

A body language detective

1. Look at the pictures and say what you think the people are feeling. Explain why you think so.



2. Discuss if the situations in the sentences are true in your culture.

- If you nod your head, it means you agree.
- It's rude to cross your arms when you talk to someone.
- You make eye contact when you want to look friendly.
- People sometimes touch their nose when they want to sneeze.
- People only shake hands in formal situations.
- When people are in a hurry, they often tap their fingers.
- It's rude to roll your eyes at older people.

[After students finish this task, ask them to work in pairs and take turns to show and guess the body language from the exercise.]

Before doing the next task, ask students these questions:

- This lesson is called 'A body language detective'. Do you know what a body language detective is?
- Do you know anyone who pays a lot of attention to the body language of others?]

3. You are going to read three conversations with a body language detective. Choose the correct phrases to complete the conversations.

Watson has invited Sherlock to a party so he can make a few new friends. It seems that it won't be so easy...

A body language detective

PART 1 Stanford and Maggie

Watson: Hi Sherlock! So happy to see you! My friends will be so pleased to meet you. Let's start with my colleague, Stanford. He's over there, talking to Maggie.

Sherlock: I don't think that's a good idea. It looks like your colleague likes to lie.

Watson: But that's impossible! What makes you think so?

Sherlock: He **touches his nose/makes eye contact** all the time. I believe Maggie understands he's a liar, too. Look, she **shakes hands/rolls her eyes** each time he tells a new lie. It's clear how annoyed she is!

PART 2 Sam

Watson: How about Sam, then? Look! He's in the living room, **shaking hands/rolling his eyes** with my boss. We can go and say hi.

Sherlock: I wouldn't like to speak to someone who is so bored.

Watson: What? You can't be serious!

Sherlock: You can see it for yourself. While your boss is talking, Sam is just **tapping his fingers/touching his nose** on the table. I wouldn't call that 'interested'.

Watson: I'm sure he is! Look, he's **crossing his arms/nodding his head** and smiling. You might be wrong, you know.

PART 3 Lisa

Watson: Hey, you need to meet Lisa. She's just arrived. I saw her a minute ago.

Sherlock: Are you talking about that young woman next to the window with no wish to talk to anyone?

Watson: That's Lisa next to the window, you're quite right. But why do you think she doesn't want to talk to anyone?

A body language detective

Sherlock: It's elementary, Watson! She has **crossed her arms/nodded her head** and doesn't want to **make eye contact/tap her fingers**. It's clear that she...

Watson: Just stop it, Sherlock! I can make some deductions too. You hate making new friends!

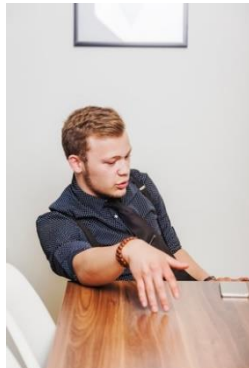
4. Discuss the questions.

- Is it really possible to say what a person is feeling based on their body language? Why/Why not?
- Are you good at reading people's body language? Give examples.
- Do you agree that body language is more important than what we say? Why/Why not?

5. Guess Watson's friends (Lisa, Maggie, Sam, Stanford) based on their body language in the conversations.

[You can ask students to explain their ideas this way: *I guess it's (name) in the first picture, because she's/he's...*]

From left to right: Maggie, Sam, Lisa, Stanford



6. Imagine Sherlock is wrong and suggest other explanations for the body language of Watson's friends at the party, using the language in the box.

EXAMPLE: *If people often touch their nose, it doesn't mean they are lying. Perhaps they just want to scratch their nose.*

USEFUL LANGUAGE

*If people..., it doesn't mean they...
They might...
Perhaps they just...*

A body language detective

Possible answers:

If people roll their eyes, it doesn't mean they are annoyed. They might react to jokes like this all the time.

If people tap their fingers on the table, it doesn't mean they're bored. They might like the song they can hear.

If people cross their arms and don't want to make eye contact, it doesn't mean they don't want to talk to others. Perhaps they are just a bit cold.

7. Read the anecdotes about the situations when people misunderstood body language. Try to guess how each anecdote might end with the right interpretation of the body language.

- a) I remember a time when I was giving a presentation to a group of people, and one woman kept nodding her head and smiling, which made her look very excited. I thought she was really interested in what I was saying, but afterwards, she told me that she was... **very sleepy and was trying to keep herself awake!**
- b) My friend, who recently started a company, went to a meeting with a potential investor. She wanted to seem confident, so she shook his hand firmly. But the investor's face looked very strange when they shook hands. My friend didn't know what to think and was afraid she had done something very wrong, but the investor soon explained that he... **had broken his hand some time ago and it sometimes hurt when shaking hands.**

8. Discuss the questions.

- Did you guess the endings in both anecdotes?
Which one was easier to guess?
- Do you think these stories are funny? Why/Why not?
- Has anything like the situations in the anecdotes happened to you? Give more details.
- How would you feel in situations like these? Would you feel or act differently?



9. Decide in which situation in each pair body language might help more.**Explain your opinions.**

- speaking on the phone vs a video call
- speaking to a person in your own language vs speaking in a foreign language
- speaking to a stranger vs speaking to someone you know
- speaking to adults vs speaking to children

[This worksheet includes an additional task that you can use as homework or revision. It's only available in the teacher's version of the worksheet. The task with the answer key is below, while the students' version is on the last page. Print it and hand it out to your students.]

Complete the problems the readers of *Sherlock's Advice* blog share. The initial letters are provided. Then, match the problems with the pieces of advice he offers them. There's one piece of advice you don't need to use. Say what you think about the advice.

- a) Thomas: 'I invited my girlfriend to this great new restaurant last weekend. I was telling the funniest jokes I knew but she was just **tapping her fingers** on the table. When I asked her if everything was okay, she just **crossed her arms** and said, "I'm fine!" Does she still like me?' **5**
- b) Kyle: 'When I presented my new ideas to my boss the other day, he just **rolled his eyes** and didn't want to **make eye contact** even after I asked him about his opinion. I feel so lost now.' **1**
- c) Andrea: 'I had a great meeting with a new client a few days ago and the way we **shook hands** clearly proved this. But when I asked a few questions about the presence of his company on social media, he seemed a bit worried and **touched his nose** a few times while answering. Do you think he might be hiding something?' **4**
- d) Fanny: 'I met this super cute guy at the gym and decided to talk to him when we both were in the smoothie bar. He said "Hi!" and smiled, so I kept talking and asked him some questions. But he just **nodded his head** and smiled. I didn't know what to think! What should I do next time I see him?' **2**

- 1) It's clear he hates them. Make sure to prepare something better next time.
- 2) Why don't you start jogging instead? It leaves no time for talking to strangers.
- 3) It's elementary! He didn't want to make a good first impression. Just like me.
- 4) You already know the answer! He's definitely not someone you will feel confident working with.
- 5) It's elementary! She doesn't! She was annoyed or bored.

A body language detective

Complete the problems the readers of *Sherlock's Advice* blog share. The initial letters are provided. Then, match the problems with the pieces of advice he offers them. There's one piece of advice you don't need to use. Say what you think about the advice.

- a) Thomas: 'I invited my girlfriend to this great new restaurant last weekend. I was telling the funniest jokes I knew but she just was **t**..... **h**..... **f**..... on the table. When I asked her if everything was okay, she just **c**..... **h**..... **a**..... and said, "I'm fine!" Does she still like me?'
- b) Kyle: 'When I presented my new ideas to my boss the other day, he just **r**..... **h**..... **e**..... and didn't want to **m**..... **e**..... **c**..... even after I asked him about his opinion. I feel so lost now.'
- c) Andrea: 'I had a great meeting with a new client a few days ago and the way we **s**..... **h**..... clearly proved this. But when I asked a few questions about the presence of his company on social media, he seemed a bit worried and **t**.....**h**..... **n**..... a few times while answering. Do you think he might be hiding something?'
- d) Fanny: 'I met this super cute guy at the gym and decided to talk to him when we both were in the smoothie bar. He said "Hi!" and smiled, so I kept talking and asked him some questions. But he just **n**..... **h**..... **h**..... and smiled. I didn't know what to think! What should I do next time I see him?'

- 1) It's clear he hates them. Make sure to prepare something better next time.
- 2) Why don't you start jogging instead? It leaves no time for talking to strangers.
- 3) It's elementary! He didn't want to make a good first impression. Just like me.
- 4) You already know the answer! He's definitely not someone you will feel confident working with.
- 5) It's elementary! She doesn't! She was annoyed or bored.