



SHELL
EDUCATION

Grade

K

MATH GAMES

Skill-Based Practice
for Kindergarten



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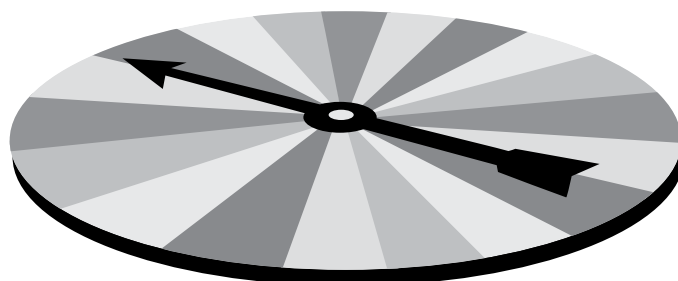
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Importance of Games

Students learn from play. Play begins when we are infants and continues through adulthood. Games are motivational and educational (Hull, Harbin Miles, and Balka 2013; Burns 2009). They can assist and encourage students to operate as learning communities by requiring students to work together by following rules and being respectful. Games also foster students' thinking and reasoning since students formulate winning strategies. They provide much more sustained practices than do worksheets, and students are more motivated to be accurate. Worksheets may provide 20 to 30 opportunities for students to practice a skill, while games far exceed such prescribed practice opportunities. Lastly, games provide immediate feedback to students concerning their abilities.

Games must be part of the overall instructional approach that teachers use because successful learning requires active student engagement (Hull, Harbin Miles, and Balka 2013; National Research Council 2004), and games provide students with the motivation and interest to become highly engaged. Instructional routines need balance between concept development and skill development. They must also balance teacher-led and teacher-facilitated lessons. Students need time to work independently and collaboratively in order to assimilate information, and games can help support this.



When games are used appropriately, students also learn mathematical concepts.

Mathematical Learning

Students must learn mathematics with understanding (NCTM 2000). Understanding means that students know the relationship between mathematical concepts and mathematical skills—mathematical procedures and algorithms work because of the underlying mathematical concepts. In addition, skill proficiency allows students to explore more rigorous mathematical concepts. From this relationship, it is clear that a balance between skill development and conceptual development must exist. There cannot be an emphasis of one over the other.

The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (2000) and the National Research Council (2001) reinforce this idea. Both organizations state that learning mathematics requires both conceptual understanding and procedural fluency. This means that students need to practice procedures as well as develop their understanding of mathematical concepts in order to achieve success. The games presented in this book reinforce skill-based practice and support students' development of proficiency. These games can also be used as a springboard for discourse about mathematical concepts. The counterpart to this resource is *Math Games: Getting to the Core of Conceptual Understanding*, which builds students' conceptual understanding of mathematics through games.

Importance of Games *(cont.)*

The *Common Core State Standards for Mathematics* (2010) advocate a balanced mathematics curriculum by focusing standards both on mathematical concepts and skills. This is also stressed in the Standards for Mathematical Practice, which discuss the process of “doing” mathematics and the habits of mind students need to possess in order to be successful.

The Standards for Mathematical Practice also focus on the activities that foster thinking and reasoning in which students need to be involved while learning mathematics. Games are an easy way to initiate students in the development of many of the practices. Each game clearly identifies a Common Core domain, a standard, and a skill, and allows students to practice them in a fun and meaningful way.

Games vs. Worksheets

In all likelihood, many mathematics lessons are skill related and are taught and practiced through worksheets. Worksheets heavily dominate elementary mathematics instruction. They are not without value, but they often command too much time in instruction. While students need to practice skills and procedures, the way to practice these skills should be broadened.

Worksheets generally don't promote thinking and reasoning. They become so mechanical that students cease thinking. They are lulled into a feeling that completing is the goal. This sense of “just completing” is not what the Common Core Standards for Mathematical Practice mean when they encourage students to “persevere in solving problems.”



Students need to be actively engaged in learning.

Students need to be actively engaged in learning. While worksheets do serve a limited purpose in skill practice, they also contain many potential difficulties. Problems that can occur include the following:

- ➔ **Worksheets are often completed in isolation**, meaning that students who are performing a skill incorrectly most likely practice the skill incorrectly for the entire worksheet. The misunderstanding may not be immediately discovered, and in fact, will most likely not be discovered for several days!
- ➔ **Worksheets are often boring to students**. Learning a skill correctly is not the students' goal. Their goal becomes to finish the worksheet. As a result, careless errors are often made, and again, these errors may not be immediately discovered or corrected.

Importance of Games *(cont.)*

- ➔ **Worksheets are often viewed as a form of subtle punishment.** While perhaps not obvious, the perceived punishment is there. Students who have mastered the skill and can complete the worksheet correctly are frequently “rewarded” for their efforts with another worksheet while they wait for their classmates to finish. At the same time, students who have not mastered the skill and do not finish the worksheet on time are “rewarded” with the requirement to take the worksheet home to complete, or they finish during another portion of the day, often recess or lunch.
- ➔ **Worksheets provide little motivation to learn a skill correctly.** There is no immediate correction for mistakes, and often, students do not really care if a mistake is made. When a game is involved, students want and need to get correct answers.

The *Common Core State Standards for Mathematics*, including the Standards for Mathematical Practice, demand this approach change. These are the reasons teachers and teacher leaders must consciously support the idea of using games to support skill development in mathematics.



How to Use This Book (cont.)

Students are able to work collaboratively during game play, thus promoting student discourse and deeper learning. The games can also be used to reduce the amount of time students spend completing worksheets.

Each game in this book is based upon a common format. This format is designed to assist teachers in understanding how the game activities are played and which standards and mathematical skills students will be practicing.

Domain

The domain that students will practice is noted at the beginning of each lesson. Each of the five domains addressed in this series has its own icon.

Standards

One or more *Common Core State Standards* will state the specific skills that students will practice during game play.

Number of Players

The number of players varies for each game. Some may include whole-group game play, while others may call for different-size groups.

Materials

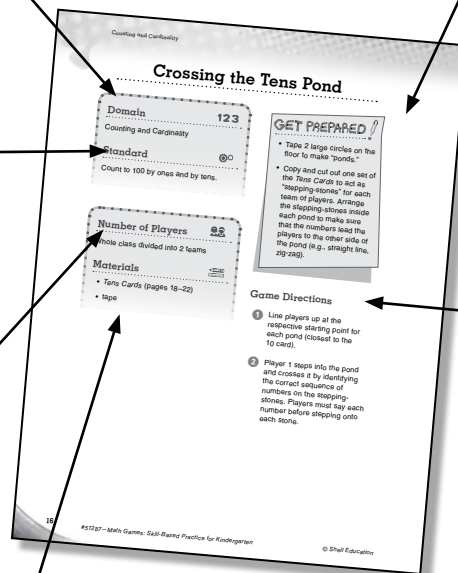
A materials list is provided for each game to notify the teacher what to have available in order to play the games.

Get Prepared!

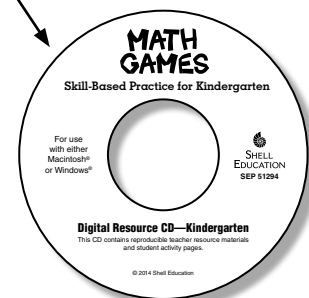
Everything a teacher needs to be prepared for game play is noted in the Get Prepared! section. This includes how many copies are needed as well as other tasks that need to be completed with the materials.

Game Directions

The directions allow for step-by-step guidance on how to easily implement each game.



All game resources can be found on the **Digital Resource CD**. (For a complete list of the files, see page 135–136).

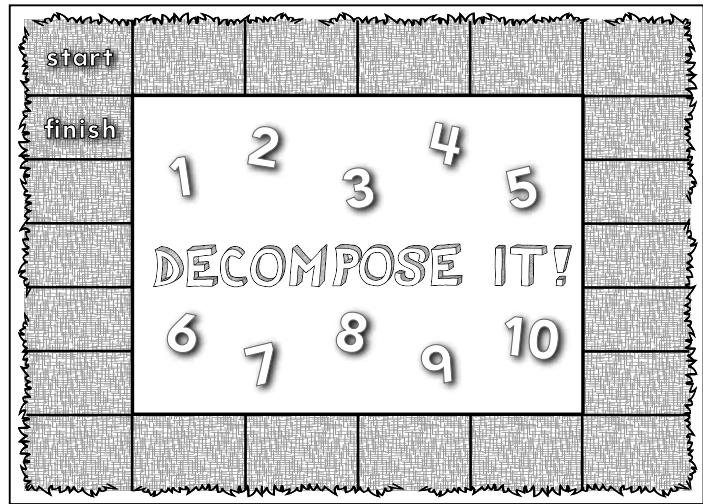


How to Use This Book *(cont.)*

Many games include materials such as game boards, activity cards, score cards, and spinners. You may wish to laminate materials for durability.

Game Boards

Some game boards spread across multiple book pages in order to make them larger for game play. When this is the case, cut out each part of the game board and tape them together. Once you cut them apart and tape them together, you may wish to glue them to a large sheet of construction paper and laminate them for durability.

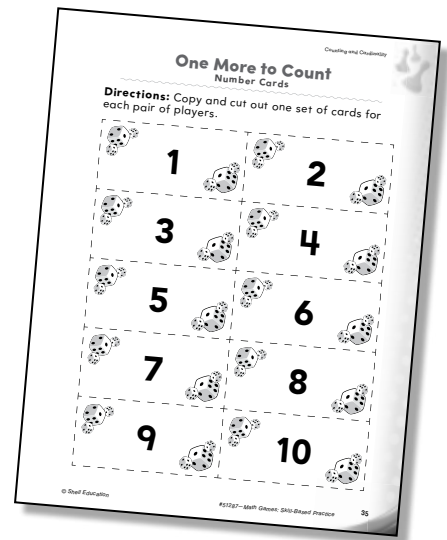
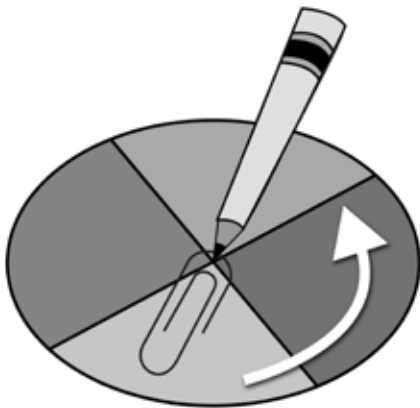


Activity Cards

Some games include activity cards. Once you cut them apart, you may wish to laminate them for durability.

Spinners

Some games include spinners. To use a spinner, cut it out from the page. Place the tip of a pencil in the center with a paperclip around it. Use your other hand to flick the other side of the paperclip.





Jack and the Beanstalk

Addition and Subtraction

Domain

 $x+y=?$

Operations and Algebraic Thinking

Standard



Solve addition and subtraction word problems, and add and subtract within 10 (e.g., by using objects or drawings to represent the problem).

Number of Players



Whole class divided into teams of 4–5 Players

Materials



- *Jack and the Beanstalk Word Problem Cards* (pages 59–61)
- beans
- document camera, chart paper, or whiteboard (optional)

GET PREPARED

- Copy and cut out the *Jack and the Beanstalk Word Problem Cards* for the class.
- Collect 10 beans for each player.

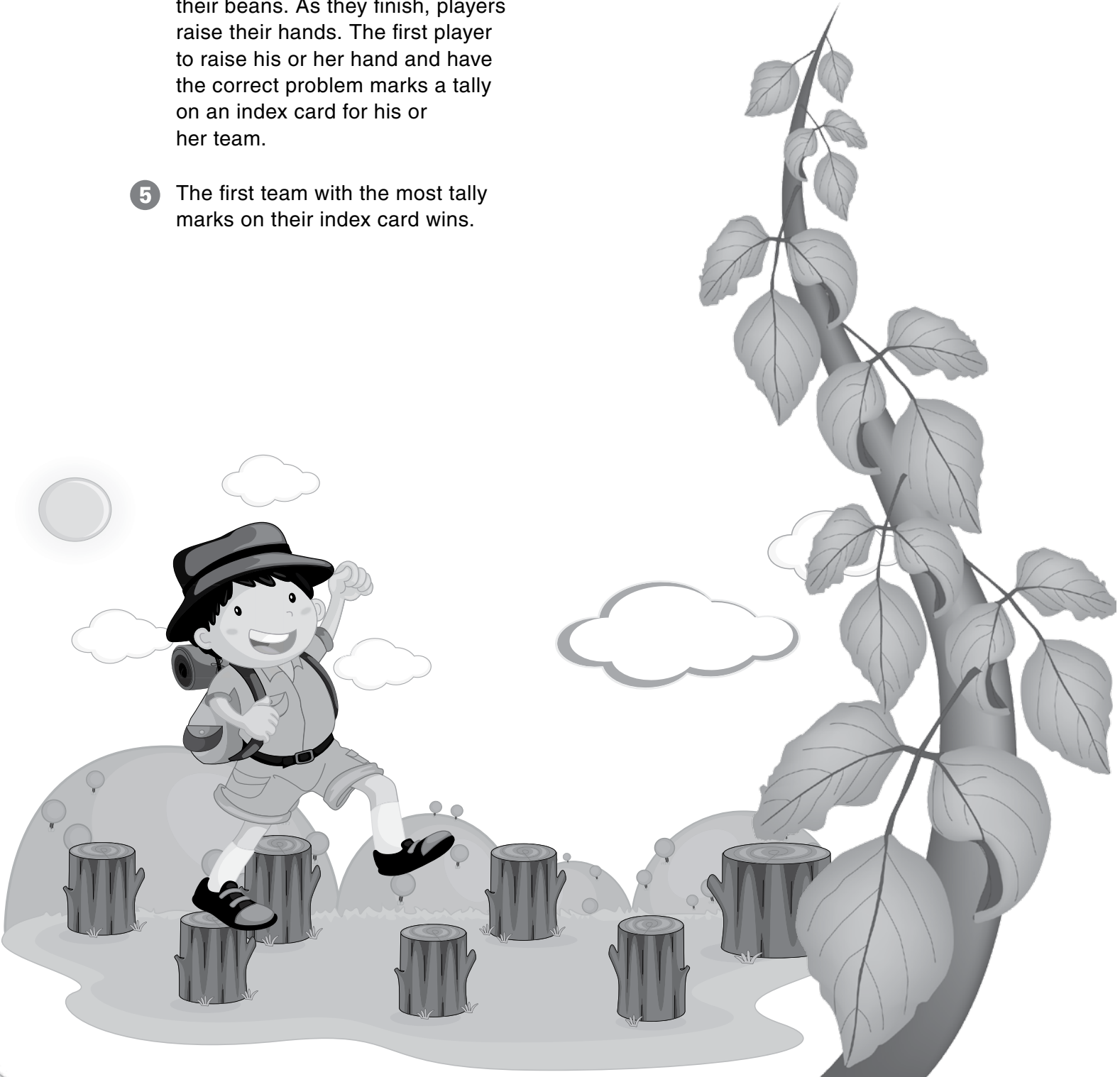
Game Directions

- 1 Distribute materials to players.
- 2 Explain that players will use the beans to show their thinking as they solve addition and subtraction problems throughout the game.
- 3 Present one word problem at a time from the *Jack and the Beanstalk Word Problem Cards*. You may wish to display the card using a document camera (if available), write the word problem on the board or a sheet of chart paper, or simply hold up the card so that each player can see it. Players should be seated while playing, either at a desk or cleared carpet area.

Jack and the Beanstalk

Addition and Subtraction *(cont.)*

- 4 Players work with their team to represent the word problem using their beans. As they finish, players raise their hands. The first player to raise his or her hand and have the correct problem marks a tally on an index card for his or her team.
- 5 The first team with the most tally marks on their index card wins.





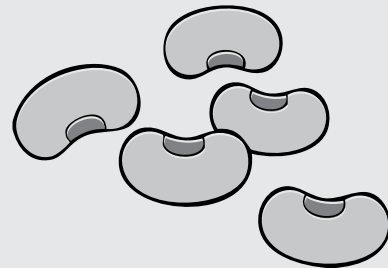
Jack and the Beanstalk

Word Problem Cards

Directions: Copy and cut out one set of cards for the class.

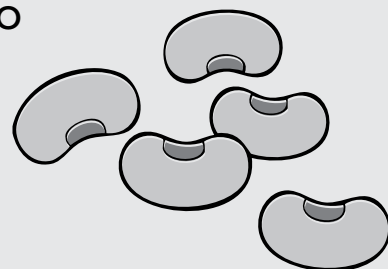
Jack has 3 beans in one hand and 2 beans in his other hand. How many beans does Jack have altogether? Use the beans to show how to solve the problem.

(solution: $3 + 2 = 5$)



Jack sold his cow for 5 beans. Then his mother threw away all 5 beans. How many beans does he now have? Use the beans to show how to solve the problem.

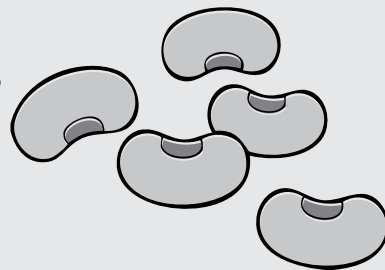
(solution: $5 - 5 = 0$)



Jack and the Beanstalk

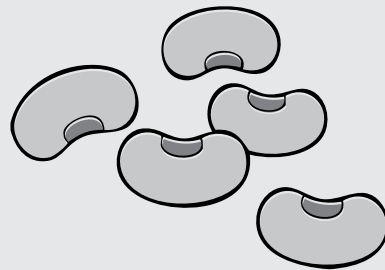
Word Problem Cards *(cont.)*

Jack's mother threw 5 beans out the window. But only 1 bean grew into a beanstalk. How many beans did not grow? Use the beans to show how to solve the problem.



(solution: $5 - 1 = 4$)

The beanstalk grew 1 inch the first night. It grew 7 inches the second night. How tall is the beanstalk now? Use the beans to show how to solve the problem.



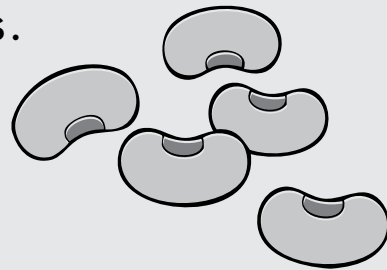
(solution: $1 + 7 = 8$)



Jack and the Beanstalk

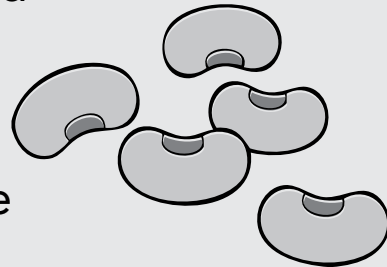
Word Problem Cards *(cont.)*

Jack climbed the beanstalk by starting at the bottom and climbing up 6 branches. How many branches did Jack climb? Use the beans to show how to solve the problem.



(solution: $0 + 6 = 6$)

Jack had 5 beans. As he climbed the beanstalk, he held 2 beans in his hand and put the rest in his pocket. How many beans are in Jack's pocket? Use the beans to show how to solve the problem.



(solution: $5 - 2 = 3$)