Conversations: Using Courtesy Expressions

1  Audio 3.3: Listen to the conversation between two friends at a community centre. As you listen, fill in the blanks with the courtesy expressions you hear. Practise the dialogue with a partner.

Lynn: Hi, Julie. ____________________________?

Julie: ____________________________. How about you?

Lynn: ____________________________.

Julie: Listen, ____________________________, referring me to Lorraine Holt. I met with her yesterday and she was very impressed with my resumé!

Lynn: It was my ____________. I was ____________________________.

Julie: She’s going to pass my resumé on to someone else she knows who is hiring right now.

Lynn: ____________________________, Julie!

Julie: I’ll let you know what happens.

Lynn: Great. I hope you get the job. By the way, how is your cat doing?

Julie: Oh, poor Tiger. He got to the point where he wasn’t eating or drinking so we had to put him to sleep.

Lynn: Oh, Julie, ____________________________. Tiger was a wonderful cat.

Julie: Yes, he was. I miss him so much. ____________________________, I ____________________________ Mark is picking me up and he’s probably in the parking lot. ____________________________ for your help.

Lynn: ____________________________.

Julie: ____________________________.

Lynn: ____________________________.

Julie: Bye.

Lynn: Bye.

2  Write other expressions that you are familiar with for the purposes below.

- Greetings & Responding to Greetings
- Responding to Good News
- Responding to Bad News
- Expressing Thanks
- Signaling the End of a Conversation
- Saying Goodbye
3  Role-play the following conversations with a partner. Use the expressions from the previous table.

**Situation 1: Student A**
You have just returned to work after a vacation that didn’t go well. Have a conversation with your colleague describing what happened (make up some details). Thank your colleague for finishing a report for you while you were away.

**Situation 1: Student B**
Greet your colleague who has just returned from a vacation. Have a short conversation. Signal the end of the conversation. Say goodbye.

**Situation 2: Student A**
Knock on your neighbour’s door. Exchange greetings. Offer your neighbour some tulips from your garden. When asked, explain that your husband’s health worsened over the winter and he is now living in a nursing home. Signal the end of the conversation. Say goodbye.

**Situation 2: Student B**
Your neighbour knocks on your door. Exchange greetings. Inquire about your neighbour’s husband who has been ill.

4  Work with a partner to prepare a dialogue between two acquaintances. Include greetings, expressing thanks, responding to good news and bad news, signaling the end of the conversation, and saying goodbye.

5  In pairs or small groups, read the following statements about what makes a good conversation. Decide whether you agree or disagree with them and discuss why.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. In a good conversation, listening is more important than speaking.</td>
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<td>2. People usually don’t like being asked questions in a conversation.</td>
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<td>3. There is no need to let other people know verbally that you are listening – your presence and eye contact is enough.</td>
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<td>4. While listening to another person, think about what you will say.</td>
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<td>5. Talking about yourself is always a safe topic of a conversation.</td>
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<td>6. If you have a great comment to add, it is okay to interrupt another person.</td>
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