

Pronunciation

How:

1. Model the word yourself. (This means you say it in a normal way to the students). Then get the students to repeat it after you, all together like in a chorus until they get it nearly right. Don't worry if they aren't perfect. Who is?
2. Then model the word again and ask individual students to repeat the word after you.
3. You could put the word on the board and ask the students how many syllables it has and then practice some stress placement. Ask them which is the stressed (strong) syllable. For example:

before = 2 syllables be FORE = The second syllable is stressed.

after = 2 syllables AF ter = The first syllable is stressed.

computer = 3 syllables com PU ter = The second syllable is stressed.

afternoon = 3 syllables af ter NOON = The third syllable is stressed.

If you know the phonetic alphabet you could write the words in that too.

Why:

1. It helps the students to improve their pronunciation which is very important because there's very little point learning a new word, learning what it means and how to use it in a sentence, if no one understands them when they say it because their pronunciation is so bad.
2. Doing a little pronunciation work can fill time here and there in a lesson. It's especially useful as a filler (a quickie activity to fill those few minutes at the end of a lesson when you've run out of material but it's a little too early to let the students go).

Extra info:

If you're planning to do some syllable work or stress placement or use the phonetic alphabet, it's a good idea to write the words, syllables, stress and phonetic spelling down before the lesson because, I don't know about you, but I find it hard to do it spontaneously during the lesson! For some reason I get muddled and write the stress on the wrong syllable etc. If you want to do some stress placement work but you don't know which syllable is stressed, look in a dictionary, especially one for students - it will have the stress indicated, usually by an apostrophe thingy. The syllable after the apostrophe thingy is the stressed one, usually.

For example:

be'fore ' com'puter á fter noon

If you look in the first few pages of the dictionary it will explain how it indicates stress placement. Just remember that not all dictionaries indicate it in the same way.