Lesson #3

Social Situations

Using the verb “to be”

Lesson Plan by Catherine Schell
Social Situations
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WARM-UP:

Do you know the famous lines from Shakespeare?

To be, or not to be: that is the question:
Whether it is nobler in the mind to suffer
The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune,
Or to take arms against a sea of troubles,
And by opposing end them?

- Hamlet

How about the French philosopher René Descartes?

I think, therefore I am.

-Méditations métaphysiques

Or the Beatles?

I am he as you are he as you are me and we are all together

- I am the Walrus

Watch the following video, called ESL English grammar lesson – to be:
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XY3K0dQUSOE&p=44F0AE6E3F24F5B0&playnext=1&index=32
“Chitchat” and “Serious Talk”
Read the following conversations between Steve and his friend Raphaël, and between Julie, her boss, Anne, and Professor Jenkins:

(On the university campus)

Steve  Hey Raph, how are you?
Raphaël Hi Steve! I’m good. What’s up?
Steve  Not much. What are you up to?
Raphaël My parents are here, they’re visiting.
Steve  Oh, that’s cool! Are you happy?
Raphaël It’s nice to have them here, for sure. How’s life for you?
Steve  A friend and I are going to Indonesia next year. I’m applying for a visa. He’s Indonesian. We’re so excited! It’s a study-abroad organized by the school. But there are a lot of things to prepare for the trip. I’m forgetful and I’m afraid of missing something.
Raphaël Yes, be careful! One of my roommates is concerned. His passport is no longer valid. He’s supposed to go to Mexico next week, but I think it’s not going to work.
Steve  Good thinking. I need to check my passport.

(On the phone)

Anne  Hello Julie, this is Anne. Are you busy tomorrow afternoon?
Julie  I am actually. Two people are sick and we’re behind on the schedule.
Anne  Well, there are two people I want you to interview about school diversity and university expectations. One is a professor from NYU, and the other person is a lawyer from Washington, D.C.
Julie  Ok. When’s the best time to meet them?
Anne  Professor Jenkins is in my office right now. Arrange the details on the phone with him.
Prof. Jenkins Good morning, Miss Davenport. How are you?
Julie  Good morning, Professor Jenkins. I am fine, how are you?
Prof. Jenkins Excellent, thank you.
Julie  Fantastic. I understand you are interested in giving us an interview. I am delighted to have you on our show. Unfortunately, I am not available until 3pm tomorrow.
Prof. Jenkins That is fine. Where is your office?
Julie  My team and I are on the second floor, Room 226. I am looking forward to meeting you.
Prof. Jenkins So am I. Have a great day.
Julie  Thank you, you too. Bye.
Work on the Text

1. Is the first conversation formal or informal? How about the second conversation? Why?

2. List all the different forms and environments (the words surrounding) of the verb ‘be’.

LESSON

BE: a useful verb

To be: to have reality or life, to exist, mean, or equal

‘Be’ can be used with a noun, to show what the subject does or what/who it/he/she is.

Examples: Julie is a journalist.
Steve and Raphaël are students.

‘Be’ can be used with an adjective, to describe how the subject is:

Examples: Steve is excited.
Julie is stressed out.

Can be used with a verb with a –ing ending to show that the action of the verb is taking place when the sentence is pronounced/written or in the near future:

Examples: Professor Jenkins and Julie are talking on the phone.
Steve is preparing his trip to Indonesia.

There are also many useful idiomatic expressions with ‘be’:
- to be __X__ years old
  Steve is 24 years old.
- weather
  It’s sunny / foggy / cloudy / hot / cold / chilly, etc.
- time
  Lunch is at 12pm / it’s 2pm.

Conjugation of ‘be’ at the present

<p>| Informal speech or | Formal speech or |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>correspondance</th>
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<td>I’m</td>
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<td>You’re</td>
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<td>He is / she is / it is</td>
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Exercises

Conjugate the verb ‘be’. For the last sentence, complete with a description of yourself:

1. You _________ students.
2. He _________ lazy.
3. My brother and I _________ very close.
4. I ________________________________________________________.

What is their job/activity?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

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________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
Exercises (cont.)

Scavenger Hunt
Find and present to the class a classmate who:
1) is interested in sports. Which ones?
2) are friends / relatives.
3) is wearing sandals / a hat.
4) are afraid of spiders / snakes

Examples:
Student 1 to class: “This is _______. He/She is interested in sports.”
    Student 1 to Student 2: “Which sports?”
    Student 2: “I am interested in …”

Now, go and create your own scavenger list of ten questions!

Role-play:
One student goes to the middle of the classroom. The teacher suggests a verb to ‘act’ to the student. Others have to guess what the student is doing using ‘be + ING’.

Example: (student dances) class: he is dancing.