

## MATES Junior Activity Resource Guide

Goal: **Academic skills**

Activity Type: Individual;  
two+ mentees  
Relationship Stage: Any

### Activity Name:

"Basic facts with playing cards"

### Objective:

To use playing cards to practice basic facts (addition, subtraction, multiplication).

### Preparation Time:

10 minutes to make basic facts operator cards

### Activity Duration:

5-10 minutes per round; can be played multiple times in a row.

### Required Material:

- Basic facts operator cards (cards with +, -, and x signs)
- Playing cards
- Timer/watch (optional)
- Paper and pen for keeping score (optional)

### Instructions:

- Use blank pieces of card to make basic facts operator cards. Between 5-8 cards of each operation (+, -, x) is enough.
- Take the jokers and face cards out of the deck, and then shuffle and divide the deck into two even piles, with the operator cards in between the decks.
- Turn over a card in each deck (including the operators) and the mentee then solves that equation. E.g., if the deck turns over a 4 and 8 with a + operator card, the mentee solves  $4 + 8$  (12).
- Keep turning over the cards to reveal new equations to be solved, until all decks are turned over.

### Further Notes:

- Division cards are difficult to use in this game. If the mentee is up for the challenge of fractions, then it can be attempted (have a calculator with you for this though!)
- You can use a timer to add to the challenge: try and solve in under 5 seconds, for example.
- This is great for practicing multiplication tables. No need for operator cards – just use the deck of cards and generate random multiplication equations.
- For greater challenge, you can add face cards to represent other numbers, e.g., jack = 11, queen = 12, king = 20
- This can be played for points, and can be played by multiple mentees. Make it a competition!