

Number Card Activities



General Points

The number cards can be used for teaching the whole class, or for small group activity work or even for individual or paired tasks. They also have a wide application in terms of age range, since they can be used with children aged 6 to 11.

Whole class activities

1. Make a line

Shuffle the cards. Give three out to each child. The teacher holds the remaining numbers. Start counting at one. Each child has to say the number they hold. E.g. the child holding number 34 says their number they hand it over to you and you place it in a line. Keep going until you have counted to 100. The cards should make a line 1-100.

2. Who has a number which...?

Shuffle the cards and give out one to each child. Ask questions, such as "Who has a number that begins with a three?" or "Who has a number which is bigger than 90?". With each question, the children have to consult the card they are holding. If their card fits the answer to one of the questions, they have to stand up. Thus, a child holding 32 stands up when the teacher asks the first question. Play this for several minutes.

3. Guess my card

Shuffle the cards and place them in a pile face down. Take one card and give it to a child. They have to look at it but show no-one else what number it is! Then help them to say three things about their number; e.g. 'It begins with a 3, it is larger than 35, it is an even number.' The children have to guess the number. they shout out some possible numbers; 'thirty-six!', 'thirty-eight!'. If they guess it, someone else has a turn at taking a card and thinking of three clues to give. (Hint: you can play this by choosing two children, then they can help each other.)

4. Write it up!

Shuffle the cards and place them in a pile face down. Take a card. Don't show it to the children. Say the number out loud. The children have to write it down. Pick one or two children to write the number on the board. Then show them all the card. Who wrote it correctly? Start again with another number!

5. Stand up and be counted!

Shuffle the cards and give one to each child. Ask all the children with numbers less than 10 to stand up. They each say their number out loud. Then ask all the children with numbers less than 20 and more than ten to stand up. Keep going like this until all the children are standing up.

6. Rounding

Shuffle the cards and place them in a pile face down. Choose a child to come and take a number. Hold up the card. Say the number out loud in unison. Which multiple of ten is this number nearest to? E.g. They take 37. Which two tens does 37 come between? Count if necessary to establish this. Thirty and forty. 37 is nearer to 40 than 30. Write 37 → 40 on the board. 37 rounds up to 40. Let another child take a number. First decide what multiples of ten it comes between and then decide which it is closest to. Tell the children that if it is in the middle (e.g. 35), then it rounds up. Let each child take their own number from the pile and round it up or down. The children can check each other's. Are any contentious!?

Variations: Use only the multiples of ten, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50,... Take it in turns to choose a number between two multiples. E.g. Toni chooses 46. Then she chooses another child who must say what number this rounds to. E.g. fifty. Choose another child to say a different number.

Group activities

1. Which number is top?

Shuffle the cards and place them face down. Place a pile of multilink cubes on the table.

The children take it in turns to take a card. They lay out their three cards and compare them. The person with the highest number takes a cube.

Variations: The child with the lowest card takes a cube, or the child with the card number nearest 50.

3. Keep the pair!

Shuffle the cards and spread them around face down on the table. Take it in turns to turn over two cards. Add the two number in you head! Say your answer out loud. The others check your answer by writing down the addition. If you were correct, you keep the two cards. Play until someone has twenty cards!

Variation: Find the difference between the two numbers instead of adding them.

2. Score of ten!

Shuffle the cards and place them face down. Deal out three cards each. Each child has to look at their cards and round each number to the nearest ten.

They write each one down. E.g. I take 32, 18 and 68. I write 32 → 30, 18 → 20 and 68 → 70.

Compare numbers and check each others answers. If any child has two numbers which round to the same multiple of ten, they may score ten points! Keep playing until someone has scored 30 points.

4. Make one hundred!

Spread out the cards face up. Take it in turns to find two cards which make 100! Keep taking it in turns and checking each other's pairs. Find as many pairs as you can. E.g. I could take 40 and 60. You could then take 39 and 61, and so on.

Variation: Can you find any sets of three which make 100? E.g. $32 + 25 + 43$.

Individual activities

1. Make a run.

Shuffle the cards and place them face down. Take a card. Lay it face up. Take another and do the same. Keep taking cards and placing them face up. You are trying to make a run of 5 numbers - either counting in ones, or twos, or threes, or fours...etc. Thus I might take these cards: 23, 98, 34, 52, 44, 67, 12, 9, 45, 72, 35, 18, 62 and 56. I make 12, 23, 24, 45, 56 which is a run of number counting in elevens.

Variation: Collect pairs of numbers whose difference is an exact multiple of ten, e.g. 34 and 44, 18 and 98, etc.

2. Make a grid

Shuffle the cards. Take one card at a time and start creating a 1 - 100 grid out of cards. Decide which row is which and as you take the cards place them in the correct row and column.

Variation: Make a long line of numbers from 1 - 100. This is also quite challenging.

3. Comparing!

Take two cards. Write down the two numbers with the 'greater than' or 'less than' sign between them. E.g. I take 47 and 29, and I write $47 > 29$. Keep taking cards and writing the pairs like this until you have compared 20 pairs of numbers.

4. Magic nines!

Spread out the cards. Find two cards where one has the reverse digits of the other. E.g. 35 and 53. Work out the difference between them. E.g. 18. Repeat this at least 10 times. What do you notice about the differences?

5. Nine in order

Take nine cards. Lay them in order of size. Copy them out. Write a number that is bigger than you largest number and write a number that is a smaller than you smallest number! Repeat this process three times.