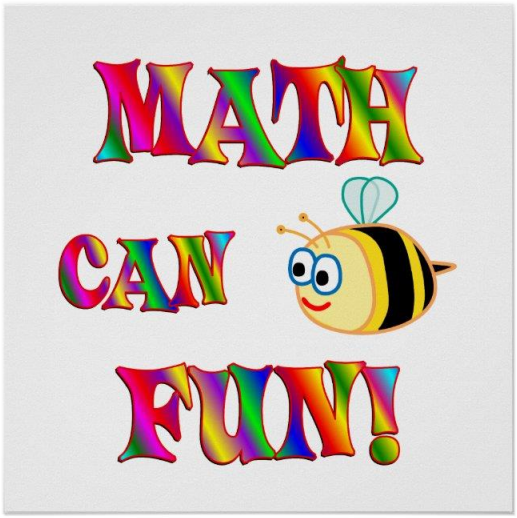
Hey, Math Can Be FUN!

A shared idea from our friends at
Scholastic



Simple Supplies: (Will vary depending on the Math Game you choose to play.)

- Beach Ball
- Permanent Marker or Sticky Label
- Chalk
- Skittles or M&Ms
- Calculator
- Deck of Playing Cards
- Measuring Tape
- Long String
- Paper
- Pencils
- Twister Game Mat

*Tip – Feel free to remove any time limits or set-up special rules that will allow younger kids to play with older kids at the same time.

The Games:

1. Bouncing Sums

   Cover a beach ball with numbers (use a permanent marker or sticky labels). Toss the ball to one child and have them call out the number that their right thumb touches. Then toss it to the next student, who does the same and then adds their number to the first. Continue for five minutes and record the sum. Each time you play the game, add the sum to a graph. On which day did you reach the highest sum? The lowest?

   Additional Challenge: Use fractions, decimals, or a mix of negative and positive integers.

2. Hopscotch Math

   Set up a hopscotch grid with a calculator layout. With older kids, you can include the square root symbol and negative integer sign. The kids first hop on one number, then an operation, another number, the equal sign, and finally the answer. For double-digit answers, students can split their last hop so that their left foot lands on the digit in the 10s place and their right foot lands on the digit in the ones place.

   Additional Challenge: The child taking a turn tosses a stone onto a number and must avoid that number in the equation.

3. Sweet Math

   Model this activity with one package of Skittles or M&Ms and a document camera, or let each student have his or her own package. Younger students can graph the contents of their packages by color. Older students can calculate the ratio of each color compared with the total number of pieces of candy in their packages.

   Additional Challenge: Compile the family's results into one graph, then have each child compare his or her ratio to the ratio for the entire group.

4. It's in the Cards

   For a twist on the traditional card game War, assign values of 1 to the ace, 11 to the jack, 12 to the queen, and 13 to the king, and face value for the cards two through 10 (for younger children, limit the game to number cards only). Playing in pairs, each child lays two cards face up, then subtracts the lower number from the higher. Whoever has the higher answer wins all four cards. If the totals are the same, the players flip over two more cards and repeat until there is a winner.

   Additional Challenge: Use the two cards to form a fraction, and then compare to see who has the larger fraction. If they are equivalent, repeat until someone wins the round.

5. String 'Em Up

Which is greater, arm span or height? Ask the children to stand in two groups according to their predictions: those who think their arm span is greater than, less than, or equal to their height. Give pairs a piece of string or a measuring tape to test their predictions and measure, then regroup according to their results.

Additional Challenge: Estimate the ratio of the length of an arm or leg to body height, then measure to check the accuracy of the estimate.

6. Twister Math

Stick labels with numbers, shapes, or images of coins onto the circles of a Twister mat. Give each child in turn an equation, a description of a shape, or an amount of money, then have the child place his or her hand or foot on the answer.

Additional Challenge: Label the mat with numbers ending in zero, then call out numbers and tell the kids they must round up or down to the nearest answer.