

Lesson 4 — Gestures

Subject 4 — Non-Verbal Communication: Gestures

Objective: Students will recognise common gestures, understand what each one means, and use gestures on purpose to send a message without words.

Duration: 45 minutes

Materials:

- Gesture poster (wave, thumbs up, thumbs down, point, shrug, come here, stop, quiet, nod, shake head, hand raised)
- Gesture picture cards
- Match-the-gesture worksheet
- Situation cards
- Open space for charades

LESSON SEQUENCE

Phase	What Happens
Warm-Up / Hook 5 min	Without saying a word, wave the group in, point to their seats, put a finger to your lips, and give a thumbs up. Then ask: "What did I just tell you? Did I say one word?" Explain that hands talk too, and today they are learning what the hands are saying.
Direct Instruction / Modelling 10 min	Go through the gesture poster one at a time. Demonstrate each one and have the group name the meaning. Group them: gestures that mean yes or no, gestures that mean come or stop, gestures that show a feeling, and gestures that ask for something. Teach the important point: a gesture can replace words, and a gesture can also change words. If you say "fine" with a shrug, it means something different than "fine" with a thumbs up. Name the gestures we do not use — pointing rudely at a person, waving someone away, gestures that insult. Keep this short and matter of fact.
Guided Practice 12 min	Hold up a gesture card. One student performs it, the group names the meaning. Then reverse: give a meaning out loud and the group shows the gesture together. Add situations: "You are across the room and you want to tell your friend it is time to go." Students show which gesture works.
Independent Practice 12 min	Students complete the match-the-gesture worksheet — picture to meaning. Second half: each student gets three situation cards and writes or draws the gesture he would use for each.



Phase	What Happens
	Share a few answers with the group and discuss any that differ.
Wrap-Up & Review <i>6 min</i>	Rapid review — you make a gesture, the group calls out the meaning. Line the group up and dismiss them using only gestures. Set the goal: notice one gesture someone uses on you today.

GAMES

Yeshiva Charades

A student draws a card with a simple message — “I am finished,” “Come here,” “I do not know,” “Be quiet” — and gets it across using only gestures. No mouthing words.

Silent Instructions

Run a short activity — handing out papers, lining up, clearing the table — using only gestures. Students must watch you the whole time. Time the group and try to beat the record.

Gesture Telephone

Students stand in a line facing away. The first sees a gesture, taps the next and passes it along. Compare the last gesture to the first.

WHAT THE TEACHER CAN SAY

- “What are my hands telling you?”
- “Show me instead of telling me.”
- “That gesture means something different — try again.”
- “You used your hands and I understood you perfectly.”
- “Watch his hands, not just his words.”

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

- Student names common gestures correctly
- Student uses a gesture on purpose to send a message
- Student notices a gesture directed at him and responds
- Student avoids gestures that are rude or too big for the setting

SUPPORTS AND ADAPTATIONS

- Start with four gestures only and add more once those are solid
- Pair each gesture with a picture card the student keeps
- For students who miss gestures, say the student's name first so he looks up before you gesture
- Practise in real routines — use the quiet gesture and the come here gesture daily
- Some students need the gesture and the words together at first; fade the words slowly

