

Functions of American English

Communication activities
for the classroom

Student's Book

Leo Jones

C. von Baeyer



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Introduction to the student

Please read this Introduction carefully to get to know the aims and methods of this book.

Who is this book for?

Functions of American English is for high intermediate and advanced learners who feel confident about using basic English grammar and vocabulary, and who are now ready to learn more about using English in real-life situations. This book is accompanied by a tape and a Teacher's Manual.

What does this book cover?

In order for your English to be effective, it must be appropriate to the situation you are in. So, when you are trying to choose the best way to express yourself in a particular situation, you have to keep in mind several things:

- What are you trying to do with your English sentences? Are you describing something, persuading someone, giving your opinion, or what? These are called *language functions*.
- What is your *role* in this situation? Are you a friend, stranger, employee, customer?
- Where are you talking? Is the *setting* on a plane, at a party, at a meeting?
- What are you talking about? Is the *topic* business, travel, sport?

Each unit in this book describes three important *language functions*. For example, the first unit covers "talking about yourself," "starting a conversation," and "making a date." The exercises in each unit let you practice all sorts of useful roles and topics in all sorts of typical places. You will practice the English that you know already and learn many useful new ways of saying things.

This book is just the starting point, though. There are many places in the book where you may want to ask your teacher for more information or for more time to practice some new material.

How is this book organized?

Each unit in *Functions of American English* is divided into several sections:

Conversation

This illustrates how each language function could be carried out during a conversation. Don't read the conversation section in the book until you have listened to the tape at least twice. This is *not* a "dialogue" that you

have to learn by heart. Sometimes the teacher will tell you the situation that the conversation takes place in, and sometimes you should try to guess. The same six characters keep appearing in different situations throughout the book.

Presentations

The presentation sections include descriptions of the functions and various ways of carrying them out. When you come to a presentation, read it by yourself. Then keep your book closed while the teacher presents the ideas using the board and the tape, and asks you for your ideas. Make sure that you can pronounce the new expressions well. There are usually three presentations in a unit.

Exercises

There are several exercises after each presentation. The first one is often directed by the teacher, so that you have a chance to ask for help and advice. For the other exercises, the class is divided up into pairs or small groups of students who work on their own. Try hard to use new expressions that you have just learned in the presentation.

Many units have a Consolidation exercise at the end. In this kind of exercise you can practice expressions from all the presentations in the unit.

Communication activities

The exercises are often followed by instructions to look at a particular number in the *Communication activities* section at the back of this book. The activities involve two or more sides communicating with each other in discussions, role plays, problem-solving activities, etc. Each side has different instructions, printed on different pages so that the participants can't see each other's instructions. In this way you can have information that is different from your partner's information, just as in most real communication outside the classroom.

Please, don't prepare the communication activities ahead of time – let them be a surprise. And don't look at your partner's instructions – keep the activities spontaneous.

Try to experiment with different ways to get your point across in these activities. Be as talkative as you can – never just say *Yes* or *No*. And don't be afraid to make mistakes – learn from them! Your teacher will be going around from group to group to listen and help. At the end of each activity, the class will discuss difficulties, and the teacher will point out serious mistakes that would make a listener misunderstand something.

Written work

The written work at the end of each unit gives you further practice on some important items from the unit. Again, experiment with new ways of communicating.

The tape

 marks sections that are recorded on the cassette tape.