

Classroom Management

Some Perspective!

Here is a post we found on the JET forums that probably sums up the ALT Role in classroom management at the middle/high school level better than anything else we could give you. Hope you enjoy it!

[Re: Classroom discipline in Japan?](#)

by [William MacDonald](#) » Fri Jan 14, 2011 11:45 am

My approach to this was to sit down and discuss discipline and other issues with the JTE (Japanese Teacher of English) before we started teaching. It was a good excuse to get to know my co-workers a little better, and if approached right it sets the right tone, namely:

- 1- You have no teaching experience *in Japan* (even if you have teaching experience elsewhere)
- 2- You are asking for their help to be a better teacher and to assist them however they need you to help
- 3- You're here to listen and learn before you try to advance your own ideas and changes

If you approach it like this, asking for help, listening and acknowledging your newness to the situation then you'll almost certainly find the JTEs will, in the vast majority of cases, be receptive. Japan has a senpai (senior) to kouhai (junior) system that pretty much requires a senior to help out a junior who asks nicely for help.

Issues I'd recommend covering:

- Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 (i.e. who is lead teacher and who is assisting) and for what? - While your role is formally "assistant" you may find that some JTEs are tired and really appreciate having a lesson where they can relax a little and let you take the lead. Bear in mind that you will see a class perhaps once a week, while the JTEs see the students for another 3, 4 or even in some high-level English schools, 6 more times that week, so it can be a nice change of pace for the JTE to let someone else run things while they relax and contribute when and where they want. On the other hand you might end up with a JTE who likes to be in complete control of their classroom environment in every respect, and will take the lead and call on you when they want you to do an activity.

These represent two extremes in approach, in my experience most teachers fall somewhere in-between and want to take the lead for certain activities and let you take the lead for others. I'd recommend talking through a lesson from greeting the class to dismissing the class and see where the JTE wants you to get involved, and who takes the lead. Sit down and do this sort of discussion for your first few classes and you'll quickly get an idea of how the JTE sees your role in the classroom and how they want to work.

- Changing roles - Naturally this leads onto a discussion of how to change who is leading in the classroom. Some teachers will say something like, "William, please read page 43 with the students", while with most of my teachers I've worked out a system where we give each other a nod and swap over without saying anything so it seems to the students that you and the JTE are working together like a well-oiled machine, but it can take some practice to get right.

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- Problem students/classes - An important topic to broach is always the topic of problem students or classes. The JTEs will be reluctant to discuss this since you're new and this information is private, however if you phrase it like, "Are there any very shy students in this class who I shouldn't ask to speak?", then you're likely to get a list of students you shouldn't call on. Remember that Japanese schools are, for the most part, mixed ability, and particularly if you're working at a Junior High School then you may well have students with autism-spectrum disorders or similar problems who need to be handled gently. Sometimes these students are in a special needs class, but often they're regular classes, and because most Westerner education systems send these students to special schools we are often not familiar with the tell-tale signs that would prevent you from asking these students to engage in public speaking, etc.

- Discipline - What is important to remember is that theoretically Japanese teachers are pretty much powerless in terms of discipline. Corporal punishment is banned, schooling is mandatory until the end of Junior High so expulsions are not an option and you can't even eject a student who's being disruptive from a class, and while there are detentions and similar things the bottom line is that if the student refuses to do the punishment there's very little the teacher can do apart from talk to the parents (who may or may not be sympathetic, and who may or may not have much of a role in their child's life given the insanely long hours many Japanese parents work).

As a result Japanese school discipline is a VERY different animal. Many students will have a closer relationship with their home-room teacher than they have with their own parents, and they'll talk to their home-room teacher about everything from school to their love lives. All the students in the home room take almost all subjects together, so they're together in the same classes for at least 7 hours a day for 5 to 6 days a week (technically school is Monday to Friday, but because of a SNAFU that means that graduating requires more "classroom hours" than can actually be completed in a 5 day week the students will come in some Saturdays to attend extra classes). This means that for the most part classes will arrive at their own equilibrium point in terms of discipline if you let them, and if the majority of the class enjoys the lesson, wants to study English and likes you then they'll reasonably quickly deal with disruptive elements by shunning them until they get the message and come back into line. Harsh, but effective.

Club activities aren't the casual once or twice a week thing they are in most Western countries, but rather students will attend club every day, many of the more serious clubs coming into school on Saturdays and Sundays for 2 to 4 hours of concentrated practice (the kendo club and brass band club in my school are like this). Often students literally use up every moment of their spare time in these clubs, their friends are almost all in the same club, and the coach knows everything about them. School isn't somewhere Japanese students go to learn, it's somewhere they go to live, and the words, "School life" take on an entirely different meaning.

You can see from the above that because students "live" at school much more than their Western the discipline dynamic is also totally different. Classes tend towards a level of discipline that suits the majority of students. The relationship with home room teachers and club coaches makes their opinions very important to the students, so if a teacher has a serious problem with a student or class they'll approach the home room teacher to investigate and sort it out, and in a worst case scenario the student might even be put "on the bench" in their club for a few weeks as the ultimate sort of reprimand (I've only seen this happen once and the student in question shaved their head in shame and as a sign of contrition).

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In the classroom you'll find the teachers likewise seem to "ignore" a lot more of what we'd consider "bad" behaviour. I'd suggest you reserve judgement on what constitutes "bad" behaviour, for example a student who sleeps through your class might be the top Kendo student with a chance at the olympics and the coach is pushing him hard. Chewing the student out for sleeping in your class, no matter how gently you do it, leaves the student stuck between you, the ALT they don't know very well, and their coach, who they respect immensely. Guess who's going to come off second best, and whose class the student is going to end up hating? Or a student consistently talks to his classmates during class in Japanese, and it's driving you nuts, but it turns out that this student is excellent at English but his friends aren't so he's helping them out by offering a running translation of what you're saying and a commentary on the relevant grammar points. Telling him to be quiet leaves him bored, and his friends irritated since they've lost their extra English teacher, oh and you've also reprimanded a good English student for trying to be helpful, so the chances of that student volunteering answers and ideas in your class (or out of it) are pretty much zero.

Sometimes behaviour will be legitimately bad, but again the teachers will allow the class some time to sort it out on their own, before intervening, and often you won't see this intervention because the JTE will instead report the bad behaviour to the home room teacher, who will then reprimand the students during the home room periods. Since the home room teacher has a lot more influence over the behaviour of the class this is an effective way to deal with the problem, but from an ALT's perspective it sometimes seems that nothing is being done.

This doesn't mean you're powerless in the classroom, but rather that you need to talk to the JTE, because they'll assume you're aware of what is happening. It was only by my 3rd year when my Japanese improved to the level where I could reliably understand what was being said around me in the staffroom that I really became aware how much this sort of thing is casually discussed in the staffrooms, so it isn't secret and everyone assumes that everyone knows. Talking to your JTE will make you feel more part of the team and overcome the communication barrier (because even if you studied Japanese at university I can assure you that it will still take you some time to become accustomed to the regional accent and dialect, as well as the fact that day-to-day Japanese is often far from grammatical and is terse to the point of being incomprehensible if you're not aware of the topic).

- Finally, discuss how the JTE wishes you to handle corrections. Some of my teachers prefer me to just step over and correct the mistake quietly, while some copy all their examples verbatim from the textbook and say that I should leave it as the tests are based on the textbook, and others want me to discuss the mistake in full with them after class so they can see not only the correction, but also understand why it is wrong.

Sorry for the extremely long post, but this is a very difficult topic to tackle because of a range of reasons. To boil it down to its essence the key in this, and many issues in Japan, is communication with your Japanese colleagues, and the key to opening up easy communication as a new ALT is to approach them as a kouhai (junior) seeking assistance (accompanied by the right attitude).

- Ex-JET (ALT, Fukui-ken 2006-2011)

<http://www.jetprogramme.org/forums/viewtopic.php?f=10&t=4689&p=57719>

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BUT WHAT TO DO WITH

!?

APATHETIC KIDS

"The opposite of good is not evil, it's indifference." Abraham Heschel

Always ask yourself : "Why are my kids apathetic ?". Question the dynamics of your class and try to change it if necessary. Put yourself in those kids' shoes by remembering the 13-year-old you in a class you didn't like. E-m-p-a-t-h-y.

Some ideas!

- GET TO KNOW THEM!!! The more they value you as a person, the more they will value your class. MAKE THEM FEEL LIKE THEY MATTER AND ARE **NEEDED** IN YOUR CLASS!!!!
- Movement : move around the classroom, don't hesitate to modulate the volume of your voice and your intonation when you have to repeat the same word 3 or 4 times
- Don't be afraid to use ridiculous examples to illustrate the grammar point of the day (if some kids laugh the others will want to know why)
- Tell a funny/disturbing/strange personal anecdote to explain cultural differences whenever relevant (making it a skit is a definite plus). Students are really interested in the differences between ES/JHS/SHS in Japan and those in your home country.
- Spend extra time with those seemingly comatose students to make sure they understand what the lesson is about
- Use pop culture reference in the classroom to get the kids' attention and in order to do that BE CURIOUS > ask your students who is on their pen case, stickers, erasers, rulers, etc... and look them up at home after school. It will be a great conversation starter when you want to talk to your students in English outside of the classroom and you can use it in the class when you give examples: *Maeda Atsuko (leader of the band AKB48) is more beautiful than Lady Gaga.* (for the lesson on comparatives in JHS)

FOR STUDENTS SLEEPING OR ABOUT TO

- If you are in charge, DON'T HAVE A BORING CLASS, YO!
- Move around the classroom
- Gently put your hand on their backs
- Cultural note: it's socially acceptable in Japan to sleep in class or during meetings so I'd suggest you don't make a big deal about it. Understand that you are participating in a different culture, things will always be different from now until you leave Japan. Get used to it. If it bothers you, express that to the JTE and ask him/her how she wants to deal with it. From what we know, most JTEs will wake up the kids. In some extreme cases, the teacher won't. You might wanna ask your JTE or the homeroom teacher (A.K.A. the mother *in absentia*) why. Maybe that student has some extenuating circumstances.

STUDENTS TOO GENKI FOR THEIR OWN GOOD

- Address them by their names and ask them to turn the volume down a bit

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-Use them for special things in class! Handing out papers, putting pictures on the board, ANYTHING you can do to keep them busy!

-Chances are they don't understand anything about the lesson and have nothing better to do than playing around. Spend more time with them to explain them the grammar point of the day. In our experience, we've found that Japanese teachers usually have a non-confrontational approach to problem solving, that is to say that teachers will scold the students for having forgotten their homework, or being late for the club of activity, but will rarely tell the noisy students off during the class. In addition to that, the teachers don't have the time to explain individually to kids who are slow so those weak students are left to themselves. Spend time with them, treat them with respect, use eye-contact. If you manage to turn them into more dedicated students, they will become your assistants.

-Japan is a group-oriented country and it starts as early as the elementary school level. Kids will naturally help each other. Use that energy.

-If you have a recurrent discipline problem with one of several kids and the abovementioned methods fail to work, discuss it with your JTE and request to have a meeting with just the JTE, you and those kids to discuss it.

SMART KIDS

-Write extra challenging questions on the board for them to answer so that they don't finish way earlier than the others (they might end up disturbing the slower kids) and it will get their interest renewed in the language

-Turn them into your assistants. Tell them to go around and check their friends' answers.

-In high school, I spend more time talking English with the students who show interest in the subject. With students who don't show as much interest, I usually move in and out of English and Japanese.

THE CONSTANT TURNING-AROUND

-A tough one that is. Some will tell you that in Japan one shouldn't ask kids questions individually in the first place and others will argue that it's part of the cultural exchange, that it's very common in western countries to ask one kid a question.

-I like to ask kids questions on a one-to-one basis myself and when I do I usually tell them to look at me in the eyes and try to come up with an answer (any answer really). If they can't or seem overly confused, it becomes awkward and embarrassing so I try to rephrase.

-Most of the time this is actually a sign that the student knows the answer, but needs verification from another student. If this is annoying to you, play a row game with the students.

-Avoid spoon-feeding them > even if you ask them every week the same question, they'll not volunteer and wait for the smarter kid to answer or for the JTE to translate what you said.

SOME ADVICE!!!!

We poled your fellow ALTs on some things they wish they had known about classroom management in Japan and advice they would like to pass on to YOU! Here is what they had to say!

"Be ready for kanchos, lots of talking over students, and the angelic student thing is a myth."

-Anonymous

"Definitely ask the JTE what role they want you to take in the classroom re: classroom management.

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Remember that positive praise is far better than negative. Also, a lot of kids in low-end schools can often have un-diagnosed, or non-medicated, learning and behavioural problems. Patience is most certainly a key skill to have, as well as knowing which "battles" to pick. Often it is much better to ignore an attention-seeking student (e.g. being loud/disruptive in class) and instead praise the other students who are working, rather than challenging that student or bringing attention to their antics. After a few classes, or even a few minutes, the disruptive student will nearly ALWAYS stop acting out and begin seeking the positive praise that the others are receiving. It's a technique a few of my JTEs are now adapting after seeing the success it has had in my classes, whereas before they disciplined said student as soon as they acted out (which result in even larger disruptions). Also, do not be shy to ask about advice with how to work with a class, whether from a JTE or their home-room teacher. " -Laura!

"My major tip would be with 1-4 grade elementary kids. A certain level of chaos in lower elementary school classes is just fine. However, when it starts to get out of hand, don't compete with the kids for noise level. Clap your hands once or twice, and then just stand and wait (I hold my hands up too, helps get their attention). It might take up to 3-5 minutes to work the first time, but they remember the next time and their reaction is MUCH faster. My first graders will go from utter chaos to sitting quietly in under a minute. Also, pay attention to their involvement level and don't be afraid to scratch your plan! Little kids get fractious when they are tired and frustrated - sometimes I'll "teach" (numbers, ect) for 20-30 minutes and they're great, and then we'll do a game. Other days, we'll be 10 minutes into the lesson and for whatever reason they are tired, bored, whatever - don't stress it, just scrap your plan and play fruits basket. Or make up a game that involves numbers on the spot - I've done that too :D. Side note: I found that the best lessons for 1-4th grade involve a switching gears often, but in a routine. For instance, I start my lessons with hello/how are you and a quick review of I'm fine/hungry/cold etc and then have them stand up and practice with 3-5 people. Then I teach the main "lesson" for 10-15 minutes (which usually involves a variation on a chant or question activity that we do often). Then we play what I call a learning game (focused on the lesson) and then wrap it up with a fun game (usually fruits basket or Simon says). If we have 2-3 minute left, I do a REALLY fast recap of the point of the lesson. Basically, change gears BEFORE they get bored, and you cut your management problems by 90%."

-Jessie!

Learn students' names if at all possible. Calling a misbehaving kid out by name works much better than "hey you!" Since this isn't feasible at large schools, consider asking for (or making yourself) a seating chart for each class that you can glance at to quickly look up a name. Or request that the students wear romaji nametags. Maybe even have them make one as part of your jikoshokai lesson, and then have each kid introduce him/herself to you. Have the students keep their nametags with their English textbook and notebook so they always have it for English class. Also, if you find yourself frustrated with how the JTE is handling classroom management, keep in mind that he/she may be doing things outside of class that aren't visible to you, such as discussing the problem with the kid's homeroom teacher. -Emily!

"Speaking out of turn, harassing other students, not paying attention, sleeping, and generally being disruptive are often just turned a blind eye to. But oh, your aisatsu wasn't genki enough? WATCH OUT! Always remember it's not your job to discipline the students, but you can employ methods that will make the classes go smoother. Wait in silence until they notice the lesson has stopped, engage the trouble-making kids in a question, go stand next to them, talk to your HRT/JTE about it, and maybe just know when you've lost the battle. Some days your kids are just NOT going to have it, and sometimes you'll need to find a new teaching method that engages them better. Also, find time to talk to and befriend your students out of class, and they'll be less likely to be dicks. Also remember that they're tired, worn out, and either balls hot and freezing cold a lot of the time." -Anonymous

"Japanese teachers don't often discipline kids like they do back home - no matter how disruptive or unwilling they may seem to be during your class there often seems to be no form of discipline, and especially none like

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detention, extra homework, confiscation, blacklist etc. However, some kids will get shouted at, pulled-about (I've seen it) and others will be made miss out on club activities, and the way this may be carried out eg. SHOUTING, can often make you feel uncomfortable. If you experience it you should tell the JTE how it made your feel and what you will, and will not tolerate, during your classes together. My visits to the school/class are deemed as 'special/fun' days by most schools but it a) sometimes means kids goof off, by either not participating or by being troublesome and b) some JTEs also seem to think it means they can take a back seat. Yes. Note that a lazy-ass JTE can also be as trying as a group of obstinate teenagers! Nip it in the bud and get them involved during classtime. However, regarding other class 'disruptions', it shouldn't be up to the ALT to discipline students. While it doesn't happen enough to make my job really difficult (and when I intervene the JTEs don't seem to mind me taking manga souvenirs), I shouldn't have to do it in the first place, right? Talk with your JTE before the new semester starts as just knowing that you may get a rowdy or otherwise disruptive class/student, and what will be done about it, can help you decide on your lesson content and team-teaching roles." -Anonymous

LET'S GAMING TOGETHER!!!

One of the most IMPORTANT parts of classroom management is keeping the kids BUSY! If they are moving and having fun, then they aren't being jerk-faces! So it's really important to start building up a mental library of games and ideas that can be adapted to whoever, whenever, and wherever!

JANKEN!

For some reason, 99.9% of Japanese kids LOVE LOVE the simple, classic game of Rock Paper Scissors. And the wonderful thing is that you can use and adapt it to almost any situation! Have them say it in English! Japanese! Korean! Use it for competitions, deciding who will speak first, practicing speeches, self-introductions, deciding who will be your baby's mamma... ANYTHING! It's kind of like Famous Dave's season salt. You can put it on ANYTHING and it makes EVERYTHING better!

For example (from Emily!)

Have some small picture cards for whatever you're teaching (for example, if you're teaching "What do you have for breakfast?" they would be food cards, though not necessary breakfast items if you want to mix it up). Each kid gets 5 or so and wanders around the classroom doing rock paper scissors. The winner asks "What do you have for breakfast?" and the loser says "I have OO" while handing over OO card. The goal is to collect as many cards as possible. It's super simple but in my experience the kids **always** get into it, from elementary 1nensei to junior high 3nensei.

It's flexible because you can let the kids play for as long as you like, and it can be used for a variety of grammar points ("What's your favorite OO?" "Do you like to OO?" "Have you ever OO?" and so on!). The cards don't have to be elaborate, too - they can just be cheap black and white copies if you're short on time/supplies.

You can also have volunteers present their cards after the game (for example - ALT: "What do you have for

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breakfast?" Student: "I have rice and juice and natto and a panda.") Another variation is to incorporate a writing element so it's not just speaking - at the end of the game have the students write a sentence in their notebooks based on what cards they have.

GOKIBURI! (the cockroach game!)

1. Introduce some new conversation piece, for example "My name is.....", "How are you?" or anything you like really.
2. Draw on the board an "evolution scale" (cockroach, fish, snake, monkey, human, God, etc. I like to let the kids choose!) and give a gesture to each level.
3. Everybody starts at the bottom of the scale, i.e. a Gokiburi. Gokiburi crawl about on the floor, hence the kids have to do the same.
4. The kids form into pairs of 2 gokiburi.
5. They practice today's conversation piece.
6. When they've finished their conversation they "Janke". The best way to do this is in English!
7. The winner then moves up one step on the "Evolution Scale" (i.e. gokiburi become snakes, snakes become rabbits etc.). The loser moves down on place (e.g. Peacocks become rabbits, monkeys become penguins etc.) Of course Gokiburi can't fall any lower!
8. They then find a partner that is the same animal as they have become. (i.e. a monkey does the conversation with another monkey, a rabbit with a rabbit etc. but a snake with, say, a rabbit is not allowed!)
9. With their new partner they repeat steps 4,5 and 6 until they reach "Human". "Humans" have to practice the conversation and the janken with the teacher. If they win they then become "god", have won the game and can sit down or help those still trapped as the 'lower' species!!!

HOT POTATO!

This classic preschool game is great for having students practice target phrases or conversations. I like to use it as a warm up for bigger games.

1. Have two objects (toys, stuffed animals, bananas, cell phones... whatever) and a way to play music.
2. Determine which toy will be for 'asking' and which will be for 'answering.'
3. Review the target conversation
4. Turn on the music (I personally like Flogging Molly's, "Drunken Lullabies")
5. While the music is playing, they pass around the toys as fast as possible.
6. When the music stops, the two who have the toys stand up and go through the conversation.
7. Repeat until it is engrained upon their minds!

*Variations- Also can be done with bouncing a beach ball a specified number of times or splitting the class into groups and making it a time bomb game, where students say something every time they pass the toy and it 'explodes' once the music stops.

CONNECT 4!

1. Make a huge grid on the board (10x10 or so)
2. Split the class into 3-4 lines, depending on size. Assign each group a color and shape (green circles, yellow squares, etc.)
3. Bring the first of each line to the front of the class and ask a question.
4. First kid to answer gets to draw his/her shape on the grid. Then ALL go to the end of the line.
5. Repeat until one team connects 4!

*Variations- you can also fill the grid with different shapes and colors, so when different teams get a question right, they are allowed to change one to their team's shape/color. When they get four in a row, they get 1 point. Or you can split the class into two teams and have them practice the grammar for the day as fast as they can (by making their own sentences). Whenever they say it right, they get to put their mark on the board. Once the grid is filled up, see who has the most groups of 4!

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TIME RACES!

Really, really simple and good for really easy phrases, like "Hi, my name is _____."

1. Practice the phrase
2. Have everyone stand up.
3. Get out a timer (make a really big deal about it!)
4. See how long it takes them to get through the whole class.
5. Repeat 3 or 4 times (I don't like to do it any more than that)

*Variation- you can also split the class into teams and do it as a race, where first team to finish sits down!

Telephone Game!

1. Have the day's vocabulary flashcards up on the board (or spread around the classroom or just written on the board)
2. split the class into 2 lines and have them sit on the floor (red and white hats!?)
3. Practice the daily conversation/question (e.g.-'how's the weather?')
4. Whisper in the ear of the first kid in the line a vocab word (e.g.- 'it's sunny!')
5. They make a whisper chain to the very back of the line.
6. The last kid jumps up, runs to the front of the class, and slams his hand on the right vocab word for a point, then takes a seat at the front of the line.
7. Repeat!

Variations- tell the kids at the back that they can only use one leg, or no legs, or have to walk on their hands or their butts. THEY LOVE IT!

ROW GAMES!

You choose a row to start, I usually go by the date and choose that student number (eg the 13th = student number 13), and make that row forward and backward stand up, you ask them questions, either basic jikoshokai stuff or revise a grammar point, and the students raise their hand to answer. You choose the fastest student and if they get it right they can sit down. When you have one student left, that student's row to the left and right stand up. Rinse and repeat!

HANGMAN (or erase-a-man)!

Play it the traditional way, or draw a guy on the board. As the kids guess letters, if they get it wrong, erase parts of his body. That might be a safer bet as some teachers are weird about games that glorify capital punishment!

TYPHOON/JEOPARDY GAMES!

1. Draw a 6x6 bingo grid on the board
2. Randomly write points in the squares
3. In some squares, write 'Typhoon' instead of a number
4. Stick words cards on top of the squares and cover the number/typhoon
5. One team chooses a word card and must make a sentence with the word
6. If they make an incorrect sentence, move on to the next team
7. If they make a correct sentence, they get the number of points under the card
8. Typhoons allow you to erase all the points from another team
9. The team with the most points at the end wins

*Variation! 'Typhoon Game/Jeopardy' are also nicely adaptable activities for reviews or general fun. Make a grid (5x5) on the blackboard and label A to E and 1 to 5 along sides. You need a

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corresponding question grid written out - for your eyes only. Have students in the first ROW stand up. One student picks a co-ordinate (eg. A-3) and once you or the JTE rattles off the corresponding question the first student to say 'Let me try!' and answer correctly gets the points for their LINE. Next row stands up and repeat until time is up, or questions are all used-up.

SIMON SAYS!

You say, "Simon Says" before giving a command (touch your head, etc.). The students do the command. If you give a command without saying, "Simon Says," and a student does it, they are OUT-O! They sit down. Continue until there is only one kid left

Fire Fighting!

Draw a chalk city map on the board, and split the kids into 2 teams. Each team has a different starting spot and an objective. There is random "fire" on map, blocking paths. The game goes like this: in a "turn," each team of kids directs their player right, left, or straight (in english, and no take-backs! Which makes for a lot of groans when they say left instead of right :D). Then, as the "fire," draw a new flame on the board to block their path. The team teacher is the "fireman" and erases one flame per turn. This continues until one team reaches their goal. It's simple, but they LOVE it.

WHITE BOARDS (can also substitute paper)!

A set of mini whiteboards and markers have been such a great purchase. You can use them for anything, but group competitions work really well. - Do a simple question and answer (first team to write the answer gets point) - listen to a simple english description and draw it (most accurate/best/funniest picture gets point) - translation, listen to the English word and write the Japanese meaning (first gets the point) - for higher level (SHS), give them the answer (eg Chocolate) and they have several minutes to make a question (eg what do we give on valentines day? Or What tastes delicious?). Good questions get a point, best question gets double points. - Could be as simple as listen to the English word and you have 1 minute to draw it - best drawing wins a point. This is really up to your imagination. It can be used as a fun review, for topics and vocabulary you've recently learnt or as a fun (but still educational) game after exams. This can be done as a single, short activity, or combine a few rounds to make this a full lesson thing. The students always seem to work well in groups, they love the novelty of using the whiteboards (so don't overuse them). The fun and students' engagement is blasted to epic levels if you introduce a prize for the winning team at the start.

SHOPPING LIST GAME!

Divide class in half. Students on left side each need notebook and pencil. Right side are each given a 'shopping list' with English words (usually 5/6 words, whatever study topic you like) and they have to communicate the words to their partner on the other side of the room. Make a variety of 'lists' and mark out 'no mans land' in the middle. Make it a time challenge for added fun!

PICTIONARY!

1. Split the class into around 4 or 5 groups and have a student from the first group come up and choose a category, with 1 point on offer for a successful 'easy' drawing up to 4 for a successful 'very difficult' drawing.
2. Once the student sees the word they have 1 minute to draw on the blackboard, remembering to follow Pictionary rules such as giving no verbal clues and not drawing letters

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and numbers. The remaining students in the team try to guess the word (while the rest of the class stay silent).

3. Continue the process with the other teams while keeping track of the scores. To spice things up a little feel free to let other teams guess the word if the original team are unsuccessful in their 1 minute, giving them the chance to take each other's points.

Board Soccer!

A good way to score kids during games! Draw a small soccer field on the board. On that soccer field, make a line that looks like this!



Put a magnet (or a soccer ball picture) in the middle. If one team gets a question right, move the magnet to one side. If they move it all the way over to the goal, they get a point. But if the other team gets an answer right, the ball moves to the OTHER side! If one team has a clear and unfair advantage, feel free to erase a step or two on the weaker teams side!

OTHER RESOURCES FOR GAMES AND IDEAS!!!!

<http://www.mes-english.com/>

<http://genkienglish.net/index.htm>

<http://www.jhsenglipediaproject.com/Pages/default.aspx>

<http://www.funenglishgames.com/>

<http://www.eslcafe.com/>

Lesson Planning!!!

Lesson Planning is a key element to classroom management. It is pointless to quiet a class, if you don't know what you are going to say. Here is a great write up on lesson planning. Read it learn it live it.

Stolen from:

<http://www.smartelt.com/the-smart-approach/smart-alt-training/smart-training-lesson-planning/>

Lesson Planning – The Basics

Most JHSs have 3-6 lessons a week for each class/grade. ALTs usually team teach one of the three lessons with the JTE, but it may be more depending on the size of the school.

For the purpose of the following sections, we will assume that you, the ALT, are planning the lesson fully by yourself, rather than half and half with the JTE. In order to actively discuss ideas with your JTE, it's better for you to have a thorough understanding of what you should be looking to get out of your lessons.

Principles of the Lesson Plan

When it comes to lesson planning, there are a few basic principles that you should try to remember for all your classes.

Each lesson should:

Have clearly defined goal: Students will be able to... (SWBAT)

Include review;

Include a number of fun activities that reinforce the goal;

Start with controlled activities and move towards less controlled activities that can evaluate how well students have learned the goal;

Use language which is beneficial and appropriate for the students;

Classroom Management

Have a Teacher-Student talk time ratio of around 30-70;
Make appropriate use of the JTE;
Lesson should be run in English;

Choosing The Goal: It All Starts Here!

Lesson planning starts from the goal. If you don't know where you want the lesson (and hence your students) to end up, it will be very difficult to get them there. One of the easiest ways to come up with the goal is to check with the JTE on what they have been teaching. Or you can check the teachers' textbook.

Classroom Activities

Now you have the lesson goal, you can start thinking more about what you are going to have in your lesson. Most lessons end up being a series of games and activities that focus on using the target language.

Examples of actual games and activities that you can use are listed in detail in the LET'S GAMING TOGETHER!!! section or use activities found in other sections of this book.

The Lesson Plan – A Breakdown

First you need to get your students back into thinking in English. Then you need to put them on the wavelength of the target you will teach that lesson. Next you need to get them to practice the new language. Finally students need to be able to test their ability to produce the target language themselves. Finally, there should be a cool down to end the lesson.

Using These Ideas In Your Lesson Plan.

There are many different things that you have to consider before starting, these include...

- Class age (atmosphere);
- Class ability (and range of ability);
- Number of students in the class;
- Class layout (how are they seated);
- Language goal;
- Class likes and dislikes; Etc...

Over-thinking each of these points, however, can be overwhelming, but there are some basic principles to follow that will help you to plan great lessons that the students will be able to enjoy, understand and learn from!

Creating Systems

We have talked about focusing targets and keeping lessons fun and being flexible. Whilst trying to keep your class varied and fun, you should also try to create some systems: a common thread to your lessons which will help students follow what you are doing.

Examples of this include:

Giving instructions in a similar way each time and following certain patterns as to how you present new grammar, vocabulary etc will help students feel more comfortable.

Using repetition of certain themes and ideas you'll find students quickly being able to understand you more easily. If you mix it up too much you will confuse a lot of the students, especially the lower ones. While a mixed approach may be helpful to higher students, you may find that you are leaving a lot of the lower students behind, creating a loss of motivation in your lessons – never a good thing!

Creating a system of gestures is invaluable! Most of the information that we present to each other in daily communication is done through gestures and body language. Having different gestures to tell students to move their desks, come to the board or start writing, for example, will allow all students to quickly understand what you want them to do. This is communication and if students can understand you they'll be able to quickly react. Again this inspires confidence and confidence leads to motivation!

Classroom Management

A LESSON TEMPLATE

Adding up all these parts and looking at the lesson plan more closely we have:

Start
Motivate
Activate
Reinforce
Test
(Cool down)

So now, let's break down each section and look at it more closely.

Start -Key Elements:

Start the lesson with both you and the JTE greeting the class and asking how everyone is. This will help students to remember that they are in an English class.

You aren't trying to challenge the students too much at the start of the lesson. Create a system and as time goes on you can expand on ideas, for example, "How are you?" becomes "How's it going?"

Expand the greeting by adding additional questions such as "How's the weather today?" and "What's the date today?" Be sure to have pre-taught these questions in a previous class though.

In the greetings, only use language that the students know very well and feel comfortable using. Remember, comfort equals confidence which leads to motivation and attentive students!!

Motivate

What are the key elements of this stage?

Usually lasts between 5-10 minutes

Focuses students' attention on English

Isn't too challenging

Easy to explain

Incorporates language review

Creates a motivated mood

Is related to a recent lesson target or the target of the current lesson.

As with the 'Start', you aren't really trying to challenge the students too much at this stage. If you are reviewing very recent targets, the students will feel more comfortable with the language than if you are reviewing language from 3 months previous.

Choosing an Activity

As stated previously the Warm Up should have some relevance to the day's target language. Your lesson should always flow effortlessly. If you do a great warm up about the weather and then run into a lesson on food without relating the targets, the students may get lost along the way: always a bad thing!

Remember that your lesson should flow. So if your current lesson is: SWBAT use "Do you like...?"

A warm up may first review the names of sports, perhaps using the previously learned "What is this?" You can then use gestures to elicit the names of a few sports, or perhaps use pictures. You could play a whole class activity using sports as the topic vocabulary. Again, this is a motivating warm up so you are not dwelling too much on the topic of sports, or really focusing on too much new vocabulary, you are just getting the students to start remembering some of the English that they have previously learned.

Classroom Management

Activate

This is where the students get what may be their first exposure to the target language. If we stay with the SWBAT of “Do you like...?”, then after, for example, eliciting sports vocabulary from the students, you can then perhaps ask one of your higher-level students the target question using gestures, pictures, or tone/intonation to demonstrate the meaning. Imagine looking to the students with a picture of someone playing soccer, and use gestures such as thumbs up/down, and/or facial expressions to get them to understand the idea ‘Do you like soccer?’ In this way, you activate an image of the meaning of the language in the students’ minds.

One key to this stage is that you aren’t just giving the students the model sentence(s). First give them the chance to get it themselves.

If you ask the question to a higher student, they can then answer “Yes, I do.” or “No, I don’t.” A good student should be able to do this from their knowledge of previous targets, if not, help them out by a slow reveal of the answer. You can now use this as a model for other students to be able to answer the question.

Once the students have been exposed to the language in this way, you can then write it on the board.

After this, listening to and saying the target language will help them to internalize it more than only reading it straight from the board.

The Charms of Effective Drilling

With large groups of students, as you will be exposed to in JHS, HS, and elementary schools, it is then best to go into drilling of the target language. This is a very important step in these types of classes. Make sure that all students are speaking in a loud voice, and check that they are using correct pronunciation and intonation. Make sure that you practice all parts of the target language, positive and negative answers, and also add a few different examples of “Do you like ___?”

It’s worth taking a quick and closer look at drilling.

So, Why Is It Important?

In the next stage of the lesson, ‘Practice’, you are going to be setting your students an activity that allows them to, as you can guess by the name, ‘practice’ the target language. This may be done in pair/group work, as an individual exercise, or a mixture of these. Even with two teachers in the class it’s still difficult to monitor all the students perfectly, so effective drilling gives the students plenty of opportunity to fine-tune their pronunciation skills and to ‘find their voice’.

If the students are given ample opportunity to vocalize the new language before going into the activity, they will have more confidence, and confidence leads to motivation, leads to active learning!! (I may have said that before!) If students are starting the activity before feeling confident with the language, they’ll stop trying, be distracted from the activity, and need a lot of extra personal attention. In essence, effective classroom management will be the first casualty!

Mix up the drilling with ALT to Student Q&A, JTE to Student, and Student to student. In the beginning, be sure to give lots of modeling, but then slowly fade yourself out by using flashcards or gestures to elicit the sentence structures.

Classroom Management

Reinforce

For lower level classes, this will take up the majority of the lesson.

What are the key points of this stage?

It follows on from what has been drilled in the 'Presentation'

It should follow the lesson's language target.

It is controlled – too much freedom at this time would be difficult for many students.

The language expands on that of the 'Presentation'.

It involves model speech patterns that allow communicative interactions between the students.

Students are monitored for correct language usage.

The type of activities that are most commonly used here are pair/group work, and/or whole class exercises, including information gap, cloze activity, communicative games, teamwork/competitive games, speeches, substitution exercises etc.

For our example language target of "Do you like...?" we may have a pair work game where students just ask each other a list of questions and then tick their partners answer for 'Yes, I do.', or put a cross for 'No, I don't.'. It may be a group activity where you first put your own answers, then walk around the class and try to find someone with the same likes and dislikes as yourself. You could play a game where first you have to guess your partners answers and see how many you got correct by then asking them.

BE CREATIVE!

Test

With the mixed level of abilities that you may come across in your school, it is again best to keep some degree of control at this stage.

The main points of this section include:

Follows directly from the Practice.

Students see and use the language in a more natural way.

Language is still controlled; however students are given a little more freedom to get creative.

Communicative competence is encouraged.

Fluency takes over as a key element.

Is timed to finish around 5 minutes before the lesson ends. (For the cool down and perhaps to pack away materials or return desks, etc.)

This section may sometimes heavily overlap with the 'Practice' stage or be dropped altogether, especially with lower level classes.

In this section you aren't focusing as much on error correction as you are on fluency, speed and confidence.

Using our example lesson target, 'Do you like...?', your 'Production' may be to allow students to freely choose 1 animal, 1 person, 1 sport, 1 food, 1 place, 1 hobby (of course limiting the choice to topics to those the students have already covered in previous lessons and feel comfortable with) and let them interview their classmates.

Cool Down

If you have planned a master lesson, your students have by now had fun, learned or reinforced some language target, gained a little confidence and steadily come closer to realizing that English is in fact the greatest subject of all! Oh, and they should have about five minutes for some kind of cool down!

Classroom Management

The importance of this time:

Give students time to clear up after activities.

Students have time to relax after working hard in their super fun English lesson.

Students are all sitting in their seats when the bell goes so they have time to prepare for their next lesson.

Students can feel like the lesson has ended.

You have time to practice your good byes with the class and re-affirm the day's target.

So after tidying up, get the students to sit down, then perhaps go over the target language on the board chorally a couple more times (it should now be super easy and the students will be able to see how much they have learned that class).

To finish, go into final Good-bye's, which should mirror something like that which you did at the beginning of the lesson. Again expand and adapt the language as time goes on depending on different student levels.

Example Goodbye

ALT: That's all for today.

ALT: Goodbye.

Ss: Goodbye ...

JTE: Goodbye.

Ss: Goodbye ...

English Classroom Phrases with Japanese Translations

Standardizing your English in the classroom is key to getting students to respond quickly to your commands. Here are some phrases with Japanese translations. This is NOT so you can use Japanese in the classroom.

1. Stand up. 立ってください。
2. Sit down. 座ってください。
3. Let's start class. 英語の勉強を始めましょう。
4. Good Morning. おはようございます。
5. Good Afternoon. こんにちは。
6. Hello. こんにちは。
7. How are you? お元気ですか。ご機嫌はいかがですか。
8. I'm fine/sleepy/hungry/hot/cold. 元気 / 眠い / お腹がぺこぺこ / 暑い / 寒い です。
9. How is the weather? 今日の天気はどうですか？
10. It's cloudy/rainy/sunny/snowing. 曇り / 雨 / 晴れ / 雪 です。
11. What day is it? 今日は何曜日ですか？
12. It's Monday/Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday/Friday. 今日は月曜日 / 火曜日 / 水曜日 / 木曜日 / 金曜日 です。

Classroom Management

13. What is the date today? 今日の日付は何ですか？
14. Be quiet please 静かにしてください。
15. Look at me. 私を見てください。
16. Look at the board. 黒板を見てください。
17. Look at this. これを見てください。
18. Pay attention. / Attention please. 注目してください。
19. What's this? これは何ですか？
20. Listen to me. 私の話を聞いてください。
21. Listen to (ALT's name)-sensei. ALT の話を聞いてください。
22. Take out your pencil/scissors/glue/textbook. 鉛筆/はさみ/のり/教科書を取り出してください。
23. Open your textbook to page -----. 教科書を～ページに開いてください。
24. Put your pencil away. 鉛筆を片付けてください。
25. Cut out the cards on page ----. ～ペ - ジにあるカ - ドを切ってください。
26. Make groups. グル - プを作ってください。
27. Make pairs. ペアを作ってください。
28. Push your desks back. 机を後ろに下げてください。
29. Put your desks back. 机を元に戻してください。
30. Sing in a loud voice. / Big voice. 大きい声で歌いましょう。
31. Big voice. 大きい声で話してください。
32. Don't be shy. 恥ずかしがらないで。自信を持って。
33. Good job / Great job! 上手ですね！/よくできた！
34. That's great! いいですね。
35. That's right! 正解です。
36. Close. Keep trying. 惜しいね。もうちょっと頑張って！
37. What's this in Japanese? これは日本語で何ですか？
38. Look at us. 私たちを見てください。
39. Raise your hand. 手を上げてください。
40. Do you know the answer? 答えがわかりますか。
41. Did you have fun today? 今日は楽しかったですか。
42. Class is over. これで終わります。
43. Thank you. ありがとうございます。
44. You're welcome. どういたしまして。/ いいえ。
45. Goodbye / See you later. さようなら。またね。
46. You all did great today! 今日は、みんな上手でしたね。
47. Nice pronunciation! 発音がいいね！

Classroom Management

48. Let's practice. 練習しましょう。
49. Repeat after me. 繰り返してください。
50. Only English. 英語だけを使ってください。
51. In English please. 英語をお願いします。
52. Do you understand? 分かりますか。
53. Are you ready? 準備はいいですか。
54. Let's start! 初めましょう!
55. Are you ok? 大丈夫ですか?
56. Yes / Ok. はい。(生徒が返事する時に)

Notes