

Teaching Math with Playing Cards

(Use a regular deck of cards, with the face cards removed)

War

Divide the deck between the players. At the same time, have each player turn over two cards from his stack. For Addition War or Multiplication War, the player with the highest sum wins all the cards in play. For subtraction War, the one who has the lowest score wins all the cards in play. "War" happens when two players end up with the same total. When you have a "War", each player turns over two more cards and the one with the highest score takes all the cards (unless you are playing Subtraction War, then the winner is the one with the lowest amount). When each player's stack runs out, the game is over and the one with the most cards wins.

Concentration

At the beginning of the game, choose a "winning number" based on the student's abilities. For examples, a "winning number" for first grade can be 10, 16-20 for second or third grades.

Lay about 16 cards face down on the table. If you have a large "Winning number", you may have to start with more than 16 cards. Have players take turns turning over cards, trying to make a total of your "winning number". If you go over the number, you have to turn the cards back over. The concentration portion is remembering where each facedown card is positioned so that the players can use them later in the game. If you make the "winning number," you keep those cards. You may turn over cards until you go over the "winning number." For older students, chooses a higher number and allow multiplication combined with addition.

Go Fish

Choose a "winning number" according to your student's ability (see above for examples). Deal out 6 cards per player (more for higher level of play) and have the rest of the cards in a stack on the table. The first player tries to add up cards in his hand to make the "winning number." If he is able, he lays down his hand and the next player takes a turn. If the player is not able to add his cards to make up the "winning number," he asks another player for a card with the particular number that he needs. If the payer has the card that is asked for, he must give up his card. If the player does not have the number card asked for, he says, "God Fish." And the Player-in-turn must pick a card from the stack. If that card adds up to the "winning number," he lays the cards down and the next player takes a turn. If it does not, that player holds his cards until his next turn. You can use two or more cards to make the "winning number." Whoever gets rid of all of his cards first, wins!

Salute

This game is played with two students and one tutor. Have one student draw a card from the deck. After drawing a card, the student holds the card by his ear so the other student and tutor can see the face of the card, but the student never looks at his card. The second student does the same. The tutor multiplies the two cards and says out loud, the sum. The first student then tries to guess the number of his card. If he guesses wrong, the second student tries to guess. Who ever guesses right gets both cards. After going through the deck, the student with the most cards wins. This game can be played as a multiplication, addition and subtraction game. It is not a good tool for learning math facts; rather it is a good for reinforcement of math facts.

13

This game is a form of Solitaire. You will want to play along with your student. Lay cards face up in a seven-row pyramid. You start by choosing card from the bottom row that add up to 13, and then remove them. There will probably be several occurrence of 13 for each row. When the remainder of the cards in the row does not add up to 13, have the student add cards from the remaining deck to the row. The student may also use non-overlapped cards from the row just above the row in play. You can use a many cards as it takes to get to 13. Keep doing this all the way up the pyramid until you remove all or as many cards as you can.

Kings = 13

Queens = 12

Jacks = 11

Aces = 1

Don't use a card until there is no card overlapping it.