Volunteering: Charity Shop Assistant

Receiving Goods from donors

Thank you very much. These look great! We appreciate your donation

OR

Thank you very much. We would love to take the books but unfortunately we don't accept TV sets

Sort and sell

Clothes

Toys

Books

Household items

Working with customers

Excuse me. Do you have any dinner sets?

Yes we do. I've just put a dinner set on the shelf over here.

This looks good — how many pieces?

There are 4 dinner plates, 4 bowls and 4 cups. Unfortunately there are only 2 side plates. But, there are two separate plates over here that nearly match the dinner set.

These look great. We've just moved into a flat and we've got nothing to eat off! How much is the set?

$5 and for another $2 I can include some knives, spoons and forks.

We'll take them. That's a bargain!

Volunteering time

This looks like a good place to work. What do you have to do to volunteer?

Introduce yourself to the manager of your local Charity Stop and ask if they have any volunteer positions.

Do you like working here?

I do! I've picked up retail skills, gained work experience and I get training on the job. I also get to practise my English when I speak to the customers.

OK, it sounds good. Thanks for the information.

Good luck!
Volunteering: Charity Shop Assistant – ideas for using the sequence story

Note for Tutors: Activities referred to in Ideas for using the sequence story are related to the suggested Vocabulary and text which you can find on page 8 of this document.

Warm up
Before looking at the picture, ask your learner if s/he has ever been a volunteer. What kind of work did s/he do? How did s/he enjoy it? You could also share your own experiences of volunteering and talk about volunteer work in New Zealand.

Focus on key vocabulary (See page 8 for suggested vocabulary)
Either provide the learner with a list of target vocabulary and ask her to match the words to what she can see in the picture (Lower level) or brainstorm words with the learner (Higher level)

Question stories (See page 10 for suggested questions)
Ask a series of questions relating to the sequence (There is a list of suggested questions at the end of this document). The learner’s answers can guide them to retell or write the description of the sequence. You could then compare the learner’s version with the suggested text below.

Alternatively encourage the learner to ask you some questions about the story. Learners often get more practice answering than asking questions.

Jumbled sentences – reading (see page 11 for photocopiable text)
Cut up the text into strips. Each strip relates to one of the pictures. Jumble up the strips. Look at the picture story and ask the learner(s) to match the appropriate sentence to the right picture.

Adapt the story: to extend more advanced learners
After working with the basic version of the text, brainstorm some more advanced words that could also be incorporated into the story. Use these words to enrich the story by adapting the existing text.

The man with the moustache works for the op shop. He is a volunteer. A woman brings a box of second-hand books to give to the shop. The man thanks her and tells her he appreciates her donation. The man in the hat brings a television to donate to the shop. The volunteer thanks him but tells him that the op shop does not accept TV sets. Many people donate used goods to charity shops.

You will notice that you will often be reporting what the characters said, so this would be a good opportunity to explore the structures of reporting speech. More information on reported speech on Perfect English Grammar, or in any good grammar book such as Raymond Murphy’s English Grammar in Use.

Point of view:
Rewrite the text from one person’s point of view (for example the woman asking for information about volunteering jobs). What happened next?
Gapped text
Gap out some words in the text on page 8 or 9 after reading it with your learner. The learner completes the text by referring to the pictures.

Depending on your learner’s needs, you can focus on particular words: e.g.

- content words from the target vocabulary in the picture (this helps with revision)
  The man with the _____________ works for the op shop. He is a _____________. A woman brings a box ____________ books to give to the shop. The man thanks her and tells her he appreciates her donation. The man in the hat brings a television to ____________ to the shop. The volunteer thanks him but tells him that the op shop does not accept TV sets. Many people donate ____________ goods to charity shops.

- “grammar” words: e.g. prepositions
  The man _____ the moustache works _____ the op shop. He is a volunteer. A woman brings a box _____ second-hand books to give to the shop. The man thanks her and tells her he appreciates her donation. The man _____ the hat brings a television to donate to the shop. The volunteer thanks him but tells him that the op shop does not accept TV sets. Many people donate used goods _____ charity shops.

- articles
  _____ man with _____ moustache works for _____ op shop. He is _____ volunteer. _____ woman brings _____ box of second-hand books to give to _____ shop. _____ man thanks her and tells her he appreciates her donation. The man in _____ hat brings _____ television to donate to _____ shop. _____ volunteer thanks him but tells him that _____ op shop does not accept TV sets. Many people donate _____ used goods to _____ charity shops.

Kim’s game (speaking or writing class game)
The learners look at the pictures for a set period of time. In pairs they discuss what they can see. The pair turns over the picture and collaboratively try and recall the pictures in the sequence and what was happening (they can do this orally or in writing). They then turn the picture back over and discuss what they left out.

Listening practice: True/false
Say some sentences about a picture, some true, some false: e.g. The woman is carrying a box of books. (True) The volunteer has a beard (False)

There are three possible activities here:
- The learner simply says true for the true ones and false for the false ones.
- The learner repeats the true sentences and stays silent for the false ones (So it’s a kind of drill, but the learner has to process the meaning as well as repeat)
- The learner says true for the true ones and corrects the false ones: e.g. no, he hasn’t got a beard, he’s got a moustache.

In a higher level class the learners can work in pairs. One learner can say a true/false sentence and the other responds. Then they swap roles.

Dialogues
Imagine the customer in the last section is telling her partner/husband about her conversation with the volunteer.
Extension activities

Volunteering discussion questions:

*Use these questions to have a discussion about volunteering:*

a. Why do people volunteer?
b. What organizations use volunteers? What kind of work do they do?
c. Have you ever done any volunteer work? What did you do? How did you feel about volunteering before you started work? What about after?
d. What types of volunteer work appeal to you? What types of volunteer work would be unpleasant for you?
e. Have you ever volunteered to do something and then regretted volunteering?
f. What are some situations where people volunteer to work in other countries?
g. Do you know anyone else who has done volunteer work? Where and why did they volunteer? Would you like to work as a volunteer in the same way?
h. Have you ever benefitted by someone's volunteer work?
i. Is there a history of volunteerism in your country?
j. What would the world be like if no one volunteered to do anything?
k. Should a volunteer be treated the same as paid staff?

Volunteering benefits

With your learner, brainstorm some of the benefits of volunteering. You might come up with some of these.

- Learn new skills, knowledge and experience
- Develop existing skills, knowledge and experience
- Get some work experience in a New Zealand environment
- Find new interests
- Meet new people in the community
- Contribute to a good cause
- Improve your English in an English-speaking environment
- Have fun.

Your learner can then put them in order of importance, justifying their decisions

How to volunteer

Discuss how to go about volunteering in New Zealand. Consider the flowing factors:

- Your motivation and interests
- Causes that attract you
- Your skills and experience
- Location, transport
- Time available
- Training

This [wikihow article](https://www.wikihow.com/) has some useful advice.
Finding a volunteer position

Use a local volunteering website for reading practice – start here with the Volunteering New Zealand website, or Google “volunteer”. Identify some opportunities that appeal to your learner. Brainstorm what would be involved:

- What is the event, or what is the charity or non-profit organisation? What do they do?
- How do I feel about this organisation’s “cause” or mission?
- What kind of work is involved?
- Would this work interest me?
- What would I learn from doing this work?
- What is the time commitment?
- Is there a cost to the volunteer?
- Is there any help with expenses?

Choose the most attractive position, and pretend you are applying for the position.

If there is an application form, practise filling it in.

Discuss why your learner would be suitable for this kind of work – how do their skills, experience or qualifications fit with the position requirement.

Apply for the position!

Visit your local op shop.

Use the internet to locate an op shop near you.

Use Google Maps to plan your route (you can even go into Google Street View and “walk” there, talking about what you can see on the way.

Think of what you might like to buy and plan some questions around the object. You can either ask the questions yourself, using the exchange as listening practice for you learner, or if your learner is confident they can ask the questions.

Some examples of shopping dialogues can be found on eslgold.com:

- Simple shopping
- At the store
- Buying and selling
Haggling

The BBC, in their How To series, has a podcast on haggling, with some suggested useful language. It is worth discussing when it is (and is not) appropriate to haggle in New Zealand (e.g. we often haggle for items at garage sales or second-hand shops, and sometimes when we are buying big-ticket items such as whiteware, electronics or cars.

Some interesting items on haggling in New Zealand:

- “Having a good haggle” by Frank and Muriel Newman
- Do you haggle to get a bargain? (NZ Herald) – use the comments to spark a discussion with your learner about when to haggle.
- TV3 News report on haggling, with some useful language to listen out for (e.g. “What’s your best offer on this?”)

Vocabulary brainstorming

For the categories Clothes, Toys and Household items, name all the items you can see. Then add some other items to each category.

Sorting vocabulary items – learner training.

A good way of remembering new vocabulary items is to sort them into categories. With your learner, put some of these vocabulary items onto small cards or pieces of paper. Then sort them into categories. You can either use the same categories as the picture above, or add some new categories:

a. Toys:
   - toys I had as a child, and toys I didn’t
   - boys’, girls’ and unisex

b. Household items:
   - room of the house – kitchen, living room, bathroom
   - essential, useful and not useful
   - items that need electricity and items that don’t

c. Clothes:
   - men/women/both
   - summer and winter clothes
Some further practice for household items: play a guessing game. Describe the object without naming it. Use these structures:

- You can find this in…
- You use this for/to
- It’s furniture/an appliance/an ornament

Toys and childhood

Use this picture to spark a discussion on toys and childhood:

Talking about toys – [some discussion questions](#) from Sean Banville

Tefl.net has a [Talking Point Worksheet about childhood](#) (scroll down to the bottom of the page to find this), with some questions and proverbs for discussion.

Talk some things your learner used to do as a child, but doesn’t do now. Some good examples of the structure used to can be found in the video on [this page from Real.English](#)
Volunteering: Charity Shop Assistant – Suggested vocabulary and text

Note for Tutors: For ideas about how to use this suggested vocabulary and text, refer to Ideas for using the sequence story on page 2 of this document.

Target Vocabulary – basic (See page 2)

Charity shop, op shop, volunteer, accept, donation, donated, goods, sort, pile, household items, dinner set, details, discuss, wish someone good luck

Target Vocabulary – advanced (See page 2)

Charity shop, op shop, volunteer, second-hand, receive, used/donated goods, donate, appreciate, donation, accept, sort (though), pile, household items, outfit, hand someone something, hanger, dinner set, shelf, separate, match, flatmate, throw in, cutlery, bargain, position, pick up, retail skills, gain, work experience, training, on the job

Text: basic version

A woman brings a box of books to the op shop. A man brings a television set to the op shop, but the volunteer tells him that they cannot accept his donation.

A volunteer sorts donated goods into piles: clothes, toys, books and household items.

A man asks the op shop volunteer if they have any dinner sets, and she points to one. The man likes the dinner set and asks for details. The volunteer tells him it is not complete. The man decides to buy the dinner set and the two discuss the price.

A customer and a volunteer worker discuss what you have to do to volunteer. The volunteer tells the customer why she likes working in the charity shop. The customer leaves the shop and the volunteer wishes her good luck.
Text: full version

Receiving goods from donors

The man with the moustache works for the op shop. He is a volunteer. A woman brings a box of second-hand books to give to the shop. The man thanks her and tells her he appreciates her donation. The man in the hat brings a television to donate to the shop. The volunteer thanks him but tells him that the op shop does not accept TV sets. Many people donate used goods to charity shops.

Sort and sell

The woman in the stripy top works in the charity shop. She is a volunteer. She is sorting through the donated goods and placing them into different piles. There is a ‘Clothes’ pile, a ‘Toys’ pile, a ‘Books’ pile and a ‘Household items’ pile. She is holding up a baby outfit. Which pile will it go into? Someone is handing her a clothes hanger.

Working with customers

A man comes into the op shop and asks the volunteer shop assistant if they have any dinner sets. She tells him that they do and points to a shelf where she has just put one. He likes the dinner set and asks her how many pieces it has. She tells him there are 4 dinner plates, 4 bowls and 4 cups but only 2 side plates in the set. She shows him where there are 2 separate side plates that nearly match the set. He thinks they are fine. He tells the volunteer that he has just moved into a flat and that he and his flatmates do not have anything to eat off! He asks the price of the dinner set. She tells him it is $5 and, for an extra $2, she can throw in some cutlery. He decides to buy the dinner set and cutlery. He thinks he is getting a bargain!

Volunteering time

A woman comes into the op shop. Some clothes are on sale. The woman speaks to the volunteer shop assistant. She thinks it looks like a good place to work and asks the shop assistant what you have to do to volunteer. The shop assistant tells her she should introduce herself to the manager of her local op shop and ask if they have any volunteer positions. The woman asks her if she likes working in the shop. The shop assistant tells her that she does because she has picked up retail skills, gained work experience and gets training on the job. She also gets to practise her English when she speaks to the customers. The woman thanks her for the information and turns to leave the shop. The volunteer wishes her good luck!
Questions for ‘Question Stories’ (See page 2)

Receiving Goods from donors
How many people are there in the first picture?
Where are they?
What is the older man's job? Where does he work?
What is the woman holding? Why?
What is the man in the hat holding? Why?
Which donation does the volunteer accept?
Which donation does the volunteer not accept? Why do you think he cannot accept it?

Sort and sell
What can you see?
Where is the woman? What is her job?
What is she doing?
What is she holding? Which pile will she put it in?
What is someone offering her?

Working with customers
Where are the people?
What does the man want? Does the shop have any?
How many pieces are there in the dinner set?
What is the problem with the dinner set?
Can they solve the problem? How?
Why does the man want a dinner set?
How much is the dinner set?
What extra items does the volunteer offer him? How much will they cost?
What is the total cost?
Does the man want the items?
What does he think of the price?

Volunteering time
Where are the women?
What can you buy on sale?
What does the customer want to know?
What does the volunteer tell her to do?
Does the volunteer like working in the charity shop? Why?
A woman brings a box of books to the charity shop. The op shop volunteer accepts them.

A man brings a television set to the op shop, but the volunteer tells the man that they cannot accept his donation.

A volunteer sorts the donated goods into piles: clothes, toys, books and household items.

A man asks the volunteer if they have any dinner sets, and she points to one.

The man likes the dinner set and asks for details. The volunteer tells him it is not complete.

The man decides to buy the dinner set and the two discuss the price.

A customer and a volunteer worker discuss what you have to do to volunteer.

The volunteer tells the customer why she likes working in the charity shop.

The customer leaves the shop and the volunteer wishes her good luck.