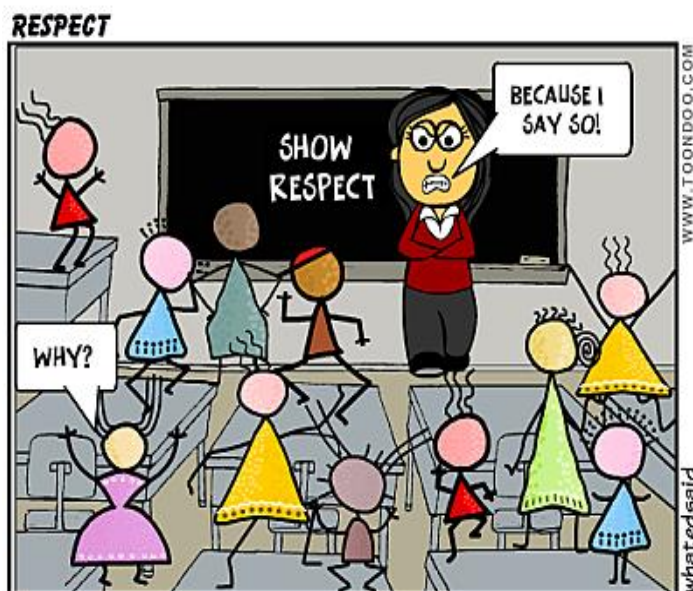


Ideas on Classroom Management in YL Classes

During my career as an ESL teacher I have come across plenty of teachers who dread teaching children. Because they are naughty. Because they cannot concentrate. Because all they want to do is run around and make a lot of noise. Having taught kids for six years now I wholeheartedly agree with all the aforementioned complaints. It takes however a few things to bear in mind to make your YL classes work like magic.

Teamwork, games and the sense of competitiveness

Students love competitions and YL are no exception. The only difference is that they love them even more! Hence you should take every opportunity to turn any activity into a contest. Start up by dividing the class into two or more groups. Give each team a name e.g. oranges and apples or red and blue. Very YL tend to forget which group they belong to so use colored chalk to mark their desks. On the blackboard write each group's name and give them an equal numbers of points for a start. Warn the students they you will erase their points if anyone from the group shouts, walks around, keeps talking, does not raise their hand etc. Tell them that points will be added if group members speak English or complete tasks successfully. Reward the kids for every positive thing they do. **Keep in mind that rewards have a much more encouraging and motivating effect than any form of punishment.**



Demonstration not explanation

Whatever your experience may imply, always remember that children are not adults. Consequently different techniques have to be used to explain to the students what you require. Forget checking instructions and wordy explanations. As an alternative, resort to demonstrations or ask a stronger student to explain what s/he understood to the other students.

Rules and routine

Children need order and quickly get used to routines and habitual activities. If you notice that e.g. blowing a whistle gets their attention, keep practising that. Try to start and end a lesson in the same or similar way or have some always repeating elements in it. For instance, a good starting point is dividing a class into groups and a good finishing point might be counting the points and drawing stars for all the group members on the poster. Be strict about the rules you want the students to follow as well. For example, let them get used to the fact that you will give coloring worksheets only to the students who have already taken out their crayons.

Encouraging the usage of TL

Try to make students use TL (target language) from the very first classes. Expose them to the basic phrases and repeat these each time an opportunity comes up. Ignore the students who insist on using their mother tongue and they will sooner or later adjust to your behavior. Reward the ones who use TL by giving their group points, clapping or verbal praise.

Getting the students' attention

YL classes tend to be noisy by definition so raising your voice or shouting has a poor chance of success. Instead, try using sound making objects - toy musical instruments (drums, maracas, trumpet), whistles, rattles, bells etc. Not only will you save your throat but you will bring some fun to the classroom as well.

Praise and rewards

Nothing works better for students than a decent amount of praise. When it comes to kids however feel free to praise them all the time for the smallest things they do or say properly. They might not be able to understand "very good", "great" or "excellent" but they will surely get "bravo", "super" or "perfect". Thumbs up, clapping hands and a huge smile on a teacher's face will definitely help the kids realize that they did a



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4