

Teacher Name: Amelia Springer	Class: ESL One on One Tutoring Through WEC
Lesson Date and Time: May 5, 2025	Lesson Duration: 55 mins
Location: ZOOM	
Lesson Objectives: Have the student start on their goal of “using big words,” have student familiarize themselves with synonyms of common words. Feel comfortable swapping the synonym for words within sentences.	

Activity 1: Upgrade That Sentence

Materials: Prepared list of 5–8 simple sentences (no handout needed, teacher reads aloud)

Time: 15 minutes

Overview: The teacher reads a simple sentence aloud and the student must rephrase it using more elevated vocabulary or a more complex sentence structure. The goal is to build the habit of *reaching* for complexity in a low-stakes, playful way.

Procedures:

1. Teacher explains the activity: *"I'm going to say a simple sentence. Your job is to make it more sophisticated without changing the meaning."*
2. Teacher models one example first: *"The movie was good" → "The film was remarkably well-crafted, with performances that lingered long after the credits rolled."*
3. Teacher reads the first simple sentence aloud. Student rephrases it on the spot.
4. Teacher offers their own elevated version after the student responds, so the student can compare the two.
5. Discuss any interesting differences. Did she choose a different word? A different structure? Both are valid.
6. Repeat with 4–5 sentences, gradually increasing difficulty.

Example sentences to use:

- *"She was sad."*
- *"He remained calm during the emergency."*
- *"The city has changed."*
- *"She stopped going to class."*
- *"Things got worse after the argument."*

Activity 2: Three Shades of the Same Word

Materials: Printed or shared screen table of word families (simple / neutral / elevated columns)

Time: 15 minutes

Overview: The student explores how the same idea can be expressed at different levels of formality and sophistication.

Procedures:

1. Teacher introduces the concept of register: *"In English, it's not just about knowing big words, it's about knowing when to use them. I thought we could look at words that mean the same thing but feel very different."*
2. Teacher reveals the first word family (e.g. sad / unhappy / despondent) and reads all three aloud.
3. Student uses each word in a sentence of her own creation.
4. Together, discuss the context for each: *"Would you text a friend saying you feel despondent? Would you write it in a journal? Would you say it in a job interview?"*
5. Move through 4–5-word families, spending 2–3 minutes on each.
6. At the end, the teacher reads a sentence using one of the words, and the student must identify which register it belongs to — spoken, formal writing, or creative writing.

Suggested word families:

- sad / unhappy / despondent
- scared / frightened / petrified
- try / attempt / endeavor
- change / alter / transform
- get worse / decline / deteriorate

Activity 3: Guess the Feel

Materials: Prepared list of elevated sentences (teacher reads aloud or displays on screen) **Time:** 25 minutes

Overview: The teacher reads an elevated sentence aloud and the student must decide whether it belongs in spoken conversation, formal writing, or creative writing. This builds instinct for register and helps the student understand *why* certain words and structures feel natural in some contexts and unnatural in others.

Procedures:

1. Teacher introduces the three categories and writes them somewhere visible:
 - Spoken: natural out loud, in conversation
 - Formal: report, essay, professional email
 - Creative Writing: literary, poetic, vivid
2. Teacher models one example: reads a sentence, thinks aloud about the category, and explains the reasoning.
3. Teacher reads the first sentence aloud. Student calls out her answer and explains why.
4. Teacher reveals the answer and discusses, pay special attention to sentences that sit between two categories, as these produce the richest discussion.
5. After every 3–4 sentences, ask: *"Can you take this sentence and rewrite it for a different category?"* For example, take a creative writing sentence and make it conversational.
6. Continue through 10–12 sentences across different themes.

POST-ACTIVITY REFLECTION:

What went well in this lesson? The visuals worked well. I had written columns for all of my synonyms. Such as scared/frightened/petrified. I had my own bland vs exciting sentences as examples, visible for her, so I think she relied on the visuals to understand and draw from.

What problems did I experience? Why? My student did seem overwhelmed. It was our second day together and I think having so many words with their synonyms, along with sentences were overwhelming. If I were to do this again with someone who is of similar skill level, I would only have a few words/examples, and focus on just those, instead of keep moving on to the next words and sentences. I was also nervous so I stumbled through these words too fast, rather than sitting with each one.

How engaged and active were the students? She seemed more overwhelmed than intrigued or engaged. She said she would look over them on her own time, but didn't seem to want to then, in the moment. I attempted to say each synonym on our document, before doing the actual lesson, but she seemed embarrassed each time she didn't know a word. I kept trying to say it was okay that she didn't know, but she did seem frustrated.

How much learning took place? How do I know? I don't think much was absorbed. She kept apologizing for not understanding and wanted to instead, have a conversation where I correct her sentences at the end, rather than a whole lesson. She said she would look it over in private the next week, but I am not sure if she just thought it was unhelpful and wanted to move away from it, but she was not a fan.

What could I have done differently? Slow down. Don't feel like I need to rush past something when she seems to get frustrated or disappointed. I needed more confidence in my lesson plan. I wish I went over each synonym instead of rushing past.

Was I well prepared? Yes! I had all my synonyms and sentence structures, and basically a script to follow. I just think with the nature of the program (WEC) she was not expecting a class like structure but rather conversational.

Was I organized? Did the lesson format work? Is there a better format for me? The lesson was organized, but my pacing was too fast. I rushed over activities too fast and didn't allow for her to hone in on exactly what she wanted which was bigger vocabulary.

Was I clear in my presentation? How was the pacing? I wish I went slower and focused on just the synonyms, since one of her goals is to "use bigger words." She seemed frustrated by the other things, so maybe just talking about vocabulary is what she would register more with.

What did I learn from this experience that will help me in the future? I think all of it. Pacing myself, giving students time to work through their confusion, and maybe not giving this many steps to a new, one on one student.