



**Getting to know you, learning to focus and concentrate and having fun.**

Volunteers with SVPACT face a new challenge every time they start working with a new child.

Where do you start? What can I do to get to know the child? What skills do they have already?

I always encourage the volunteers to bring a couple of items with them to the session so that you have something to pique the child's interest.

A pack of playing cards is a great starting point.

Ideally the cards would have pictures on them.



You can start a conversation just by looking at the cards and asking open ended questions about the cards, the suits, the pictures, the picture cards etc.

For very young children you can ask them if they can put the cards into the correct sequence for each suit.

## **MEMORY**

You can play an easy memory game by using just two suits

The objective is to collect the most pairs of cards.

Shuffle the cards and lay them on the table, face down, in rows.

On each turn, a player turns over any two cards (one at a time) and keeps them if the cards match (for instance, two kings or two twos)

If they successfully match a pair they get to keep the cards, and that player gets another turn.

When a player turns over two cards that do not match, those cards are turned face down again (in the same position) and it becomes the next player's turn.

The trick is to remember the location of each of the cards.

The person with the most pairs at the end of the game wins.



A more challenging version would involve playing with a complete deck of cards.

You can also play Memory with sets of cards that have pictures, letters or numbers on them.

Alphabet cards can be used to find out if students know the upper and lower case of letters. For example: .A match could be A and A , but also A and a,

[Here are some ideas for games to play with just one pack of cards.](#)

## **SNAP**

A fun card game to help develop kids focusing and concentration skills. They must pay attention to keep from losing in this game!

### **HOW TO PLAY**

Number of Players: 2+

Objective: To win all of the cards.

Deal: The cards are dealt one at a time face down to each player until all the cards have been dealt.

Playing: The first player flips over their top card, making a new pile of cards face up. Going clockwise, the next player does the same thing until all players have done so.

When a card is turned over that matches a card already face up on another player's pile, the first person to notice the matched cards yells out "Snap" and wins both piles of cards. Add these cards to the bottom of your face-down pile.

If two players yell "Snap" at the same time, the two piles are combined and placed in the center face up. These cards are now the Snap Pot. If at any time, a player sees a card that matches the card on the top of the Snap Pot pile, they call out "Snap Pot" and win all of those cards.

If a player runs out of cards in their face-down pile, the cards in the face-up pile are turned over and the player continues.

Winner: The winner is the person who has all of the cards at the end.

## **OLD MAID**

Kids can develop matching, pairing, and counting skills as they play this easy card game that results in multiple winners and one big loser!

### **HOW TO PLAY**

Number of Players: 2+

Objective: Don't be stuck with the old maid (the Queen) at the end!

Deal: Remove **one** of the Queen cards from the deck and deal all of the remaining cards evenly to the players face down. Since there are 51 cards, the number of cards received may be slightly uneven.

Playing: Each player looks through their cards and pairs up any matches. Put these face down in front of you. After all the pairs are matched up, player two draws a card from player one's hand face down. If player two made a match, place those cards face down. Continue playing, moving clockwise (player three then chooses from player's two hand).

When a player has paired up all the cards from his hand and is out of cards, he is out of the game and safe from becoming the Old Maid.

Winner: The person with the last card (the Queen) is the Old Maid and the loser of the game!

## **CRAZY EIGHTS**

This classic card game is perfect for younger kids as well! The eight card is wild, giving this card game its fun name!

### **HOW TO PLAY**

Number of Players: 2 to 5

Objective: Be the first player to get rid of all your cards!

Deal: Each player gets five cards, one card at a time. The remaining cards are placed in the center with the top card flipped over face up to create a new pile.

Playing: Grab the cards that were dealt to you and keep them hidden from the other players. Working clockwise, players will take turns to either play the same number or same suit on top of the card that is in the face-up pile.

An eight card is considered wild and can be played on top of any card. The person who plays the eight selects any suit and the next player has to play a card of the selected suit.

If at any time, a player cannot play a card of the same number or suit, they can draw up to three cards from the face down deck in the middle (if you'd like, you can opt for unlimited card draws!).

Winner: The first person to get rid of all their cards is the winner!

## **SLAPJACK**

This has got to be a favourite from so many childhoods! Kids will love having the chance to slap the cards as they play this fun game!

### **HOW TO PLAY**

Number of Players: 2+

Objective: Get all of the cards from the other players.

Deal: Cards are dealt one at a time, face down and split evenly amongst all the players in the group. Cards remain face down, without players looking at them.

Playing: The first player places their top card face up into the middle of the group pile. Moving clockwise, the next player does the same. Players continue to do this, moving fairly quickly as they play each card.

When a player puts a Jack card face up into the pile, the first person to slap the pile gets to keep the entire deck of cards underneath it. That player will shuffle the pile and add it to their existing cards.

Winner: When a person runs out of cards, they are eliminated from the game. The person who has all the cards at the end of the game wins!

## WAR

This is an easy card game that your kids can play all on their own, once you have taught them how to play. This classic card game brings out the competitive spirit in everyone and is so fun and simple!

### HOW TO PLAY

Number of Players: 2

Objective: Collect all of the cards (or the most cards) by the end of the game.

Deal: All cards are split evenly amongst two players. Cards are dealt face down and players must not look at them. (No peeking!)

Playing: Both players will flip their top card over at the same time. The player who placed the card with the higher value (Ace is the highest and two is the lowest) wins both of the cards. Put the cards won in your pile face up. Continue playing until you reach the face up cards. Once those cards are reached, shuffle your pile and continue to play.

When two cards of equal value are played at the same time, that means war! Players put three cards face down and then flip one card face up. The player that has the higher value card showing wins all 10 cards.

Winner: The person to get all 52 cards wins the game!

It is good to keep the games simple so that the child quickly learns how to play. **They also enjoy winning most of the time so you need to ensure that this happens sometimes.**

**I usually work with struggling readers and I find it can be a great incentive to the child if we do some work on reading, sight words, writing letters on the lines etc and then as a reward we have a quick game of cards.**

The same principle applies if working with older children but you would need to use more challenging games.

Source: <https://www.happinessishomemade.net/card-games-for-kids/>

<https://playingcarddecks.com/blogs/all-in/40-great-card-games-for-all-occasions>