

Benefits of Adding Games to the Math Curriculum

- 1) Why math games? They promote:
 - Familiarity
 - Fluency
 - Recall
 - Understanding
 - Visualization
 - Analytical thought
 - Creativity
- 2) Include mathematical games and activities as a specific part of their mathematics education
 - Should not replace the curriculum, but rather supplement it, complement it, reinforce it.
 - Do not just make games an afterthought or a reward, something used "when there's nothing else to do"
- 3) Carefully selected mathematical games, incorporated as a regular part of a child's mathematical experience, can have several benefits:
 - Foster a positive, enjoyable attitude about mathematics
 - Provide another means of instruction
 - Provide context for mathematics from another perspective
 - Exposure to substantive, enjoyable math games can help show how various facts and concepts are related
 - Provide motivation - kids simply want to play these kinds of games, learning as they go
 - Provide variety beyond flash cards, drill sheets, rules, vocabulary memorization, etc.
 - Give another avenue for gaining familiarity, practice, and mastery of important mathematical facts and concepts
 - Games are fun! Encourage laughter, togetherness, and learning
- 4) A certain amount of memorization is required. (Math facts, formulas, steps)
 - Three crucial components of memorization: repetition, repetition, and repetition.
 - Formerly, repetition came in the form of flash cards, drill-and-practice worksheets. Still valuable tools. BUT. . .
 - Math games and activities incorporate important dynamics that support memorization: understanding, variety, motivation, context, and fun.
- 5) Reminders:
 - Games do not take the place of basic, sound curriculum; they complement it
 - Use proper math terminology
- 6) For an overview of some favorite games and activities, see "Math Games and Activities" file in the math site.