

What to do if...

If the students do not have questions...

Have these kinds of probing questions ready:

- ◆ What do think would happen if there were no more pigs left in the world?
- ◆ How are pigs different (or the same as) than your pets?
- ◆ How is taking care of a pig different (or the same as) than taking care of your pet?
- ◆ Tell me in one sentence what you learned at this presentation that you didn't know before you came here.
- ◆ Who likes animals? (Ask them to raise their hands.) Why do you think it's important that a farmer who raises pigs likes animals?

If the students interrupt you...

Set out the rules for answering very clearly. If it's ok to shout out the answers, let them know that. Otherwise ask them to raise their hands. If they're interrupting with questions all the time, ask them to save their questions until the end of the presentation.

If the students start telling stories ...

Politely re-direct their focus to the question YOU asked. Children often get caught up in their own little world and you will begin to lose the attention of the rest of the group if you engage in an "anything goes" policy. You can reduce this response from happening with statements like this: " I need to stop you now. Although that is interesting, we are on a short time line and I would like you to re-think how you can respond to my question. Let's listen to_____ and see if he/she can do it." Now repeat your question and see if that student can respond appropriately.

If students aren't listening ...

Ask their name, and use it in a sentence. "Do you agree with that, Tim?" Get them involved in the activity: "Tim, can you help me find the feed that the sow might eat?" If you find a lot of students aren't listening on a regular basis, maybe you should re-evaluate your presentation. You may be lecturing for too long or using information at an inappropriate level for that age group.

If students are talking ...

Don't compete with them and try to talk louder than they are. Pause and look right at the 'talkers' until they stop talking. Ask, "Can I have your attention please?" If they continue to disrupt, ask the teacher/supervisor to help out.

If the students are misbehaving

Since you are with the students for such a short time, let the teacher/supervisor be the disciplinarian. If a student misbehaves, ask them to please stop. If the behaviour continues then ask the student to sit or stand with the teacher/supervisor as you would like all the other children to enjoy the presentation.

If the students are not interested...

Ask them what they would like to learn about. Ask them to think of questions or ideas they would like to discuss. This works best with an older group.

Think about your presentation and how to make it more fun and interactive. Ask someone else to objectively evaluate your presentation or display area on how to make it more exciting or attractive. Evaluate what messages the students can relate to and how it affects them or what they care about directly. Technical details and stats will bore even the most attentive group.