Title: Adjectives; describing our classmate

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Level: Upper beginning; elementary school

Purpose of the activity: The learner will understand what an adjective is and how to use adjectives in descriptions.

Type of activity:
- Whole class discussion; individual work
- Learners will sit and face front to see teacher and board
- Classroom setting

Objective: The learner will understand what an adjective is and how to use adjectives in order to describe themselves and their classmates.

Vocabulary: An adjective; to describe a classmate; how do you describe yourself?; a noun; the verb to be—present and past (am, is, are, was were); plural or singular; articles a and an; positive adjectives such as those listed at end of activity; before a noun; phrases

Materials: White board; dry erase marker; scrap paper; white paper 9 ½”X13”; crayons or markers; stencil with large capital letters (optional)

Teaching Note: This lesson is for students who have acquired more vocabulary and can write adjectives. This lesson should stress that the adjectives used to describe a classmate must be positive and therefore pairing up of friends for this activity is recommended.

The teacher may opt to explain and use the list of positive adjectives at the end of this lesson.
Procedure:

1. Begin the lesson by writing “How do you describe yourself?” “I am ______________” on the board. Ask a student to read the question and to fill in the blank with a word. Write the student’s response on the board and ask several other students to read the question and answer. What type of word is in the blank? An adjective. Adjectives describe nouns and in this case, the adjectives describe a person. Ask the students what other kinds of words adjectives describe—places or things.

2. Analyze adjectives with the students. Ask the students where they see adjectives in a sentence. An adjective can come after the verb Be (am, is, are, was, were). Give several examples such as “Ann is pretty” and “Derek is quiet.” Adjectives can also come before the noun. Give several examples such as “a pretty girl” or “a quiet boy.” The articles a and an come before the adjective when the noun is singular. Adjectives do not change and nothing is added to them when the noun is plural. Ask the students if they can think of any more examples of adjectives used before the noun or after the verb be.

3. Tell the students that they are going to ask each other to describe themselves. Remember to tell the students that during this lesson you are only thinking of positive adjectives as we are thinking of nice and polite ways to describe our friends and classmates. Write the following question on the board: “How would you describe yourself?” or “What is a positive word to describe yourself?” Next, pair up the students and model the procedure for the activity. Each student will ask the question to his or her classmate, wait at least a minute for a response, and then write the response(s) on paper. Have the students ask each other the question and ask the students to write their answers on a piece of scrap paper. Give the
students five minutes and then ask the students to share information with the class.

4. Now pick a student’s name and write that student’s name vertically on the board. Make each first letter bold in color to make it stand out. Ask the students to think for several minutes about what adjectives (remember positive adjectives) the students think of that begin with each letter of the student’s name. For example, for the name Maria:
   
   M usical
   A lways happy
   R eally funny
   I s helpful
   A ppealing

5. Show the students how each line has an adjective. The phrase may begin with a verb but there is still an adjective in each line. Tell the students that we are going to create some art with the names and adjectives. Using some of the adjectives that they wrote earlier in the lesson, ask the students to try to think of an adjective to write for each line of their partner’s name. (They may ask other classmates to help and share as this is a fun and enjoyable activity.) Model for the students how they will take a piece of paper and turn it vertically. Then, they will take a plastic stencil and trace each letter of their partner’s name vertically. (In order to share, some students may brainstorm for adjectives while other students use the plastic stencil.) Each letter of their partner’s name should also be capitalized in order to stand out when decorated. Now show the students examples of how they can decorate each letter with a different pattern—for example a solid, polka-dotted, print, or floral pattern.
6. Have students share art work with the class. Display on wall on bulletin board if desired.

7. Ask students what adjectives they learned today. How do you know a word is an adjective?

Examples of positive adjectives:
Bright Imaginative
Careful Likable
Comical Musical
Courteous Playful
Cheerful Quiet
Cute Sunny
Enthusiastic Sympathetic
Fabulous Understanding
Friendly Upbeat
Funny
Grateful
Happy
Helpful