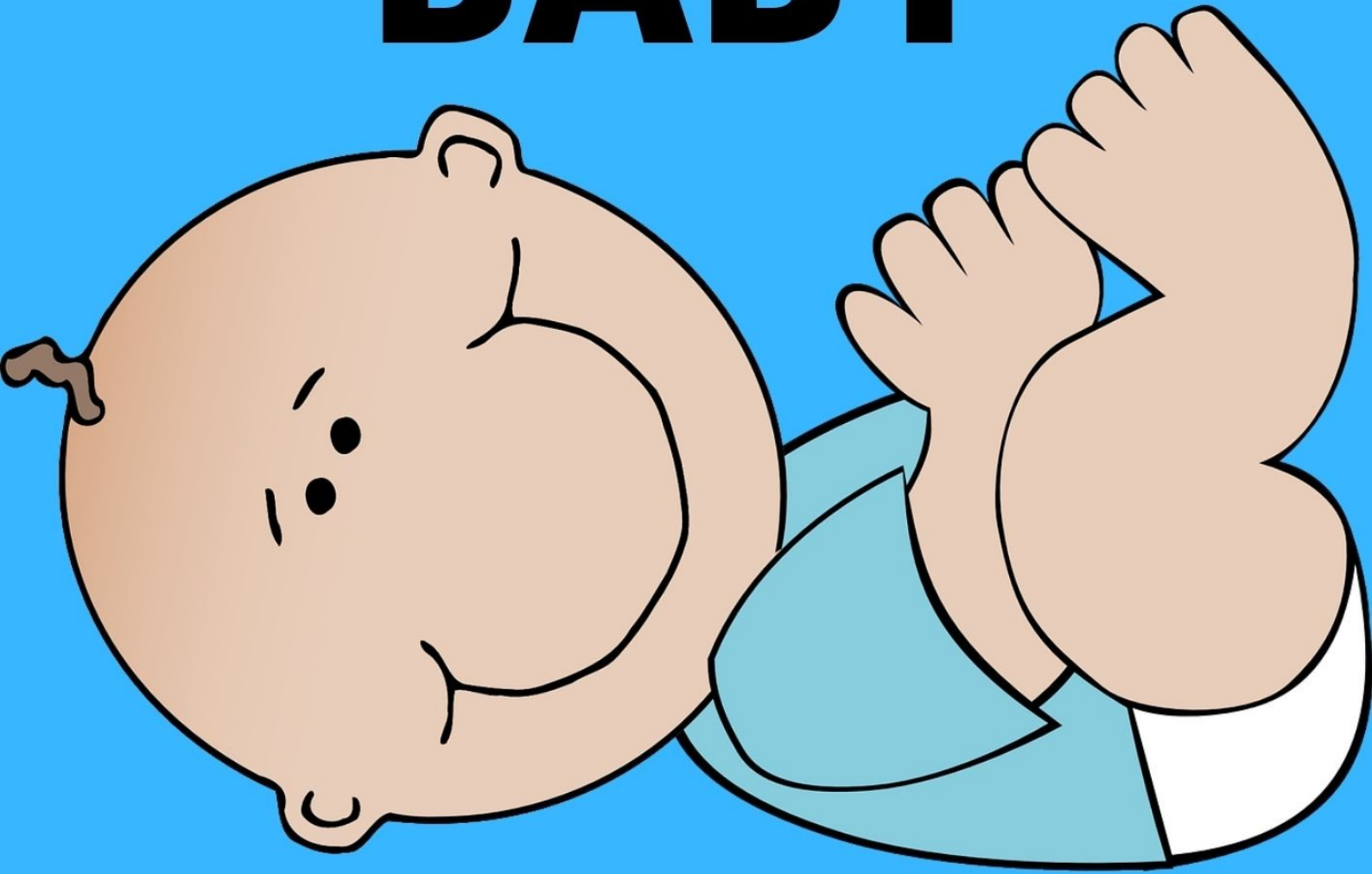


CHANGING BABY



IN PUBLIC?

a Talking Points English lesson plan

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Introduction

Does a young mother change their baby's nappy in public in your country?

Is this acceptable in society do you think?

If not, why is it not acceptable?

Where should the mother change her baby?

What's That Smell?

Read Meghan's account below.

Something terrible happened the other day.

I had just finished a sales presentation for work — *a lot of important clients there* — and I had five minutes to myself, so I went to the coffee shop over the road to grab a cup of coffee.

As I sat down, I took a sip of my coffee and breathed out. It is so rare to get a break at work these days, so I felt quite privileged to rest.

Then I was hit by this unbelievable smell.

I turned my head, and on the next table was a woman changing her baby's nappy.

I couldn't believe it.

She just took the nappy off in the middle of the coffee shop. And the smell was terrible.

I didn't know what to say.

I looked over at the barista and he caught my eye, then looked the other way. Clearly, he wasn't going to do anything about it.

So I cleared my throat to get the woman's attention.

She slowly looked at me like she was not doing anything wrong.

Excuse me, I said. Do you mind not doing that here?

And she gave me a really filthy look.

Where else am I supposed to do it? she said.

I was shocked.

Then I told her.

Do it at home, I said. Do it in the bathroom. But don't do it in the middle of a coffee shop where people are eating and drinking.

The woman then started calling me a bigot and said I had no right to talk to her in such a way.

The barista finally came over to deal with it, but instead of talking to the woman and telling her to use the bathroom, he had a go at me.

Please don't talk to our customers like that, he said. If you don't stop, I will have to ask you to leave.

I was speechless!

I didn't think I was being unreasonable.

The other people in the coffee shop kept their heads down so I could see I had to deal with it on my own.

In the end, I grabbed my bag and left. There didn't seem any point in talking to the woman or the barista anymore.

I was fuming by the time I got back to the office.

After I calmed down, I sent a message to my friend and told her what happened. Later she called me and said that if she had been in that situation she would have ignored it.

I asked her why and she said that young mothers now have the right to change their baby wherever they want.

I guess this is because we all have to be tolerant.

But what about other people? What about health and general hygiene?

There was a time when people respected others and were aware of their surroundings.

That doesn't seem to matter anymore, as long as we all grin and bear it.

Reading Comprehension Questions

What task had Meghan just finished in her office?

Where does the story take place?

What did Meghan smell?

What was the woman at the next table doing?

Who did Meghan look at for support?

What did this person do?

What did Meghan do next?

How did the woman react?

What did Meghan tell her to do?

What did the woman call Meghan?

What did the barista do?

How did Meghan react?

What did the other customers do?

Did Meghan stay in the coffee shop?

How did Meghan feel by the time she got back to the office?

Who did she contact for advice?

What did her friend say about it?

Essential Vocabulary

sales presentation	clients	grab a cup of coffee
sip	rare	privileged
unbelievable	nappy	barista
cleared my throat	a filthy look	shocked
bigot	to have a go at sb	speechless
unreasonable	fuming	to ignore smth
tolerant	general hygiene	grin and bear it

Exercise

Write down all the words and phrases in your vocabulary notebook. Look in your dictionary and find the meaning of each word. Write the definition next to each word.

Then make up your own sentences using each word or phrase.

For example:

Clients — *a person who receives services or advice from a professional or company.*

“I have found that since I started using social media I have a lot more clients.”

Discussion Questions

What do you think of this story?

In your own words, say what happened.

In the story, Meghan seems very angry. Does she have a right to be angry, do you think? Why/why not?

If you were in Meghan's place, how would you react to it?

Does the young mother have the right to change her baby's nappy wherever she wants? Why/why not?

Do you think a coffee shop is a suitable place to change a baby's nappy? Why/why not?

What do you think about the barista's reaction? Why do you think he supported the young mother and not Meghan?

What do you think of the other customer's reaction? Were they right to ignore the situation?

If you were one of the customers, how would you have reacted?

Do you think we live in an overly tolerant society?

Do we just tolerate everything in order to not be seen as bigoted or ignorant?

Should we tolerate everything in society?

In your culture and country, what things are tolerated in society that you think is unacceptable?

Are you a tolerant person? Are you willing to accept most things in society?

Do you think in modern society, people have become more or less respectful of each other?

Try to give some examples.

Have you seen anyone get angry with another person in public?

What happened? What did the people say to each other?

Did you think the person had a right to be angry?

Or were they just overreacting?

Do you think people are afraid of becoming angry in public in case someone records it and puts it on social media?

How does this affect what you do in public?

Role Play

This is a role play activity.

There are two characters in the role play.

Person A — a customer in a coffee shop

Person B — a parent (could be a mother or a father)
changing their baby's nappy at the next table

The Situation

Person A goes into a coffee shop to enjoy a nice cup of coffee. They sit down and take a sip of their coffee, but then they are hit by an unbelievable smell.

At the next table, Person B is changing their baby's nappy.

The smell is terrible and you can see everything — all the mess inside the nappy!

How does each person react?

What do they say to each other?

How the people in your role play react is entirely up to you. They can be angry and shout at each other.

Or they can be quiet and speak politely and reasonably to each other.

Get into pairs and take some time to prepare your role play.
Then show the rest of your classmates and the teacher.

Debate

This is a debate activity.

You have all been chosen to take part in a debate for a town meeting.

The meeting is to discuss whether young mothers should be allowed to change their babies' nappies in public.

Should Young Mothers Be Allowed To Change Their Babies' Nappies In Public?

Team A

You believe that every mother has the right to change their baby wherever they want.

Often the mother is under a great deal of stress and has no time or will to change the baby in any other place.

Also, the town does not provide enough facilities. Some public bathrooms have 'Baby Changing' rooms — but there are not enough.

To ask a young mother to change the baby at home or 'somewhere else' is just extremely intolerant and ignorant.

People need to be more accepting of others.

Team B

You believe that mothers should change their baby at home or in a public bathroom.

It is totally unacceptable to change the baby in a public place where other people could be eating or drinking.

We have to think of public hygiene!

There are public bathrooms — and some of them have Baby Changing rooms. So use these places.

Expecting others to just accept your behaviour is not good for society.

All the class should get into two teams of equal numbers.

Also, choose one person to act as a chairperson. This person should make sure that every person gets a chance to speak, and that there is order during the debate.

In your teams, take some time to prepare what to say in the debate. Make sure your lines of argument are thought out clearly.

When you are ready, begin the debate!

It Really Gets To Me!

This is a classroom discussion.

It really gets to me means it makes me very angry.

Take a look at the following social misdemeanours and discuss whether they are acceptable or unacceptable.

- **Talking loudly on the phone**
- **Parents yelling or shouting at their kids**
- **Flossing or using a toothpick after eating in a restaurant**
- **Smoking at the entrance of a cafe or restaurant (the smoker is outside, but the smoke comes inside)**
- **Throwing candy wrappers on the ground**
- **Discarding cigarette butts on the ground — or on the beach**
- **Playing music loudly on the phone**
- **Nose picking or ear cleaning**
- **Couples fighting or arguing**

Go through each one and discuss whether you think these things are socially acceptable or not.

Say why or why not.

If you have an example or stories to say about these items,

mention them in class!

Writing

Imagine you are Meghan in the story.

You are very angry about what happened in the coffee shop today.

You want to express your anger but also hope to receive sympathy from the general public.

You are going to write a post on social media expressing what happened and how you feel about it.

Say what happened in short form.
Then express how you feel about it.

Say why you think it is wrong and that we should not allow young mums to change their baby in the middle of a coffee shop.

Try to write your post so that you come across as the victim.
You have to try to gain a lot of sympathy from the public!

When you have finished writing your post, read it out loud in front of the class.

Ask your classmates and teacher for feedback.

Credits

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