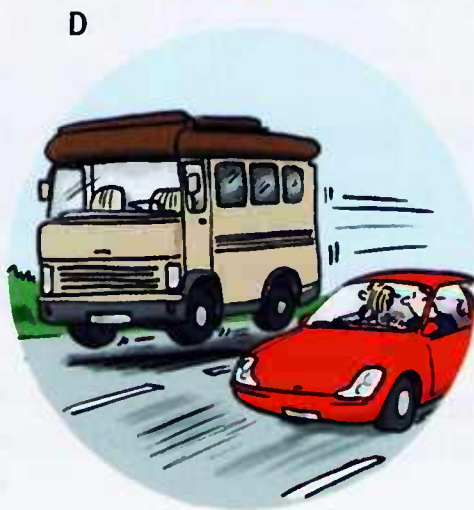


12B | Sue!

READING

- 1 Work in pairs. Look at the cartoons A–E. Something is going wrong in each one. What is it?



- 2 Read the newspaper articles 1–5 below. Match them to the cartoons in exercise 1.

- 3 Read article 1 again and find words that match these definitions.

- 1 a person who takes another person to court
- 2 a financial agreement
- 3 asking a law court to change its decision
- 4 taking a person to court to get money from them because they have done something bad to you
- 5 money that is paid because you have done something bad to another person
- 6 extreme unhappiness

1 A grandmother from Kansas City is suing a Florida theme park because she says that one of the attractions is too frightening. The plaintiff, Mrs Darlene Joel, refused the offer of a small out of court settlement. She has asked for \$15,000 in damages for the emotional distress she suffered. However, the court is expected to turn down Mrs Joel's claim in the judgment later today. Her lawyers are already planning an appeal.

3 At an Elton John concert in a San Diego stadium, Robert Glaser needed to go to the men's room. However, when he got to the toilet, he was surprised to find a woman using it. When he asked a stadium official to show him to another men's room, he was **informed** that all the toilets in the stadium were unisex. Too embarrassed to share a toilet with a woman, Glaser had to wait until the end of the concert, four hours later. He **complained** that he had suffered emotional distress and sued the stadium for \$5.4 million.

4 CHERYL VANDEVENDER, a shop worker in West Virginia, seriously injured her back at work after opening a jar of pickles. Her doctor told her to take some time off work. Her manager **warned** her that she would lose her job if she did not return to work within twelve months. Nearly a year later, she returned to the shop and her manager told her to fill up a fridge. After only twenty minutes, her back was injured again. This time, Ms Vandevender decided to sue the company, Sheetz Inc.

2 In March 2003, Mr Merv Grazinski of Oklahoma City bought a new 10-metre Winnebago motor home. On his first trip, he set the cruise control at 70 mph and went into the back of the vehicle to make himself a cup of coffee. Within minutes, the motor home had crashed. Mr Grazinski was not hurt but he wanted his money back. In court, he **insisted** that he was not responsible. He pointed out that the instruction manual did not tell him to stay in the driver's seat when he was using cruise control. The manufacturers **denied** responsibility and asked the judge to throw out the claim.

5 Veronica Martin and her husband were eating hamburgers from a fast food chain when a hot pickle fell out of the burger and burnt Victoria's chin. Her lawyers have asked a court in Knoxville, Texas, to award \$110,000 in damages for medical bills, loss of earnings and emotional distress. Her husband, Darrin, has **claimed** that he lost the 'services and companionship' of his wife and is also suing for \$15,000. A company spokesman said that all its products were safe.

- 4 Now read articles 2–5 again. What do you think the judge decided in each case?
- 5 Match the articles 2–5 to the judges' decisions a–d.
- In order to avoid legal costs, the company reached a secret settlement with the couple, but refused to discuss details or to accept any responsibility.
 - The judge, however, agreed with the plaintiff and order the company to pay \$1.75 million in damages and replace the vehicle.
 - But the real emotional distress came later when the judge said the claim was not serious, and the Supreme Court refused to hear an appeal.
 - The court decided that the company had acted in an illegal and unfair way towards its employee and ordered it to pay over \$2 million in damages.
- 6 Work in pairs. Discuss these questions.
- Do you think that Mrs Joel (article 1) was right to sue the theme park? Why or why not?
 - For what reasons do people sue in your country?
 - Can you think of any recent examples?
- 7 All five of the stories you read in exercise 2 were reported in newspapers in the United States. Later it was discovered that one of the stories was untrue. Which one, do you think? Explain your reasons.

- 2 Write five sentences about things that your teacher has recently told or asked you to do.
- She asked me to do some grammar exercises.*
He told me to listen to the news on BBC radio.

VOCABULARY: reporting verbs

- 1 Match the highlighted verbs in the newspaper articles to the definitions 1–6.
- gave someone some information
 - continued saying that something was true
 - said that something was not true
 - said that something was true, although you knew that other people may not agree
 - said you were not happy about something
 - told someone that something bad may happen
- 2 Match the sentences to the reporting verbs in exercise 1.
- 'It's not true that the attractions in our theme park are dangerous.'
 - 'Danger! This attraction is not suitable for people with a heart condition.'
 - 'Please, Gran. I really, really, really want to try it.'
 - 'The park will close in forty-five minutes.'
 - 'This is the best theme park in the world.'
 - 'We had to wait far too long for some of the attractions.'

GRAMMAR: *tell* & *ask* with infinitive

You can use *tell/ask* + object + (*not*) *to* + infinitive to report instructions, orders or requests.

direct speech	reported speech
'Can you show me the men's room?'	<i>He asked an official to show him the men's room.</i>
'Don't go back for three weeks.'	<i>Her doctor told her not to go back for three weeks.</i>

SEE LANGUAGE REFERENCE PAGE 124

- 1 Put the sentences into reported speech.
- 'Can you describe the attraction?' the judge asked her.
 - The instruction manual told drivers: 'Use cruise control for long-distance trips on the freeway.'
 - 'Stop wasting the court's time!' the judge told him.
 - 'Don't interrupt me when I'm speaking,' she told her son.
 - 'Could you give me the name of a good lawyer?' she asked her friend.
 - 'Can you call an ambulance?' she asked her husband.

SPEAKING

- 1 Work in groups. Read the information below and decide how much money the woman should receive.

A woman went to a fast-food restaurant and bought a cup of coffee. She placed the cup between her knees and as she was taking the lid off the cup of coffee to add cream and sugar, she spilled the coffee, which burned her legs. She decided to sue the company that owned the restaurant and she found a lawyer who agreed to help her.

- 2 Compare your ideas with other groups and explain your reasons.

Now turn to page 126.