Tech Mishap Backup

Using technology in language teaching can be extremely beneficial. However, we must also be aware of the risk that inevitably, at some point, technology will not function as planned. While we’re waiting for the computer to reboot, for OnCourse to come back online, or the tech reinforcements to arrive with the right speakers, it’s always good to have a few “tech mishap backup” energizers to keep our students engaged while we problem solve.

This fun, energizing activity can be adapted for students of any age and any level by selecting familiar vocabulary and assigning an appropriate sharing task. Plus, it requires no materials, no advanced planning, and no electricity!

Steps

1. Have students stand and get into pairs.  
   (Two parallel lines of students facing each other is easiest for rotating later)

2. Explain that you will call out two words. Students should listen carefully to the two words. After you say, “begin” the pairs have about 30 seconds total to share with each other (in the target language!) which of the two words describes them better and why.

3. When the time is up, get the students attention, and have them rotate to new partners.

4. After students have refocused, call out two new words, and the process begins again.

5. This process can continue with high student energy for about 8 to 10 rounds (or about 10 minutes).

Example

Words: Night owl Early bird

Student response: I am definitely a night owl because I like to go to bed after 2:00 AM. It’s always difficult to get up for my 8:00 AM class. Usually, I start my homework at 11:00 PM because I go to the SRSC to work out after dinner.