

TOP 10 TIPS

Teaching English on Your Gap Year

1. **Keep it formal:** It's easy to slip into informal relationships when you enjoy teaching and get on with the students. But remember: If you want them to listen, learn and pick things up, your students need to think of you first as a teacher, then as a friend.
2. **Make sure everyone is heard:** In order to get the whole class picking up the language, everyone needs to speak. Try pairing quieter students with more vocal ones and see if this has a positive effect.
3. **Don't labour a point:** If there's a grammatical lesson that students are finding it impossible to grasp, move on and return to it at a later date. Most important is keeping the flow of the class going.
4. **Act the fool:** Sometimes you need to be a bit more expressive to drive through a point. Don't be afraid of using your hands and being playful with the class. If it looks like they're getting bored, this could be what wins their attention back.
5. **Keep it visual:** Students need to be constantly stimulated. Bring a variety of visual aids with you, such as objects they have to name, to avoid losing their attention. Use the board as much as you can.

6. **If you fail to prepare, prepare to fail:** Make sure you have written a clear lesson plan and that you stick to it. The plan should cover the four skills: reading, writing, listening and speaking. Check out [Onestopenglish](#), for lesson plans, extra activities and more teacher tools.

7. **For example:** Use examples for every rule and word you teach. The best way for students to understand new vocabulary is if you put it in context and relate it to something they are familiar with in everyday life. Try and use examples that are situated in the culture they are from, don't get tempted to use back home examples.

8. **Is that a yes or a no?** Often students will give you a nod of understanding to most things you teach them, even if it hasn't all gone in. Get them to practice what they have learnt to show that they have understood the lesson.

9. **Plan B:** No matter how much you plan, sometimes things in the classroom don't go your way. Students may be particularly restless that day, or too many will have not revised for the test. If this is the case, always have an emergency plan of action, whether this is a language game or a sing-a-long CD. You can also have an extra activity book on hand to supplement the course, such as our [700 Classroom Activities](#).

10. **Stick to the point:** It's easy to lose students' attention if you stray off topic. If you're talking about household vocabulary, don't get distracted by questions about holidays or animals. You've got a lesson plan, follow it.

We have a wide range of excellent teacher methodology titles at Macmillan Education to help teachers prepare for their lessons, as well as providing extra tools for supplementing lesson plans and keeping students engaged. [Check them all out here](#).