

# 7 Math Fluency games to play at home

## 1. Speed Racers

**What they'll practice:** Identifying odd and even numbers

**What they'll need:** One deck of cards per pair

**How to play:** Students should remove all face cards and divide the deck in half. Students flip over cards one by one to make two piles: odds and evens. After the fastest flipper puts down his last card, he calls out, "Stop!" and his opponent freezes. The opponent checks both piles. If a mistake is found, the opponent gets to finish flipping her own cards into piles until she finishes or makes a mistake (at which point it would revert to the other player). Play continues until all piles are correct and a speed racer crosses the finish line!

## 2. Flashlight Tag

**What they'll practice:** Basic math facts

**What they'll need:** Chalkboard or interactive whiteboard, two flashlights (one with colored cellophane wrapped around the top to distinguish between teams)

**How to play:** Before class begins, list several numbers on the board (either in rows or random order). Divide your class into two teams. One player from each team should come to the front of the classroom. Turn off the lights and ask the students a math problem. The first student to flashlight-tag the correct answer wins a point for his or her team. Modify this game to suit your needs by changing the symbols on the board to match whatever you're studying.

## 3. Subtraction Salute

**What they'll practice:** Addition, subtraction

**What they'll need:** One deck of cards for every three students (face cards are worth 11)

**How to play:** Two players are the "soldiers" and one player is the "general." Deal half a deck to each soldier. To begin the game, both soldiers salute the general by holding one of their cards up to their forehead (they can't see the card they're holding but the other two players can).

The general (the only one who can see both cards) adds the two numbers together and says the sum aloud. Each soldier then takes that sum, subtracts the number her opponent is holding, and calls out

the value of the card she can't see. Whoever calls out the correct number first gets to keep both cards. Play ends when time runs out or someone wins all the cards.

#### **4. Coin Toss**

**What they'll practice:** Coin values, addition, subtraction

**What they'll need:** Small buckets, lots of coins (fake is fine, but real is more fun!)

**How to play:** Stagger buckets under the chalkboard. About six feet from the board, tape lines on the floor. Divide students into groups of four and give each team a baggie full of coins that amount to one dollar (two quarters, three dimes, two nickels, and ten pennies work well).

When you say "go," the first line of students tosses coins one by one into their team's bucket. When the first person makes it in, he writes the amount of the coin on the board and the next person in line tosses. If she gets the coin in the bucket, she adds the amount to the total on the board. If she misses, she picks it up, subtracts it, and goes to the end of the line. (The next person isn't allowed to toss until the numbers are totaled.) The first team to reach a dollar wins!

#### **5. Double Down**

**What they'll practice:** Adding doubles

**What they'll need:** Two dice, one piece of paper, and one pencil per student

**How to play:** In pairs, time students so that each round of play lasts five minutes. When you say, "Roll 'em!" everyone rolls their two dice simultaneously. Anytime someone rolls doubles, they say, "Double Down!" Both students in that pair should stop rolling, then add the value of the dice, and record the sum under the player's name who rolled it.

As play continues, students keep track of both sets of scores. Whoever has the most points at the end of five minutes wins.

#### **6. Slam Ten**

**What they'll practice:** Adding multiples of 10

**What they'll need:** One deck of cards per pair

**How to play:** Remove face cards and deal each player half the remaining cards. Taking turns, players flip cards faceup one by one. When the first card is revealed, both players multiply the number shown by 10 and say the value out loud. For instance, if one flips over a three of clubs, both say, "Thirty."

Players keep flipping cards one at a time, always adding the value times 10 and saying it aloud. For example, if the next card was a four of hearts, they'd both say, "Seventy," because 30 plus 40 is 70.

Whenever the total value of the cards lands on 50, 100, 150, etc., either player may "slam" the deck with his hand. The fastest slammer keeps all the cards. When time is up, each player counts the value of her cards in 10s (not the number of cards!) to determine a winner.

## **7. Firecracker**

**What they'll practice:** Addition, subtraction

**What they'll need:** Two decks of flash cards, one noisemaker

**How to play:** Place students in a straight line. Determine where the middle of the line is. This is where the "firecracker" will go off. Place a maraca, clapper, or anything that makes noise there.

Now, you and another student start on opposite ends of the line and show flash cards to individuals. As facts are correctly answered, students sit down and play goes on to the next person on the "fuse." When the last person (closest to the firecracker) answers correctly, he gets to sound the noisemaker, announcing a victory for his team.

This game can also be played with several, smaller fuses for an even more exciting bang!