Spelling Better for Teachers

30-Minute Vocabulary Lesson Plan

English teachers, ESL/EFL teachers, tutors and homeschoolers

Lesson objective

By the end of the lesson, students can explain the meaning of eight new words, spell them, and use at least three of them correctly in their own sentences.

Materials

- Board and markers
- Word cards (one word per card) or the words written on the board
- Paper or notebooks; mini whiteboards if you have them
- Small slips of paper for the exit ticket

Example word set: words for feelings

cheerful, nervous, curious, proud, calm, grateful, furious, disappointed

Simpler set: happy, sad, angry, scared, tired, excited, bored, surprised. More advanced set: anxious, content, frustrated, relieved, indifferent, elated, apprehensive, overwhelmed.

Lesson stages

Time	Stage	Teacher	Students
5 min	Warm-up	Show or describe a simple situation (a friend wins a prize). Ask: how might they feel?	Share any feeling words they know; the teacher lists them on the board.
8 min	Introduce	Present each new word: say it, show the spelling, give a child-friendly meaning and an example sentence.	Repeat each word, clap the syllables and copy the word with a quick picture or note.
10 min	Practice	Read short situations aloud and circulate to check spellings.	In pairs, match each situation to a word, then write two sentences of their own.
5 min	Game	Run a round of charades or 'mystery word' using the new words.	Act out or guess the word, then spell it aloud as a class.
2 min	Exit ticket	Collect slips at the door.	Write one new word, its meaning in their own words, and a sentence using it.

Differentiation

- Support: use the simpler word set, give sentence starters (I feel ___ when ___), and allow pictures alongside writing.

- Challenge: use the advanced set, ask students to rank words by strength (annoyed, frustrated, furious), or find a synonym and antonym for each.
- Mixed-level pairs: pair a confident reader with a student who benefits from hearing words read aloud.

ESL/EFL notes

- Model pronunciation clearly and mark the stressed syllable (CU-ri-ous, GRATE-ful, dis-ap-POINT-ed).
- Use gestures, facial expressions and pictures so meaning does not depend on English explanations alone.
- Let students note a translation in their first language if that helps them remember.
- Point out word endings that change the part of speech (proud, pride; calm, calmly).

Teacher notes

What worked / what to change next time _____

_____

_____

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