

Play Subtraction "War"

Play this fun card game with your second grader, and before long those challenging subtraction math facts will be part of her mathematical skill set. Besides strengthening subtraction skills, this game also provides practice in comparing numbers. Your teacher will thank you: in school, second graders are spending lots of time going up and down the number line, counting objects, and developing deep understanding of these all-important number concepts.

What You Need:

- Deck of cards
- Kitchen timer

What You Do:

1. Shuffle the deck of cards and deal them face down, giving each player an equal number of cards until the deck runs out. Each player keeps his cards in a stack. Assign picture cards, such as jacks, queens, and kings, a value of 10. Give aces a value of 1.
2. Demonstrate to your child how to play the game: Each player turns two cards face up, reads the number sentence and supplies the answer. For example, if your child draws a 5 and a 4, he says $5 - 4 = 1$. If you draw a 7 and an 2, then your number sentence is $7 - 2 = 5$. Because your result is larger, you win the four cards and you put them at the bottom of your pile.
3. If each of you has a number sentence with the same answer, then it's war! At this point, you'll reverse the math "operation" and do an addition problem. Each player puts four cards face down and turns up two of them. The player with the sum wins all eight cards.
4. Set up the timer and play the game for 10 to 15 minutes. When the bell goes off, each player counts his cards. The player with the most cards wins. If one player runs out of cards before time is up, then the other player wins.

Say no to boring "drill and kill". Get your game on! Subtraction Math War is an marvelous, high-speed way to build up math skills while spending a richly enjoyable time with your child.

