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How can teachers handle large groups?



There are different ways to spark students' interest.

Something you might often ask is 'Where can I get ideas on how to handle large groups?' In order to know what can be effective to improve classroom management. There are mixed feelings when you are dealing with a large group.

Such concerns are normal, and can be used to make your lessons more dynamic.

To reduce anxiety, you could start by giving yourself time to chat to students a bit more informally before the class starts.

Even though this means arriving earlier, be sure that during that quality time you explain the reasons why you think learning English is essential for personal improvement, professional development or lifelong happiness.

You could have your students do some pair or group work not only to brainstorm about their expectations of the course, but also to get students to use English as the common communication code among them.

A few students might want to share some of the conclusions they got from the task.



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It is clear that every student comes with different linguistic needs and interests, you might also want to use this strategy to get to know your students when teaching a large group. It is also useful to get some help from stronger students to motivate the weak ones during tasks like this.



The more ideas you get from them, the easier it will be to gear your lessons to meet your students' needs and interests.

Most icebreakers do not work as well with large groups as they do with small ones, however, making learners feel they are being taken into account could be enough to capture their attention.

Why not tell a story to begin with? Telling stories is probably one of the oldest ways to let people (even more effectively young people) about different topics both past and present.

Students benefit a lot from sources of stories and it makes your class more appealing as it triggers comprehension of the language.

There is every likelihood that in large groups quiet students feel ostracized, especially if the subject matters focus on topics that are unrelated to them. It is worthwhile to use elbow partners to give everyone the opportunity to talk and be listened to.



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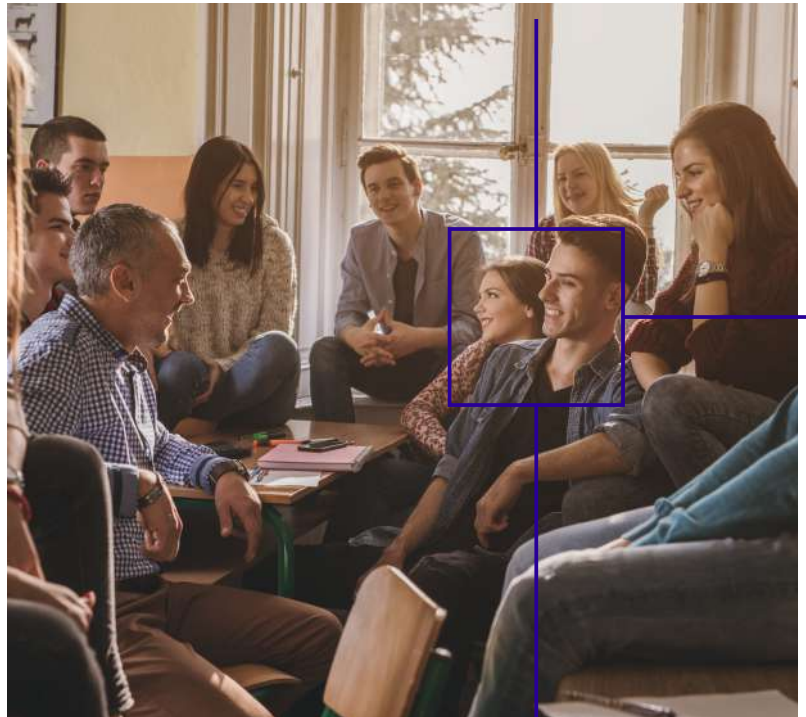
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This will also help you kick off activities where students are motivated to learn problem solving, decision making and even reasoning.

Even though there will be events that cannot be controlled, you must be ready to tackle the problems in the best way possible.

Brace yourself for the noise that every task will involve as most of the activities will get louder than what you probably expect.

The tip here is to create behavioral codes that are clear and strict for all the students to understand.



It is important to avoid shouting at students since the atmosphere of the class might get awkward.

Creating gestures such as semaphore signals or with a flashlight pointing at the students when you think it is time to stop the activity are very useful.

Assessing students in large groups tends to be an issue as you might have a mountain of work by the end of the courses. However, you might want to set frequent and short assignments during the course working so as to avoid having to do everything at once.

This will also provide learners with further opportunities to learn from constant feedback.

Teaching large groups represents a good challenge for everyone.

What other tips would you add? Do you identify with the situations described?