

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.

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...

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!

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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?
- 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?

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



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...*

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.

- 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...
- 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...

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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