What's your problem? - Teacher’s notes

Aim: To practise giving advice and suggestions using should and shouldn’t
Level: Pre-intermediate - Intermediate
Materials: Cut-up problem slips
Time: 1 hour

Stage 1: introduction: 15 minutes

1. Begin the lesson by choosing a student from the class. Give the student three pieces of advice. For example:
   - Sandra, you should remember to wear sunscreen the next time you go to the beach.
   - Sandra, you should put on some aloe vera to ease the pain.
   - Sandra, you should stay out of the sun until it heals.

2. Ask the students to guess what Sandra's problem is. (Sandra has got sunburn!)

3. Next, divide the students into two teams (Team A and Team B). Choose one player from Team A to give advice to a member of their team. The other members of Team A try to guess the problem. Give them one minute. Team A score a point if their answer is correct. If Team A can't guess the problem, Team B can try for the point. Repeat the activity using a player from Team B. (NB This game can also be played in pairs; the partner with the most correct guesses wins.)

Stage 2: main activity – 30 minutes

1. Pass out the ‘problem slips’ to each student. Give the students 5 - 10 minutes to write down three pieces of advice that one would give to a person with the specified problem. Circulate and help individuals with grammar, vocabulary or comprehension questions.

2. Play the game as a whole class (option 1) or in teams (option 2)

   **Option 1: whole class**
   Select a student to gives his/her advice, by presenting the three statements they have come up with. Ask the rest of the class to try and guess the problem.

   **Option 2: Team A and Team B**
   Repeat Stage 1: 3

Stage 3: summary – 10 minutes

1. Ask students individually to think of a problem which has not already been mentioned. Give the students two minutes to complete this task.

2. Choose a student to ‘mime’ their problem to the rest of the class. The class have to ‘guess’ the problem and provide appropriate advice.
Problem slips (cut up)

Your classmate failed his/her last English exam.

Your classmate has a cold.

Your classmate is always late for class.

Your classmate has a flight tomorrow but is afraid of flying.

Your classmate has lost his/her keys.

Your classmate has a toothache.

Your classmate has bad breath.

Your classmate has lost his/her voice.

Your classmate’s computer has crashed and he/she has lost his/her homework.

Your classmate has head lice.

Your classmate didn’t get any sleep last night.

Your classmate is afraid of the dark.

Your classmate is homesick.
Your classmate’s luggage was lost at the airport.

Your classmate forgot to wish his/her mother Happy Birthday.

Your classmate got stood up by a date.

Your classmate got fired from his/her job.

Your classmate has a black eye.

Your classmate’s purse was just stolen.

Your classmate has been arrested for stealing a chocolate bar.