

Things that may be part of the problem - and that you may need to change:

- Class size (large) - you probably can't change this, but it means you may need to do a lot of group work and use other strategies.
- Room arrangements - even if it's not your own class (form/home) room, there are simple changes you can make for your lessons, and you may even be able to talk to the home room teacher about changing things around.
- You don't know all of the children's names - below I will give some ideas and strategies to learn them quickly.
- There is a lot of outside noise / ambient noise - you may need to plan your lessons specially so that, for instance, you gather the children in a small group (on a mat, maybe) for when you are giving instructions so you don't have to shout.
- The children have a short attention span - make sure the lesson plan includes lots of variety and don't do any one thing for too long.
- The timetable period is too short, or too long - careful lesson planning is needed, and make sure to arrive on time and stick to a schedule.
- You are a "non-optionist" teacher, or just not confident in speaking English, or not confident in the specific topics you need to teach - hopefully this website and other materials can help you to increase your confidence (gradually).
- The children have poor English skills (or are in a low stream) - and you are the teacher, so it is your responsibility to raise their skill level.
- The children bored, not engaged, not motivated - it is your job to motivate and engage them. There are some ideas below.
- The children are not trained in how to behave - it's your job to train them. Strategies below.
- There is not enough for the children to actually do, there is no challenge - again, you're the teacher and it's up to you, and there are ideas below.
- There is no reason for the children to behave (from their point of view), there are no rewards or penalties - introduce rewards and penalties, and there are ideas below.
- There is poor classroom organisation - change it.

Here are some initial ideas for change - more below:

- Use technology - if your classroom does not have a smart board or LCD projector, consider going to the computer lab sometimes.
- Go outside - take the children somewhere else in the school occasionally for a change. Plan carefully and be very specific in your instructions and reward good behaviour!
- Go to the hall – it's a place to sit/stand in a circle for some activities that may engage the children. Again, make sure you have given careful instructions about lining up and moving to the hall.
- Let the children use a microphone - maybe in the hall. This can really help children overcome their 'shyness'. Each child could have a turn at practising target language on the microphone.
- Change the room arrangement - on a temporary basis, or permanent arrangement after talking to the form teacher.
- Take 'that' child and (for your lessons, at least) move them – to the front right under the board, or to the back way behind all the others – or give them a special responsibility (not necessarily class monitor)
- Stop doing drills. Really! Find other ways to practise (writing, singing, miming) that are less noisy and encourage the better-behaved quieter children to excel.
- Don't allow any shouting at all - by anyone, teacher or children. Establish a class penalty for anyone who raises their voice. Instead - sing!
- Don't react / respond to the things that make you angry - turn away, count to ten ... and ignore secondary behaviours
- Make sure your classes have lots of variety – children have short attention spans.