

Snag a Spoon! A Math Game

In this version of the classic card game, students gain a solid understanding of basic equivalents, while having so much fun they may not realize it's a math review. But when it comes time for that big equivalents quiz at school, your child will remember the equivalents practice she got while snatching that spoon!

What You Need:

- White paper
- Marker
- Spoons

What You Do:

1. With your fifth grader, cut sheets of white paper into 52 playing cards. Divide the cards into 13 sets of 4.
2. For each of the 13 sets, choose a decimal, such as .25, and write it on one of the cards. On the rest of the cards in the set, write equivalent percents or fractions. For example, one set of cards would be: .25, 25%, 25/100, 25%.
3. As you are making the game, explain decimal and fraction equivalents by applying them to money and referring to place value, an important component in understanding decimals. For example, explain that \$.25 = 25 cents. 25 cents = 25 pennies. There are 100 pennies in a dollar. Therefore, \$.25 (25 cents) = 25/100. Next, explain decimal and percent equivalents. For example, remind your child that .25 = 25/100. 25/100 means "25 per 100". "Cent" means 100 (in Latin) 25/100 = 25 percent or 25%
4. Once the playing cards are complete, shuffle and gather a few more players. In the middle of the table, place one less spoon than the number of players. For example, if there are 5 players, use 4 spoons. Deal 4 cards to each player and explain the rules.
5. The object is to get "4 equivalents of a kind", for example .30, 30/100, 30%, .30. The dealer will begin by taking the top card from the deck. She will look at it and decide if she wants to keep it or pass it. If she keeps it, she must discard one of her cards and pass it face-down to the next player. If she doesn't want it, she simply passes the card face-down to the next player.
6. Play continues in a circle until one player gets "4 equivalents of a kind". That player grabs a spoon – trying to do so secretly. As soon as another player notices someone has grabbed a spoon, he should grab one, too! Suddenly, everyone will be grabbing for a spoon! The player who does not get a spoon is out. Remove one and continue playing until there are no spoons left – whoever gets the last one is the champion!

Note: Play moves quickly so be sure all players have 4 cards at all times.

As your fifth-grader's knowledge of equivalents becomes more advanced, make playing cards of equivalent fractions in lowest terms. For example, .25, 25%, 1/4, 25/100 or .50, 50%, 1/2, 50/100.

