

Mail Order Catalog

Many students have trouble talking to native speakers on the telephone. Because they can't see the person to whom they are speaking, many of the contextual clues that we use to interpret meaning are simply not available. I developed this exercise to help students overcome the fear that is sometimes associated with this problem. The script I use is very close to the one many mail order companies use. I use Talbot's in this script--feel free to use whatever mail order company you are familiar with.

This lesson works best if you have a few copies of a catalog for the students to use as they go through the script. This also makes it more real to them.

Mary: Good afternoon Talbot's. This is Mary speaking. How may I help you?

Mrs. Williams: Hi. I'd like to place an order, please.

Mary: I can help you with that, Ma'am. May I first have the customer ID number located on the back of your catalog?

Mrs. Williams: Yes, it's 02153649

Mary: Am I speaking to Mrs. Alice Williams?

Mrs. Williams: Yes, that's right.

Mary: Mrs. Williams, is your billing address still PO Box 4490, Knoxville, Tennessee?

Mrs. Williams: Yes, it is.

Mary: Thank you. What would you like to order today?

Mrs. Williams: My first item will be the cardigan on page 29...

Mary: Mrs. Williams could you please give me the item number of that item?

Mrs. Williams: The item number? Hum.. let me see, oh yea here it is. That number is B178-24

Mary: Thank you. What color would you like that cardigan?

Mrs. Williams: Well, let's see....I really wanted two colors if you have them. I want one in blue and the other in black.

Mary: Okay. And what size do you need?

Mrs. Williams: I need those in a small.

Mary: Is that a misses small or a petite small?

Mrs. Williams: That would be a petite small.

Mary: Okay Mrs. Williams. We have both those in stock. What will your next item be?

Mrs. Williams: I think I would like the sweater to match, if you have them.

Mary: Do you want the same colors and the same size?

Mrs. Williams: Yes, I do, please.

Mary: Okay, Mrs. Williams, we have those in stock also. Is there anything else you'd like today? Mrs. Williams: No, I don't think so. How long will it be before I receive this order?

Mary: We ship UPS so you should receive your order by Friday afternoon. Is that soon enough for you.

Mrs. Williams: Yes, that's fine.

Mary: Mrs. Williams what credit card will you be paying with today?

Mrs. Williams: I'll use my VISA card if that's okay?

Mary: Yes ma'am that's fine. Will you please read the number to me?

Mrs. Williams: Yes. That's 421785600027. The expiration date is 01/31/20

Mary: Let me read that back to you. The number is 421785600027.

Mrs. Williams: Yes that's right.

Mary: Okay Mrs. Williams we will ship your sweater and cardigan sets to you by UPS and you should receive them by Friday. Thank you for calling Talbot's.

Mrs. Williams: Thank you for your help. Good-bye now.

Mary: Good-bye