















“Stepping Out” Teen Teacher Tips Keeping Attention

Twelve Ways to Get Their Attention Without Yelling

-  Ring a bell or blow a whistle. Start a noisemaker collection so you can vary sounds.
-  Choose a hand signal with the children that they can all remember and agree to honor. When it is noisy, make the hand signal and wait for all the children to follow.
-  Praise attentive behavior: “I like the way Jane is ready to listen” and “Joe is ready to listen, too - thank you” until they all quiet down.
-  Throw a small, soft ball to the first child who pays attention who then throws it back to you. Only toss it to children who are paying attention and just until it is quiet.
-  Talk VERY softly so they must strain to listen.
-  Flash the lights on and off a few times.
-  Tell a small group of children you will throw a handkerchief in the air. Ask them to clap vigorously while it drops but to stop abruptly when it lands.
-  While talking, stand next to the chatterboxes. Lightly touch their arm or shoulder if they start to talk.
-  Start a physical routine such as a clapping sequence or a sequence where they touch their heads, shoulders, noses, etc. Stop when everyone has joined the sequence.
-  Walk around and whisper nonsense in their ears.
-  Play a “freeze” game. Whenever you say “freeze” they must stop and freeze in place without talking. You can then give your directions and “thaw” them.
-  Pick out one positive code word, such as “focus”, and use it as needed.

Source: Murdock, S., M.Ed. Reaching and Teaching Teen Teachers: Tips and Techniques.
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