Games for math fact review

**Touch the answer**

Draw a vertical line down the center of the chalkboard to divide the chalkboard in half. Write the numbers 0-10 (if doing minus) or 2-18 (if doing plus) on each side. You can do fewer numbers, but then must be careful that the answers are on the board for the math facts you are flashing. Divide the students into two lines, facing the chalkboard. Give the first person in each line a fly swatter (or pointer). Flash a flashcard. These two students race to touch the answer on their side of the board. The first one to touch the correct answer goes to the back of the line while the other person stays at the front to race with the second person in the other line. Play continues until the teacher says it is time to stop. A variation is to have both students go to the back of their lines, acknowledging who was first each time or if there was a tie.

**Circle around**

Have students get in a line first one near the front of the classroom and the others behind him. Flash the flashcards and have students go to the back of the line as they say the answers. Here are several variations that add fun:

-Have bite-sized apple pieces or crackers on a plate beside you, enough for each child in the class to have several. After a student says the correct answer, they can take an apple piece as a reward as they move to the back of the line. The game continues until the food is all gone.

-Have students keep track on their fingers how many answers they give. Once they have answered the amount that you have told them, they can go back to their seat. Or once they have said as many answers as how old they are, they can return to their seat.

-Place a chair in the front of the room beside you. After saying the correct answer, the student can stand on the chair until the next student says the correct answer, then the first student hops off and goes to the back of the line and the next student gets to stand on the chair. Play continues until the teacher says to quit.

**Yell out the fact**

Write a number on the board. Have students yell out math facts that equal this number. The teacher quickly writes the math facts on the board. Time for ½ minute and see how many facts they can say in that time.

**Back to Back**

Have half the class stand in a circle with their backs to each other. Give each of these children some flashcards. The other half of the class stands in front of these children, one in front of each person to say the answers as they flash the cards. The middle children flash the cards for the children in the outer circle until the teacher says, “HOP!” Then the outside circle of children hops one place to the left so that they are saying the answers to a different child’s flashcards. This is repeated several times until the outer circle has gone all the way around (or as the teacher decides or time allows). Then the teacher says, “SWITCH!” At this, the one holding the flashcards gives the stack to the one saying the flashcards and they switch spots. The “new” middle circle holds the flashcards while the others get a chance to say the answers. Again the teacher gives the word to “HOP!” and the outer circle rotates around the inner circle who are holding the flashcards. This game takes some training for children to know what to do, but when they are trained, it is one of the best ways to keep them on task practicing flashcards.

**Train**

This works best for a small group of students. Have students line up by the chalkboard. The first student says the answer to one flashcard on the chalkboard ledge. The teacher puts another flashcard on the ledge. The next student says these two math fact. Third student gets another flashcard making three that he has to say. And so it continues until the chalkboard ledge is full of math flashcards and students are saying a long “train.”

**Across the pond**

Divide class into two groups, each group a line facing the teacher. The teacher flashes a math flashcard. The two students in the front of each line race to say the answer first. The first one to say the answer pulls (gently) the other student over onto their side and they both go to the back of this line. The next two students race to say the next flash card. Once again the winner pulls the looser over onto their side. Play continues until one line gets everyone “pulled” into it.

**Around the world**

Have students sit in a large circle around the room (I often use the desks that are at the perimeter of the classroom—it doesn’t need to be a perfect circle, just so you can keep going around). One student starts by standing beside another’s desk. The teacher flashes a flashcard for them. These two students race to say the answer first. The one who wins gets to move on to the next desk to race with that student. And so we continue around the room, the teacher flashing flashcards, two students racing and the one who wins moves on to race with the next student. If two students say the answer at the same time, the one “wins” who hasn’t won the time before. This helps to keep one person from dominating the game quite as quickly.

**Racing**

Students form a line facing the teacher. The first two in the line stand beside each other. The teacher flashes a flashcard. The student who says the answer first goes to the back of the line. The other student stays in the front to race with the next person in line.

**Cars**

Using two long strips of paper, write identical math facts in a row, but do not putting them in the same order. Give two students each a match box car. Have them “drive” the car along the paper, saying the answers. The person who gets to the end of the paper first wins the race. This can also be done individually with a timer, racing against their own time.

**Take a step**

This works best with a small class. The teacher stands on one side of the room and students on the opposite side other facing her. Hold a flashcard up, having students take turns to say the answer. When the student says an answer, they take a step toward the teacher. The game is over when the student reaches the teacher (or the wall).

**Rhythm**

Decide ahead of time if you will be practicing addition, subtraction or multiplication. The class claps their hands, slaps their knees and snaps their fingers, right hand, then left hand. As they snap their fingers, the teacher says two numbers (an example with multiplication: teacher could say 5, 9). The rhythm continues as the class claps and slaps their knee, then a student answers during the next snapping of fingers (45). The rhythm continues and the teacher says another two numbers. The students take turns saying the answers, perhaps going around the room. To up the effort, students need to sit down (and are out of the game) after two misses. Go until one or only a few students are still standing.