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SL45: Disagree without Offending

Student Name: _____ Student ID Number: _____

Instructor: _____ Level: _____ Date: _____

For media links in this activity, visit [the LLC ESL Tutoring website for Upper Level SDLAs](#). Find your SDLA number to see all the resources to finish your SDLA.

All listening and activities have been adapted from "Step Up 1: Listening, Speaking, and Critical Thinking" with permissions of the authors, Margaret Teske and Peggy Marcy.

Section 1: Introduction

Part 1: Answer the questions with your experience.

1. When people ask you to do something for them, do you usually agree? _____
2. What happens if you disagree with what they ask you to do? _____
3. Does it make a difference who is asking you to do something? Give some examples.

Part 2: Let's learn some idioms that share opinions and preferences. Match the letter in the right column to the idiom in the left column.

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| ___ 1. A pain in the neck | a. To say "no" to something |
| ___ 2. To pass the time | b. To persuade someone |
| ___ 3. To pass up something | c. It's something that you like to do. |
| ___ 4. To talk someone into | d. A bother; an annoyance |
| ___ 5. To put a stop to | e. To do what you prefer |
| ___ 6. To just stand around | f. To stop someone from doing something |
| ___ 7. It's right up your alley. | g. To keep yourself busy for a while |
| ___ 8. To suit yourself | h. To wait while standing up |





Section 2: Practice Idioms of Opinion and Preference



Listen to the conversation "Waiting in Line" for Section 2. Answer the questions. Use these idioms in your answers: just stand around, put a stop to, pain in the neck, suit yourself, pass up, right up your alley, pass the time, and not passing up. Listen as many times as necessary.

9. Where are John and George? What are they doing?

10. What are John and George discussing?

11. Why doesn't George like the idea of playing the cell phone game?

12. What does John say to persuade him?

13. What does George prefer to do? How does he express his preference?

14. Do you think John is happy with George's preference? What does John say to let you know his reaction? (Hint: You can use two idioms here.)

15. How does George make John feel better?





Section 3: Expressing Preference

Sometimes instead of saying no or yes, you can suggest something you would prefer. Practice the phrases below.

- I'd prefer to ... rather than ... because
- I'd much rather ... than ... since
- Let's ... instead of ...

Part 1. Match the end of the sentences on the right with the beginnings on the left.

- | | |
|---|---------------------------------------|
| ___ 16. I'd prefer to go to a movie | i. instead of downloading the music. |
| ___ 17. I'd prefer to buy the CD | j. rather than go to McDonald's. |
| ___ 18. I'd really prefer to eat at home | k. than Dr. Miller's history class. |
| ___ 19. I'd much rather take Ms. Slimm's math class | l. instead of going jogging. |
| ___ 20. Let's play basketball | m. rather than watch a video at home. |

Part 2. Write two sentences following the patterns in Section 3 Part 1. Think about your preferences.

21. _____

22. _____

Section 4: Disagreeing without Offending

One way to disagree without offending is to politely share your preference instead. It is also helpful to explain your preference before or after you express what you like. However, sometimes it is not possible to give an alternative preference. Another way to disagree without offending is to start with something positive before we refuse it or pass it up.

- That's nice of you to ask (to say), **but** I really can't make it this time. Maybe next time?
- Oh, I wish I could, **but** I already have plans. I hope you have a good time.
- I would like to, **but**
- My daughter is home this weekend, **so I can't**....
- My schedule is crazy **or else** I would enjoy going with you. Let me know how it went.





Complete the situations with A) an alternative preference first and then practice with B) a positive refusal.

Situation 1:

You are on a diet and don't like cheese.

Friend: Let's go out for pizza.

A) Your Preference: _____

B) Your Refusal: _____

Situation 2:

You don't like hip-hop music. You do like classical music like Mozart.

Friend: Would you like to go to a hip-hop concert next Saturday?

A) Your Preference: _____

B) Your Refusal: _____

Situation 3:

Soccer is a boring game for you. You don't know the rules and you can't understand it.

Friend: Hey, my soccer team is playing this Saturday. Want to come watch us?

A) Your Preference: _____

B) Your Refusal: _____

Situation 4:

Unfortunately, you love dancing, but you get embarrassed easily. And, you have children at home to take care of.

Friend: Let's go dancing. I heard about a great club that opens at 11 pm.

A) Your Preference: _____

B) Your Refusal: _____





Situation 5:

Musicals are boring for you. You can't follow the dialogue and you hate all the singing and dancing around.

Friend: Would you like to go to the musical "Hamilton" on Friday night?

A) Your Preference: _____

B) Your Refusal: _____

Situation 6:

You think that the American version of mahjong is a pain in the neck. It takes too much time and is too confusing.





Friend: I heard you play board games with your kids. I play the American version of mahjong every Tuesday night. Want to join our group?

A) Your Preference: _____

B) Your Refusal: _____

Section 5: What Did I Learn?

Complete this table BEFORE meeting with a tutor.

Communication Skill	I can't do this YET. 	I can do this WITH help. 	I can do this WITHOUT help. 	I can TEACH this to a classmate. 
I can use idioms related to opinions and preferences.				
I can express my alternative preferences without offending.				
I can politely refuse someone's suggestion or request.				





Here are some words/phrases I need to practice.

Good job!




Now go to the [LLC Tutoring Website](#) and make an appointment with a tutor.

Visit the [Virtual LLC](#) at the time of your appointment.

Section 6: Practice with a Tutor!

Meet with a tutor. Give this paper to the tutor. The tutor will review your work and talk with you.

Grading Rubric

Possible Points	Need Practice  (0-1 Point)	Good Job  (2-3 Points)	Excellent Work  (4-5 Points)
Content	Not enough information provided in responses and often does not use correct vocabulary.	Provides most important information in responses and some of the time uses correct vocabulary.	Provides all necessary information in responses and most of the time uses correct vocabulary.
Skill: Speaking	More than 6 mistakes saying words; needs guessing more than 3 times.	Not more than 5 mistakes saying words; needs guessing on 1-2 words or sentences.	Not more than 2 mistakes saying words; needs no guess about meaning.
Oral Fluency	Speaks mostly in phrases, individual words; many pauses.	Sometimes speaks in complete sentences; several pauses.	Speaks in complete sentences; a couple pauses okay.

*Students must receive at least 10 points to move on

Possible Points: _____ / 15

Tutor Comments:

Congratulations! Keep going.

You have successfully completed this SDLA and are ready to continue to the next.

Work on this more.

You have not yet mastered this SDLA. It is recommended that you complete it again.

Tutor Signature: _____

Date: _____

