

Case Studies

HELP FILE

Rude Noises, grade 2

"I have a boy in Grade 2 who shows rude behaviour in front of the kids - like inappropriate bodily noises if you know what I mean. I think it's attention-seeking. How do I stop this?

I don't feel I have the skills to stop behaviours like students continually making silly noises just to push my buttons, students continually mimicking the words I try to teach in Italian.

I know they want to get my attention, but I can't say always 'Come and sit next to me'.

What other strategies can I try?

Many thanks, S"

Jenny Replied

- You need to notice him and acknowledge him only for positive behaviours or in situations you initiate and control. Don't make this an obvious thing (it has to be honest), a short positive comment to him on his clean shirt or shoes, nice smile, haircut - anything and look for something similar in others as well - a few a day and it will take away their need to act out. You face a similar situation to a young child swearing - they say unacceptable words not because they are unacceptable - they don't know what they mean but because they get a reaction ... The rude noises etc are just the same - you can either ignore, say something like I don't believe I heard that - we don't do that in our class - take the wind out of their sails - not nastily - just matter of fact or you can use a little light humour ... e.g. "Was that a buzzing bee I heard?" etc.
- ... It's not a matter of you stopping it but rather the child not wanting to repeat it because it didn't get the reaction he desired or he wanted and in balance you only notice him when he is e.g. sitting quietly, speaking nicely, gets a word right etc. etc. - you reinforce his good behaviour by only noticing him when he elicits this The message he unconsciously receives and works with is - if I want to be noticed in her class - I have to be good. You can't control him - you have to manage your responses so that they make him want to control himself. ... Complicated ... Not really - just remember the dance. Along with this you have a right to express disapproval and how you feel - that is fine ... You have a right to feelings but not to hitting out at / hurting others by your actions and words.
- Silly noises are interesting - yes, it is the unconscious goal of attention, could be power with older students. Remember DON'T TAKE IT PERSONALLY - they

are not doing it to get at you - you actually are irrelevant - they are doing it because they feel like it - you just happen to be there - on the receiving end ... Don't get hooked in. Have fun with the language - get them all to mimic if one starts - stop the whole class - alright everyone follow Jason That's great now you have got it right - well done He won't do it again Give them opportunities to sing, say, recite be rhythmic with the words - Italian is a wonderful language and learning it can be so much fun. Try and get some simple poems or songs they can learn and sing or recite The more they speak the better they will be.

- Always focus on when they get it right - ignore the wrong -- they will learn much faster - speak clearly and loudly yourself and let them teach each other after you have give the example. I would make a point with language of focusing on the positive and when necessary saying it correctly myself and encouraging them through noticing how they improve. If someone tells me what I am doing wrong I don't want to try anymore but if they tell me when I get it right I'll give it another go. Affirmation, descriptive praise (see notes), pos 'I' messages are all key to your teaching.
- Don't feel everything has to be just so and they have to sit and learn - make it fun ... If you enjoy it so will they. Learning should be fun and with languages you can do so much and they will learn so fast ... Even if they have to learn things of by heart make silly poems mnemonics anything to help them remember and I know you will use all the senses to help them learn - pictures, feeling, smelling etc. What fun you can have. Do enjoy your teaching and the children will too. When you have lots to do and have fun doing it - they will learn and remember.

Good luck Let me know anything else and if you need more ideas - just email.

Jenny Mackay