

Fictional task: a community book sale. Read only your own page. Ask and answer aloud; do not show the page to your partner. No real booking or borrowing is required.

You: the book-sale organiser

You need a table on **Friday, 09:00-11:00**. It must be ready at **09:00**; you cannot start late.

The display needs a table **at least 1.5 metres long**. You can collect it at **08:45** and return it at **11:15**.

The equipment coordinator has a large table. You do not know its availability or what other tables they have. Only their listed tables are available in this task.

3. Prepare, then have the conversation

Ask to borrow the large table. Explain your need and check an uncertain time or size. Find out about alternatives before deciding. Be clear about which times you can and cannot change.

Take one minute to plan keywords. Use the phrase bank only as much as you need. Listen to the reply before choosing your next question. You may accept a suitable option or finish without an agreement.

Check the details that matter

What time exactly? / How long is it?

Where can I collect it? / When must I return it?

So, ...? / Is that right?

4. Compare your understanding

Without looking at each other's page, each complete the first outcome box on page 4. Then compare: have you recorded the same table, day, times and next action? Resolve any difference by asking.

5. The situation changes

After feedback, your teacher gives one person a new message. Keep your roles and have the conversation again. Check whether the earlier agreement still works. Record the new outcome separately.

Follow an answer

1. When have you needed to check a vague answer? What did you ask?

2. What makes it easier for you to say no to a request?

Ask one follow-up about the answer. Invent a situation or pass if preferred.

FR1 | STUDENT 3 | PRIVATE ROLE B

Can we make it work?

Fictional task: a community book sale. Read only your own page. Ask and answer aloud; do not show the page to your partner. No real booking or borrowing is required.

You: the equipment coordinator

The **large table is 2 metres long**. Another group has it on Friday until **11:20**. If asked about availability, begin with **after eleven**; give the exact time when asked.

A **smaller table is 1.6 metres long** and is free on Friday, **09:00-11:00**. It is in **Store Room 4**. Collection is possible at **08:45**; it must be returned by **11:15**.

These are the only tables. You can reserve one after you both agree. You do not know the organiser's minimum size or exact needs.

3. Prepare, then have the conversation

Listen to the request. Give a clear answer and check the organiser's needs before suggesting another table. Do not promise a time or size your information does not support.

Take one minute to plan keywords. Use the phrase bank only as much as you need. Listen to the reply before choosing your next question. You may accept a suitable option or finish without an agreement.

Check the details that matter

What time exactly? / How long is it?

Where can I collect it? / When must I return it?

So, ...? / Is that right?

4. Compare your understanding

Without looking at each other's page, each complete the first outcome box on page 4. Then compare: have you recorded the same table, day, times and next action? Resolve any difference by asking.

5. The situation changes

After feedback, your teacher gives one person a new message. Keep your roles and have the conversation again. Check whether the earlier agreement still works. Record the new outcome separately.

Follow an answer

1. When has an alternative worked better than your first choice?

2. How do you check that someone has understood an arrangement?

Ask one follow-up about the answer. Invent a situation or pass if preferred.

FR1 | STUDENT 4 | Outcomes, reflection and optional homework

Did we understand the same thing?

Complete your own record before comparing it with your partner. Keywords are enough. If no option works, write none and the reason. You can report orally if writing gets in the way.

Check	First conversation	After the new message
Agreement or no agreement?	_____	_____
Which table? Where?	_____ _____	_____ _____
Day; use starts and ends	_____ _____	_____ _____
Collection and return	_____ _____	_____ _____
Next action and person	_____ _____	_____ _____

6. Keep one success; improve one thing

What did your partner make clear? Which detail needed a question? Choose one phrase to use more clearly next time. Note any help you used: model, phrase bank, keyword notes or teacher cue.

Optional homework: make the reply useful

1. Repair the request: Could I to borrow your pen?
2. Repair the request: Could you helps me before two?
3. Someone offers help later. Write a question to check the exact time.
4. Someone offers a four-person room for your group of six. Decline it clearly and explain the mismatch.
5. Someone refuses a request. Write a respectful closing that accepts the refusal.
6. Write a final confirmation for this agreed plan: borrow the laptop, Monday, 10:00-11:00, collect from Room 3. Do not add an unagreed promise.

Prepare a short new exchange based on one request from your own life. Include a reply and a detail worth checking. Fiction is welcome. Ask for the page 6 key after your first attempt.

FR1 | TEACHER 1 | Set-up, procedure and change message

A complete exchange, with a purpose

Outcome: make a specific request, respond to it, clarify uncertainty and confirm an accurate outcome, including no agreement. Suggested A2-B1, adults and teens, about 45 minutes. All situations are fictional.

Share carefully

Everyone: page 1 and outcome/homework page 4.

A only: page 2. B only: page 3. Keep pages 5-6 with the teacher.

For online pairs, send the individual A/B PDFs privately. Do not send the full learner pack before the private task. No recording or extra picture materials are required.

Minutes	Teaching route
0-5	Discuss a small request. Establish who needs what and what makes an answer useful.
5-14	Read page 1 for the agreed outcome. Notice the moves; rehearse, then explain from memory.
14-24	Give separate roles and one minute of planning. Pairs speak; each records an outcome before comparing.
24-30	Give feedback on one clear move and one repair. Give the new message only to B.
30-37	Keep roles and repeat with the changed facts. Check the new outcome; do not require a yes.
37-45	Use the fresh booking task on page 6 with swapped roles and less language support where appropriate. Reflect and choose homework.

Teacher-held message: give only to B after feedback

A new booking update: the smaller table is now needed by another group until **09:30**. It is available from 09:30, not 09:00. The large table is still unavailable until 11:20. No other table is available.

Ask B to explain the change. A must check it against the original need. Do not reveal the new outcome before they speak.

Support: check borrow/return, at least, metres and quarter past. Allow keywords and a visible phrase strip. For a smaller A2 scope, give the minimum size as 1.5 m and ask learners to focus on day, exact times and one checking question. **Stretch:** remove the strip after rehearsal and discuss wording for a different relationship.

One-to-one: take the other role; record your language prompts. **Short route, 20 minutes:** model, first private conversation, feedback and change message. Follow an interesting answer when useful, but return to a shared accurate outcome.

FR1 | TEACHER 2 | Check meaning, interaction and support

Keys and a fresh exchange

Model and main task

Page 1: B agrees to check the figures on slide four at 13:15 and send comments before 13:30; B does not agree to check all six slides. After lunch needs an exact time because A has a deadline. Accept natural paraphrases.

First book-sale call: the large table is too late. The smaller 1.6 m table meets the minimum 1.5 m, Friday 09:00-11:00. Collect at 08:45 from Store Room 4 and return by 11:15. B can reserve it. A can accept it or clearly end without an agreement; assess the facts and understanding rather than forcing acceptance.

After the update: neither table is available at 09:00. A cannot start late. No listed option meets the requirement. A suitable close is: Thanks, but 09:30 will not work. We need it at nine, so we have not found a table that fits. Do not invent another table or silently change A's fixed time. An accurate refusal is success.

Homework: examples and alternatives

1 Could I borrow your pen? **2** Could you help me before two? **3** What time exactly? / Do you mean two or later? **4** Thanks, but that room is too small. We have six people. **5** Understood. I will make another plan. **6** So, the laptop on Monday from ten to eleven, collected from Room 3. Is that right? Items 3-6 allow other accurate wording.

Fresh task: swap roles and hide the old cards

Send or read each fact set privately. This checks a new exchange, not recall of the table solution. Allow comparable preparation and note support. Use the teacher as the second role one-to-one.

New requester only: You need a quiet indoor room for six people on Monday. You need at least 45 minutes and must finish by 15:00. You can start at 14:00 or 14:15. Ask for Room 1 and check alternatives.

New coordinator only: Room 1 fits four people and is free at 14:00. Room 2 fits eight and is available later in the afternoon; the exact slot is 14:15-15:00. Both rooms are quiet and indoors. Give the exact time when asked. You can reserve a room once agreed.

Fresh-task key: Room 1 is too small; Room 2 at 14:15-15:00 meets six people, 45 minutes and the finish time. Confirm room, day, start/end and reservation action. A clear refusal of an unsuitable offer also counts as appropriate interaction.

Observe each learner, not just the pair

Record evidence for **specific request / relevant response / useful clarification / shared outcome**. Note independent use, phrase-bank use, a teacher cue or not yet observed. Separate factual success from accurate forms. After one repair, ask for a fresh response. Later use is needed to judge retention.

Wording: can/could + base verb, not to + verb. Could I borrow asks permission to use something; Could you help asks the listener to act. Neither length nor a particular accent guarantees politeness. Refusals need not contain an excuse or an alternative. Reference: British Council LearnEnglish, Requests, offers and invitations. Original How to English activities; classroom timing and engagement remain untested.