

MEETING PEOPLE: Verb *be* – singular

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR

GENERAL NOTE

Beginning students of a foreign language may have some difficulty with almost everything – pronunciation, word forms, meanings and uses, as well as grammatical structures. The trick in teaching is to keep things as functional and simple as possible on the surface to reduce student stress, while at the same time being prepared to deal with typical problems when they occur. It is also important to appreciate that many problems do not appear much early on because the focus is on few things, there are clear models to follow and the practice is restricted. Instead, they often come to the surface later, when the practice is freer and different forms and structures are being used together. Later clarification and remedial work is at least as important as the initial focus on new grammar.

- The main grammar focus is on *be* in the singular with the corresponding subject pronouns and possessive adjectives (*I/am/my, you/are/your, he/is/his, she/is/her*).
- Latin American Spanish and Brazilian Portuguese tend to omit subject pronouns and use the inflected verb alone. Your students may do the same in English, e.g. *What's your name? Is Maria.* ✗ Also, *his, her* and *your* (formal) correspond to just one word in Spanish and Portuguese, so students may confuse them, e.g. *She's from Canada and your name is Sally.* ✗ *Where . . . from?* and *How do you spell . . . ?* are unlike anything in Spanish or Portuguese but, perhaps after initial difficulties, your students should be able to learn and use them as fixed formulas at this stage.
- **Note:** Sentences marked with a ✗ are incorrect.

ANSWERS

EXERCISE 1

Harold: Hi, I *am* / ~~is~~ Harold. What's (1) *your* / ~~you~~ name?

Maria: My name's Maria.

Harold: Where (2) ~~is~~ / *are* you from, Maria?

Maria: I (3) *am* / ~~are~~ from New York.
And (4) ~~your~~ / *you*?

Harold: I'm (5) ~~England~~ / *English*.

Maria: Nice to meet (6) *you* / ~~your~~, Harold.

EXERCISE 2

A: What's (1) his name?

A: Where's (2) he from?

B: Yes, he (3) is.

A: What's (4) her name?

A: Where's (5) she from?

B: No, she (6) isn't.

EXERCISE 3

- 1 Is Mr. Davis from America?
d) Yes, he is.

- 2 Is Mrs. Nichols from England?
f) No, she isn't.
3 Are you from Portugal?
g) Yes, I'm from Lisbon.
4 Am I in room 629?
c) Yes, you are.
5 Is champagne from England?
e) No, it isn't. It's from France.
6 Are you John Hurst?
a) No, I'm Henry Field.

EXERCISE 4

Possible answers

You: (1) Yes, I am.

You: (2) Yes, it is.

You: (3) My name's (student's name, e.g. Mark Jones).

You: (4) (e.g. J-O-N-E-S)

You: (5) Nice to meet you, too.

You: (6) I'm from (student's country or city).

PERSONALIZE IT!

- Ask the students to have similar conversations to those in exercises 2 and 4 about themselves and other members in the class.
- Bring in pictures of people who are famous in your country and internationally to practice the conversation in exercise 2.

MEETING PEOPLE

EXERCISE 1

Choose the correct word.

Harold: Hi, I (am) / *is* Harold. What's (1) *your* / *you* name?

Maria: My name's Maria.

Harold: Where (2) *is* / *are* you from, Maria?

Maria: I (3) *am* / *are* from New York. And (4) *your* / *you*?

Harold: I'm (5) *England* / *English*.

Maria: Nice to meet (6) *you* / *your*, Harold.

EXERCISE 2

Complete the conversations with *is, isn't, he, her, his* or *she*.



A: What's (1) name?

B: Harold.

A: Where's (2) from?

B: England.

A: Is he from London?

B: Yes, he (3)



A: What's (4) name?

B: Maria.

A: Where's (5) from?

B: The U.S.A.

A: Is she from Miami?

B: No, she (6)

EXERCISE 3

Match the questions and answers.

- | | |
|---------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Is his name Claudio? | a) No, I'm Henry Field. |
| 1 Is Mr. Davis from America? | b) No, it's David. |
| 2 Is Mrs. Nichols from England? | c) Yes, you are. |
| 3 Are you from Portugal? | d) Yes, he is. |
| 4 Am I in room 629? | e) No, it isn't. It's from France. |
| 5 Is champagne from England? | f) No, she isn't. |
| 6 Are you John Hurst? | g) Yes, I'm from Lisbon. |

EXERCISE 4

Write answers to these questions.

Alex: Excuse me, are you a student?

You: (1)

Alex: And is this the English class?

You: (2)

Alex: Hi. I'm Alex Karen. What's your name?

You: (3)

Alex: How do you spell your last name?

You: (4)

Alex: Nice to meet you.

You: (5)

Alex: Where are you from?

You: (6)