



Level: A2 upwards

Focus: Pronunciation - stress patterns

Theme: verbs and pronouns

Activity: Searching for sentences in a grid; chanting

SENTENCE SEARCH

We often teach that any syllable in a sentence may be stressed, depending on the meaning we want to create. For example, we may say *I like her*, with stress on *her*, if we want to make a contrast with, say, *him* eg ...but I don't like him. But we also need to teach the default stress, without any contrastive meaning. The following is a useful general rule: you may stress the content words but don't stress the function words. Function words include prepositions, articles, auxiliary verbs, to be, and the focus of this lesson, pronouns.

The default stress pattern for *I like her* is o O o, with like stressed and the pronouns unstressed. If students put stress on one of the pronouns by mistake, they create an unintended meaning. This lesson focuses on raising awareness of this.

PROCEDURE

1. Give out the sentence search puzzle. Go through the circled example *I met them* with the class. Show that it has the first of the three stress patterns on the right because *I* and *them* correspond to small circles and *met* corresponds to the big circle.
2. Now ask the students to find the remaining sentences, and make a note of them beneath their respective stress patterns. Point out that the sentences may be horizontal or vertical. Many of the words are used twice - once in a horizontal sentence and once in a vertical sentence. If there are two sentences in the same direction containing the same words, for example, *He called; he called her* and *He called her name*, students should circle the longest one.
3. Go through the answers with the class:
 - oOo - We met them, She called him; I like her
 - oOoO - I think he left; I'll phone my mum; He called her name; He lost his keys
 - oOooO - You gave her my keys; I bought you your lunch; She gave him her phone; I left him my card
4. Ask the students to look at the puzzle and say what kinds of words correspond to the small circles and what kinds of words correspond to the big circles (small circles = pronouns & possessive adjectives; big circles = verbs)

FOLLOW UP

Give out the chant *Grace and Paul* and play the audio. Then play it again a few times and ask the students to say the words along with the audio, being careful not to stress the pronouns.

This chant appeared on p.74 of *English Pronunciation in Use Intermediate* 2nd edition (CUP 2012)

SENTENCE SEARCH

we	met	them	I	he
I	think	he	left	lost
bought	she	called	him	his
you	gave	her	my	keys
your	him	name	card	us
lunch	her	I	like	her
I'll	phone	my	mum	my

●●● x3

We met them.

●●●● x4

●●●●● x4

GRACE AND PAUL

He **saw** her, he **liked** her **face**
 He **asked** her her **name**, she **said** it was **Grace**
 She **liked** him, his **name** was **Paul**
 She **gave** him her **number**, he **gave** her a **call**
 He **bought** her a **gift**, he **went** to her **flat**
 She **gave** him a **drink**, she **showed** him her **cat**
 He **liked** her, but **hated** her **cat**
 He **never** returned, and **that** was **that**.