

focus: the days of the week

needed: a class set of plastic cups

My students call this the cup game. I introduce it to my first-year classes to help them learn the days of the week. However, it is highly popular among all ability levels.

I begin by having students copy and memorize the following sentence:

“En domingo, lunes, martes, miércoles, jueves, viernes, sábado . . .  
cuidado, mi amado, del oso con helado.”

silent pass

begin change of direction

Pass out the cups. Students must sit in a circle on the floor with an upturned cup in front of them. While slowly saying the above phrase together, they must rhythmically pass the cups to the right, releasing the cup in front of the student on their right during the underlined portions of the words, and picking up the cup that the student on their left has been placed in front of them during the non-underlined portions. Between the words “sábado” and “cuidado”, there is an additional, silent cup pass. When students get to the word “oso”, instead of releasing the cup, they change directions so that on the word “con”, the cup is front of themselves, and on the “ado” of “helado”, they have now released the cup in front of the student on their left. The game now repeats with passing cups to the left.

The game continues in a constant rotation of passing to the left or right. The tempo of the chant and, thus, the passing of cups increases little-by-little. Students who break the rhythm in some way are out. They must stand outside of the circle and can act as referees. The game continues until there is one, cup-passing victor.

