

Being Politely Firm

An activity of "A special encounter".

Read "A special encounter" (pages 18–19, *What's Up* August 2023). Imagine that you are a forest guide at Gunung Leuser National Park. You come across difficult tourists who do not observe forest etiquette. How can you respond in a firm yet polite way? Preparing your responses beforehand will help you handle unexpected difficult situations with confidence.

Tips on how to be politely firm

- Explain briefly to the tourist how his or her action may cause harm.
- Give a further explanation if the tourist insists on carrying out his or her action.
- Do not criticise the tourist as a person. Focus only on his or her actions.
- Where possible, suggest an alternative action that is more acceptable.

1. On your own, write down what you would say as a politely firm forest guide speaking to the tourist in each of the scenarios below.
2. Work in a small group to pick one of the scenarios, expand on the dialogue together, and prepare a skit.
3. Take turns for the groups to perform their skits for your whole class.

Scenario 1: *A tourist is about to feed some fruit to a wild orangutan.*

YOU: Please do not feed the orangutan.

TOURIST: But it looks hungry. I just want to help the poor animal.

YOU: _____

TOURIST: May I give it just a small piece of fruit? That wouldn't do any harm, I'm sure.

YOU: _____

Scenario 2: *A tourist tries to pick ripe bananas from a banana plant in the forest.*

YOU: Please do not pick any fruit from the forest.

TOURIST: If no one picks these ripe bananas to eat, they will rot very soon.

YOU: _____

TOURIST: Let me take just one banana. That should be fine, right?

YOU: _____

Scenario 3: *After eating some fruit, a tourist tosses the fruit peel to the forest ground.*

YOU: Please pick up the litter.

TOURIST: I'm not littering. I'm doing a good thing by leaving the fruit peel on the ground.

YOU: _____

TOURIST: The fruit peel will fertilise the forest plants. That is a good thing, isn't it?

YOU: _____

Scenario 4: *A tourist tries to go near a wild orangutan to take a selfie with it.*

YOU: Please do not go near the animal.

TOURIST: Don't worry! This orangutan looks so gentle. It won't attack me.

YOU: _____

TOURIST: I just want to take a selfie with the orangutan. It will only take a second!

YOU: _____

4. Have a whole-class discussion on whether these ways of being politely firm are useful for your daily life as a student. Give examples of such scenarios.