

Be My Guest

English for the Hotel Industry

Teacher's Book

Francis O'Hara



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Introduction

AIMS

Be My Guest is a course for pre- and in-service hotel employees at the elementary and lower-intermediate levels who need English for their work. It focuses on everyday communicative situations so that hotel employees can understand and respond to the needs and requests of hotel guests during their stay.

It meets the needs of the following personnel: receptionist, porter, bar person, chambermaid/room attendant, housekeeper, concierge/commissionaire, management trainee, waiter/waitress.

The range of topics includes:

- various types of work at reception: bookings, changes of reservation, etc.
- working in the bar and in the restaurant: recommending, explaining dishes, etc.
- answering the phone, taking various types of messages
- helping to solve guests' problems during their stay: explaining how things work (VCR, personal safe, etc.)
- giving directions inside and outside the hotel
- offering suggestions on which places to visit in the region

Be My Guest comprises:

Student's Book – 15 units, Personal job file, Speaking practice, Tapescripts, Verb list

Teacher's Book – comprehensive lesson notes, Answers to exercises, Tapescripts

Audio CD/Cassette Set – all the recorded texts and exercises

are primarily functional and cover a range of offers, suggestions, explanations, and advice, all typical of the language hotel employees need to use. There is systematic training in intonation and the rhythm of English sounds.

Listening

The listening exercises in *Be My Guest* have been designed to take account of the careful preparation needed when teaching students at this level. Students often feel great frustration when too much is being asked of them; it is very difficult to understand a strange collection of sounds for which they have had very little preparation. In reading, writing and speaking activities a measure of control remains with the student, whereas in a listening exercise students often feel they have no control – a rush of sounds begins and they feel powerless to control or understand it – and this often leads to discouragement. In the listening tasks in *Be My Guest* there is careful grading of the demands made on the students, and the tasks are designed so that students know each time what they are listening to and for.

– They may be listening *to*: a conversation, a dialogue, a message, an announcement, etc.

– They may be listening *for*: details of opening and closing times, dates, places, etc., missing words for a 'fill in the blanks' exercise, specific phrases concerning suggestions or advice, the order of a list of sentences embedded in a recording, etc.

Reading

All the material is taken from, or adapted from, authentic documents that hotel workers are likely to come across – brochures, instructions, bills, leaflets, guides, etc. While the material is from an authentic source, it has been simplified where necessary in order to make it a viable teaching aid for students at this level. Material has been selected which students will be able to understand without necessarily being able to reproduce the language items presented. Students are expected to be able to read, for example, a hotel brochure without being asked to compose one themselves.

METHODOLOGY

Speaking

Before choosing the language to be taught in *Be My Guest*, a research project was set up to interview hotel workers to find out just what it is they need to say and understand. This language became the basis of *Be My Guest*, and speaking practice is given great prominence throughout the course, with regular consolidation of the language. The speaking activities

Introduction

Writing

An entirely functional approach is adopted here so students gain writing practice ranging from filling in registration forms, to writing short letters and e-mails to guests.

STRUCTURE

Be My Guest contains 15 theme-based units. Each unit is divided into two parts, Part A and Part B, each of which is subdivided into five sections as follows:

- Presentation
- Listening and pronunciation
- Language focus and practice
- Personal job file
- Speaking practice

PRESENTATION

Real-world material is used throughout to present the target language in context, using photos, hotel brochures, menus, etc. This activity is directly linked to the listening task which follows.

LISTENING AND PRONUNCIATION

Specific tasks, e.g. taking bookings or messages on the phone, coping with problems, etc., are clearly presented so that students know what they are listening to and for. The tapescripts at the back of the Student's Book are later used in the *Speaking practice* section in each part of the unit. They are also included in the Teacher's Book.

Each unit (from Unit 2 onwards) contains a *Being clear and polite* section containing sentences which students listen to and repeat, giving systematic training in intonation and the rhythm of English sounds. Each of the sentences is taken directly from the listening tapescript so that the students are practising sentences they have already heard in context.

LANGUAGE FOCUS AND PRACTICE

The language that resulted from the research project for *Be My Guest* is included in the course. It reflects the range of vocabulary and structures that hotel workers need to use and understand in their work. The course therefore includes examples of multi-word verbs, conditionals, modals, simple past, simple future, present and past perfect forms, where these are necessary for students to speak or be understood in a given context.

PERSONAL JOB FILE

At the back of the Student's Book there is a *Personal job file*. Students are referred to this twice in each unit in order to record and translate the words and phrases which are most useful for them, and to do short consolidation exercises based on the theme of the unit. In this way students build up a complete reference list of useful words and phrases. The *Job file* then becomes a record of work completed during the course.

SPEAKING PRACTICE

The speaking activities are controlled in early units and gradually become less controlled. They are based on the listening exercises earlier in the unit, either directly where students study and then practise the dialogues in the tapescripts, or indirectly, where conversations are built around them. Students speak in pairs or small groups and this practice consolidates the language studied in each part of the unit.

The emphasis throughout *Be My Guest* is on consolidation of the language presented in each unit, with carefully graded listening and speaking practice, designed to cover the range of language students need in their work and to build their confidence – and in so doing help them enjoy their work more as well.