

LOOK at the picture and answer the questions.



Look at these two men. They are the Burlington Beadles and they work in the Burlington Arcade in the heart of London. They are the world's smallest private police force. But what do you think their job actually involves?



Now watch the following video. They will both tell the story of the Beadles and what their jobs are actually about.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nEzGluLHIFc>

Click on the link above.

Remember that you can watch the video with subtitles if you click on this icon:



READforGIST

Read the text and choose the best answer (A, B, or C) for questions 1-2.

1. The writer
 - A. gives detailed advice to UK visitors.
 - B. compares British and German customs.
 - C. explains how the English language works.
2. The writer is probably someone who has
 - A. lived in England.
 - B. moved to England.
 - C. a family in England.

Politeness

It's really true what people say about English politeness: it's everywhere. When squeezing past someone in a narrow space, people say 'sorry'. When getting off a bus, English passengers say 'thank you' to the driver.

In Germany, people would never dream of doing this: bus drivers are just doing their job! I used to think the German way, until I was in Britain for a few years. I understood that there were more polite ways of treating people and I began to adopt some of those ways too!

When people buy something in a shop, both customer and shop assistant usually thank each other, twice or more. In Germany, it would be unusual to hear more than one 'thank you' in such a conversation. British students thank their lecturers when leaving the room. English employers thank their employees for doing their jobs, but Germans think that paying their workers money is already thanks enough!

But there is another side to British politeness. One word that comes to mind here is 'artificial'. Although it is enjoyable to talk with friendly people, it has often made me wonder what the English really think. In fact, this confused me throughout my stay in England. Everyone at the University I attended seemed to like me and people in my class were kind and friendly but I found it hard to understand who was really my friend and who was 'just being polite'.

I must say that British politeness is a little puzzling to me. For example, I often wonder why the English lose it when they drink too much. And then I think: maybe, drinking is a good excuse for being rude once in a while... After all, having to be polite all the time can be stressful, right?

READ *for* DETAIL

Read the text again and choose the best answer (A, B, or C) for questions 3-6.

3. The writer
 - A. used to apologise a lot.
 - B. feels more polite now.
 - C. hates to be rude.

4. The writer says Germans, compared to the British,
 - A. have bad manners.
 - B. say 'thank you' less often.
 - C. think more about money.

5. How do the English change when they drink too much?
 - A. They become loud.
 - B. They joke a lot.
 - C. They are less polite.

6. The writer is confused by English politeness and wonders if
 - A. it's necessary.
 - B. it causes tension.
 - C. it's overemphasised.

Finally, watch this quick video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m1tjn2dy8wE> which is followed by a short vocabulary exercise. All of the points below are mentioned as inappropriate when you are in the UK. Order them from 1 to 9.

..... Talking about money Hugging, kissing and touching people
..... Standing too close to people Saying 'please' and 'thank you'
..... Being punctual Asking personal questions
..... Having an argument in public Never jumping the queue!
..... Tipping at a restaurant or bar	

All images and logos have been searched on Google© using the 'Labeled for non-commercial use' filter search.

ANSWER KEY

READING

1. The writer
B. compares British and German customs.
2. The writer is probably someone who has
A. lived in England.

Politeness

It's really true what people say about **English politeness**: it's everywhere. When squeezing past someone in a narrow space, people say 'sorry'. When getting off a bus, English passengers say 'thank you' to the driver.

In Germany, people would never dream of doing this: bus drivers are just doing their job! I used to think the German way, **until I was in Britain for a few years**. **I understood that there were more polite ways of treating people and I began to adopt some of those ways too!**

When people buy something in a shop, both customer and shop assistant usually thank each other, twice or more. **In Germany**, **it would be unusual to hear more than one 'thank you' in such a conversation**. **British students** thank their lecturers when leaving the room. **English employers** thank their employees for doing their jobs, but **Germans** think that paying their workers money is already thanks enough!

But there is another side to British politeness. One word that comes to mind here is 'artificial'. Although it is enjoyable to talk with friendly people, it has often made me wonder what the English really think. In fact, this confused me **throughout my stay in England**. **Everyone at the University I attended** seemed to like me and people in my class were kind and friendly but I found it hard to understand who was really my friend and who was 'just being polite'.

I must say that **British politeness is a little puzzling to me**. For example, **I often wonder why the English lose it when they drink too much**. And then I think: maybe, drinking is a good excuse for being rude once in a while... After all, **having to be polite all the time can be stressful, right?**

3. The writer
B. feels more polite now.
4. The writer says Germans, compared to the British,
B. say 'thank you' less often.
5. How do the English change when they drink too much?
C. They are less polite.
6. The writer is confused by English politeness and wonders if
B. it causes tension.

VIDEO 2

1. Saying 'please' and 'thank you'
2. Being punctual
3. Never jumping the queue
4. Having an argument in public
5. Don't talk about money
6. Standing too close to people
7. Tip at a restaurant or bar if you are happy with the service
8. Hugging, kissing and touching people
9. Asking personal questions