

# Flexibility in the Classroom

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# Today's Presentation

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- ▶ Introductions
- ▶ Theory
- ▶ Practice
- ▶ Sample Situations
- ▶ Conclusion



# Today's Presenters

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- ▶ Mika Mori
- ▶ 21 years, 5 junior highs worth of amazing (?) experience
- ▶ From Amakusa, Japan



# Today's Presenters

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- ▶ Roland Carlos
- ▶ 3<sup>rd</sup> year ALT
- ▶ From California, USA
- ▶ 4 Elementary Schools, 1 Junior High





Theory

# Expecting the Unexpected

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- ▶ **What are some possible extraordinary situations?**
  - ▶ Students are tired after P.E. class
  - ▶ Students are fighting/upset with each other
  - ▶ Students are too noisy/excited after recess
  - ▶ Students are too quiet after being scolded by other teachers



# Being Flexible

- ▶ Why worry about being flexible?
  - ▶ Lesson plans are great, but you don't want to be locked in
  - ▶ The same approach may not work from school to school
  - ▶ The same class will go through different moods/attitudes depending on day/schedule
  - ▶ Do it for the students!



# The good and the bad

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## ▶ Advantages

- ▶ Best possible learning experience
- ▶ Variety in class
- ▶ Helps form student relationships
- ▶ Cuts down on prep time

## ▶ Disadvantages

- ▶ May not be easy to change plans
- ▶ Takes time to get used to having “no plan”
- ▶ Can be scary to go into class with “no plan”
- ▶ Beware of the demonstration class!





# Student Behavior and Signals

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- ▶ **Talk with them!**
  - ▶ Find time between classes: lunch, cleaning time, club activities
  - ▶ Knowing is half the battle!
- ▶ **Use warm-up activities**
  - ▶ Use a speaking activity and listen to how they sound
  - ▶ Check their posture and eyes



# Student Behavior and Signals

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- ▶ **Pair and Group Work**
  - ▶ Watch how they work
  - ▶ Make note of distance between students
- ▶ **Other students cues**
  - ▶ How they hold their books and pens
  - ▶ Idle chatting
  - ▶ Pretending to work
  - ▶ Tapping on the desk
  - ▶ Leaning in the chair
  - ▶ Yawning, falling asleep



# How to Read Students (Example)

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- ▶ **Introductions**
  - ▶ Ask “how are you” but actually listen to them!
- ▶ **Warm-up activity**
  - ▶ Students read from textbook
  - ▶ Don’t just listen, check their attitude
- ▶ **Preparing for class**
  - ▶ Use last few minutes of warm-up time to determine approach
  - ▶ You can use another small activity to plan





Practice

# Example Situation

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- ▶ Students are coming back from P.E. class where they had to swim 500 meters. As they come in for English class they all look very tired and have no energy.
- ▶ How do you approach this class of students?



# Example Situation

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- ▶ A group of your students seem to be too energetic. They are speaking loudly and laughing a lot before class. The bell rings but they are still being too noisy.
- ▶ How do you approach this class of students?



# Example Situation

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- ▶ You start off the class by having students reading in pairs. However, one pair of students is unwillingly speaking to each other and not making any eye contact.
- ▶ How do you approach this class of students?



# Quick Activities

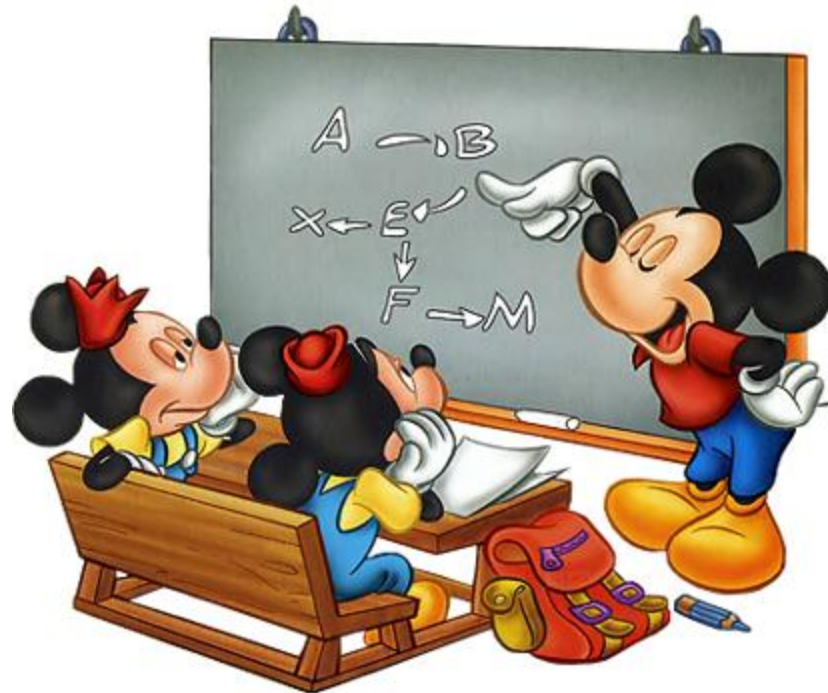
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## ▶ Reading

- ▶ Reading Individually
- ▶ Reading in Pairs
- ▶ Reading in Groups

## ▶ Listening

- ▶ Using I Can Do It
- ▶ Intentionally Fast Speaking
- ▶ Slow and Clear Speaking





# Quick Activities

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## ▶ Writing

- ▶ Limited Time Writing
- ▶ Word Change Writing
- ▶ New Vocabulary Writing

## ▶ Speaking

- ▶ Speaking Fast
- ▶ Speaking Each Word Clearly
- ▶ Speak With Emotion





# Conclusion

# Conclusion

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- ▶ You are not obligated to teach in a certain way
- ▶ Having a plan is great, but always give yourself options
- ▶ Being flexible gets easier as you get to know a class (and how they behave)
- ▶ Not just here to teach English, but to inspire students
  - ▶ Being flexible, when used appropriately, can do this!
- ▶ Being flexible can be used outside the classroom also



# Questions?

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