

## **Reporting an Absence**

**Materials:** Reasons for Being Absent from School or Work, Practice Reporting an Absence

**Objective:** Students will be able to report their child's absence from school or their absence from work.

**Vocabulary:** absent – adjective: not at work or school because you are sick or for some other reason, absence – noun: an occasion when you are not where people expect you to be

1. Ask the students if they know what the policy is for reporting an absence from their child's school and/or from their work. Ask if the policies were similar in their home countries.
2. Ask if they know what happens if their child is absent from school for too many days. Most schools have a policy that a child will lose credit for a class if they are absent a certain number of days. If your students are working, ask what happens to them if they are absent from work too often. Most companies have a policy about absenteeism.
3. Give the students the Reasons for Being Absent from School or Work worksheet and tell them you are going to fill in only the Reasons for Being Absent from School or Work first. If the group is small you can all answer these questions together. If it is a larger group, you can have the students work in pairs or small groups. When the students are finished, have them share their answers and write them on the board so everyone can have a complete list. Discuss any reasons they give that are problematic (for example – if students take their children out of school for a vacation, most public schools count these as unacceptable absences and the child could lose credit for a class).
4. Now have the students look at the Information to Give When Reporting an Absence section. Follow the same procedure as above. Make sure that they include all important information including: for child's absence from school – the date, their name, their child's name, their relationship to the child, their child's teacher's name (or class) and grade, the reason the child is (or was) absent, when the child will return to school, and any other information their school may require. For their absence from work – their name, their supervisor's name, the shift they work, the reason they are absent, when they will return to work, and any other information their employer requires.
5. Ask if they are more comfortable telephoning (calling) or writing (emailing) to report an absence. Give the students the handout Practice Reporting an Absence. They can work on the written note on their own and practice the dialogs with a partner.
6. After they have practiced, ask for volunteers to share their written notes and to role play their dialogs for the class. The class can help to improve or correct the notes and dialogs.

## Reasons for Being Absent from School or Work

Acceptable:

Unacceptable:

## Information to Give When Reporting an Absence

To your child's school:

To your work:

## Practice Reporting an Absence

Writing a note: For example:

February 5, 2015

Dear Mrs. Jones,

Amy was absent from school yesterday, February 4, because she had a fever.  
Please give her any work she missed.

Thank you.

Mrs. Angela Smith (Amy's mother)

Write your own note:

Calling your child's school to report an absence:

School receptionist: "Good morning, Elmwood Elementary School, Ms. Jones speaking."

Mother: "Good morning Ms. Jones. This is Ms. \_\_\_\_\_. I'm calling to let you know my daughter won't be in school today because she is sick."

School receptionist: "I'm sorry to hear that. What is your daughter's name?"

Mother: "Her name is \_\_\_\_\_. She's in the fifth grade and her teacher is Ms. Simpson."

School receptionist: "Thank you. I'll let her teacher know."

Mother: "You're welcome. Goodbye."

School receptionist: "Goodbye."

Now practice your own dialog with a partner. Take turns being the mother and the school receptionist.

Next, practice calling your job to let your boss know you won't be in today.