Lesson 11: Word and Sentence Stress

I. Review: Linking Words and Sentences (5 minutes)

Instructions: "Let's start with a quick review from our last class. I will say a sentence, and I want you to tell me which words are linked together. Listen carefully!"

Examples:

Teacher says: I need a copy.
Student says: need a

Teacher says: He is on the team.
Student says: He is and on the

III. Choral Reading: Word and Sentence Stress (10 minutes)

Introduction: "Today, we're going to focus on how to use stress to make our sentences sound more natural. Stress is when we say a word or part of a word louder, longer, and with a higher pitch. This helps listeners understand the most important information."

Rule 1: Content Words vs. Function Words

Content words carry the main meaning of a sentence. They are usually stressed. These include nouns, main verbs, adjectives, and adverbs.

Examples:

- They BOUGHT a new CAR.
- The BIG dog ran QUICKLY.

Function words are the small words that connect the content words. They are usually not stressed. These include articles (a, an, the), prepositions (on, in, at), conjunctions (and, but), and pronouns (he, she, it).

Rule 2: Shifting Stress for Emphasis

You can change the meaning of a sentence by stressing a different word.

Examples:

- I love my **NEW** job. (Focus on "new," not "old.")
- I **LOVE** my new job. (Focus on the feeling, not a negative one.)
- I love **MY** new job. (Focus on "my," not someone else's.)

IV. Game: Stress Ball Toss (15 minutes)

Instructions: "Now, let's play a game to practice stress! We will get in a circle, and I will say a simple sentence. When I toss you the ball, you must repeat the sentence and stress one of the content words. You can toss the ball to someone else to try a different stress. Let's see how many different meanings we can create!"

(Teacher brings a soft ball or a crumpled piece of paper to use.)

V. Group Activity: Dialogue Generation Tool (15 minutes)

Instructions: "Now, we will get into small groups and create a short dialogue using the Dialogue Generation Tool. This time, your mission is to use stress to add meaning to your conversation. You must pay attention to what words you are stressing to convey your message."

> **Example:**
>
> **Student 1:** "I need a copy of the report, it is due **TODAY**."
>
> **Student 2:** "I put it **ON** my desk."
>
> **Student 1:** "Thank you! I was **SO** worried about it."

Final Speaking Task:
After you complete your story, practice saying each of the sentences in your groups, paying close attention to the stressed words.