Math Coaches Corner

A game worth a thousand worksheets

Is your child having trouble recalling basic math facts? Do you want to help them practice their mental math abilities? Then try out the card game War! If you have never played, you split a deck of cards among the all the players playing. If you are two people, each person flips over one card (or two depending of the version you are playing) and does the math equation using the cards; the person with the largest number wins all the cards that were played. You continue to play as long as both players have cards. If there is an equality, “war” is declared. Both players place three cards face down and flip over a new set of cards. Again do the math equations using the cards; the person with the largest number wins the “war”.

The game war can be played throughout your child’s elementary and middle years schooling. You can start by playing with one card, saying the number names and recognizing which is bigger and which is smaller, later put two cards together to make a two-digit number to compare. You can move on to basic addition of two low number cards, and then progress to two-digit number addition! You can try subtraction in the same way. If your child is working on multiplying and dividing, that is what you practice with the cards. If your child is in French Immersion, encourage them to practice saying the number words in French—it is a good opportunity for you to learn from them and support your child’s French learning.

C:\Users\janellemeyers\AppData\Local\Microsoft\Windows\Temporary Internet Files\Content.IE5\8UK96RMT\MC900065210[1].wmfUno cards can be found at many of the dollar stores for about $3 a deck. There are lots of cards with only numbers on them –no hearts, spades, clubs or diamonds to count—which is a bigger challenge than using a regular deck of cards.

Have fun helping your child sail towards Numeracy!

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