Complaining strategies

Name: _____   Class: _____   Date: _____

Step 1: With a partner, take turns reading the "Situation" section aloud. If you don't understand something, please ask your teacher.

SITUATION

Be careful when you complain about something. The way you make complaints will be different depending on the situation. Think of the following things before you complain:

Relationship: *How close is your relationship with the person you are complaining to?*
Are you complaining to someone you know? Are you complaining to a stranger? Are you complaining to your boss? If you are not so close to the person, it might be dangerous or hurtful to make a strong or assertive complaint.

Impact: *How big is the problem you are complaining about?*
For example, being late can be a small problem if you are just meeting up with friends, but can be a big problem if you are holding a business meeting. If the problems are major, it might be appropriate to make your complaint stronger.

Step 2: Go over the strategies below. Make sure you understand all of these ideas and vocabulary.

STRATEGIES

Upgraders: *Make it stronger!*
- **Strong words:** *Hey!; What!?; I can't believe it!; Right now!*
- **Direct order:** *Turn the music down!; Close the door!; Be quiet!*

Downgraders: *Make it softer*
- **Questions:** *Can you turn the volume down?; Could you please close the door? Do you think you could…?*
- **Indirect requests:** *Did you get that memo?; Do you know what time it is?; What are you doing?*
- **Softening Words:** *A little bit; Perhaps; Maybe*

Explanation: *Explain why you're annoyed*
- Direct Complaint:
  - *You are playing music so loud and I cannot sleep!*
  - *I didn't order this!*
  - *I want my money back.*

- Indirect Complaint:
  - *I am trying to concentrate.*
  - *I have been waiting for 40 minutes.*
  - *This is a smoking-free area.*

Step 3: Watch the video again carefully, then fill in the correct information below:

Relationship: _____

Impact: _____

Upgrader: _____

Downgrader: _____

Explanation: _____