The Matchmaker

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Language Target: Comparing personalities, working with descriptive adjectives of character, discussing probabilities.

Setting Up: Before class begins, cut the worksheet into cards. Make one set of male and female cards for each group of four students.

Getting Started: As an introduction, a brief discussion of matchmaking might be interesting. Explain that in some countries, the age old custom is still in practice. Tell the students that today, they will have a chance to be a Matchmaker. So their judgment, inspiration and wisdom will be important.

Begin with a demonstration, draw one card from a male and female set respectively. Read (and/or write on the board) the first line from each card. For example, She loves good food. He likes thin women. Ask the students for their early opinions of this match. Students may say something like: I think they are not such a good match because she likes good food, so she probably eats a lot. And he likes thin women so they probably won’t get along very well. Encourage other positive and negative opinions.

Proceed to the second line from each. She’s a professor. He’s a dentist. Remind the students that this male and female are the same as before. Again, encourage students for their opinions. A student may offer: I think they would make a good couple because they are both intelligent and highly educated. The woman likes good food, but she can control her eating habits, etc.

Finally, read (and write) the third line: She’s shy. He’s stingy. If necessary, explain the vocabulary. Once again, have the students voice opinions as to the appropriateness of this couple’s merits (and demerits).

When the students understand how the cards work, put them into groups of four and hand out one set of male and female cards to each group (if possible, two males and two females per group).

Within each group, two student assume the role of Matchmaker, one introducing the male card and the other the female. The Matchmakers draw one card each read the first line. The other two students make observations about the match and offer opinions. Note: There are no set matches, therefore no preset right or wrong couples. The Matchmakers try to counter any negative opinions with other arguments and try to persuade the other two students that this couple is a good match.

The Matchmakers proceed through the three items on the card, each time supporting his/her character on the card.
When all opinions have been offered, the other two students have to make a judgment as to the compatibility of the couple.

Then, the students reverse roles and the other two students assume the role of Matchmaker, select another card and do the same until all of the cards have been used up. Encourage students to dwell with any couple as long as they like, especially if the discussion about them is interesting. This isn’t a race to finish quickly.

Variation 1: Rather than working in groups, ask for two volunteers to come forward, one male, one female. Hand them one card each and ask them to read it in first person, i.e., (female) I love parties, (male) I like to stay home.

The other students offer opinions and ask questions to the volunteers about their likes and dislikes. After all three descriptions have been read and discussed, the class votes as to the compatibility of the two. Then continue with two other students and two other cards.

Variation 2: Give each student one card, male cards to males and female cards to females. (If the balance is not exact, just tell students that they are going to recommend a friend. Have the students mill around and try to find the best partner. They just read the items from their cards to another student and try to discover their compatibility quotient. If the don’t seem to be a match, then they will try to find another.

When students have made ‘couples,’ encourage a volunteer couple to come to the front of the class and explain why they are ‘made for each other.’ Ask the other students if they agree or not

Building Fluency: All of the cards easily lend themselves to additional description and extrapolation. Throughout this lesson, encourage students to add information from their imagination that fits the information written on the card. Encourage the other students to ask for more information from the Matchmakers’ imagination in order to clarify personality traits that aren’t written.

Writing Practice: Assign an essay where students write about the compatibility (or lack thereof) of a couple they know (or a celebrity couple). OR they could write about an ideal partner using phrases such as: He/she should….

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