

## Teaching Tips from Box Cars And One-Eyed Jacks

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### Organizing Your Cards & Card Management

Use three large buckets (1 gallon or 4 liter each). Gather a lot of decks of cards approximately 1 deck per student but 1 deck per 3 students is a good start (purchase, donated, brought from home). The joke "not playing with a full deck" applies here. We don't play with full decks as it's not important to the math of the games, full decks are not necessary (as seen below) when organizing the cards, and not worrying about full decks speeds getting cards out and putting them away (as seen below) at the beginning and end of classes.

In the first bucket, put your low cards. For example, John likes to put his 1's, 2's, 3's, 4's and 5's. The cards match the fingers on the hand, keeps sums to 10, products to 25, denominators to  $1/5$ s. On the other hand, Jane likes to have 1's through 6's as this allows matching the cards to a typical 6-sided die. This also allows sums to 12, products to 36 and fraction denominators to  $1/6$ s. The key here is that as teacher, decide what cards go into your buckets based on your classroom routines.

In the second bucket, put the rest of your single-digit cards. John - 6's, 7's, 8's, 9's, and 0's (Kings for 0 if using a regular deck). Jane - 7's, 8's, 9's, and 0's (Kings for 0 if using a regular deck). The cards in this bucket along with cards in the first bucket allow for Place Value (0-9 digits), sums to 18, products to 81 and fraction denominators to  $1/9$ s.

In the last bucket, put everything else - 10's 11's 12s (Jacks for 11, Queens for 12 if using regular decks) and any wild cards or jokers.

#### GETTING CARDS OUT

Once a teacher has identified a game and shown how to play, the students are told to get a "small" or "big" handful of cards from either a specific bucket or buckets

#### SHUFFLING AND DEALING

Cards are "mushed up" and quickly separated into as many groups as players (typically 2 for 2 players, 3 for 3 players). The player Mushing the cards is the last to pick a pile (piles do not have to be exactly equal, if "winning" is important, the winner is whoever has the most cards in their "point pile" at the end).

#### CLEANING UP

Players quickly place the cards into 3 piles. First pile has 1s 2s 3s 4s and 5s. Second pile has 6s 7s 8s 9s and 0s. Last pile has 10s 11s 12s Wild Cards, Jokers, etc. The piles are then placed into their corresponding bucket.

### Organizing Your Dominoes & Dominoes Management

A typical class will need a minimum of one set of dominoes for every two students (about 12 sets). If feasible, 1 set per student is even better.

First and Foremost Use Dominoes of Different **COLORS!** This makes it easier to determine each student's or group's set while playing and when putting dominoes away. If you already have sets of the same color, get a adult (parent?) volunteer with 6 colors of permanent spray paint. The adult volunteer takes one set, lays them face-down on newspaper (outside or other well ventilated area) and sprays the back of the set all one color (for example "green"). The volunteer then takes the other sets and repeats the same process but **with a different color for each set** until the first 6 sets are done. The volunteer continues to do sets of 6 in this way until the entire collection of dominoes has been done.

**Keep the dominoes in their sets inside easily opened and closed see-through containers** such as Mesh Bags, Traveling Soap containers, heavy duty sandwich sized freezer bags etc.

**For each week that the students are using the Dominoes**, have the students make sure they have a

complete set by using their set to fill in the Dominoes Outcomes Chart (page 78 in Domino Games - Connecting The Dots, page 77 in Domino Games - Linking The Learning).

**When students are done using the dominoes** for the class, have them make stacks of 4 dominoes (a complete set of 28 double-6 dominoes will have 7 stacks). If they have a complete set, the put the dominoes into the container and then put the container away. If a set is missing a domino, it is important that the teacher knows so it can either be found or, if all else fails, the container for the set is marked as "incomplete" until a replacement can be found. Younger students may find it easier to put them into stacks of 2 (14 stacks for a complete set).

### **Organizing Your Dice & Dice Management**

**Keep dice that are the same together in one container** (for example 0-9 dice in one container, + and - dice in another container, 1-12 dice in a third container, etc.). See-through re-sealable tupperware containers or heavy duty mid-sized freezer bags work well. One student per group or game gets the dice for the game and returns the dice at the end of the game.

**Have the students roll the dice into their hands!** Roll their dice into the "Hockey Net", "Soccer Goal", "Dug Out" etc. In other words the dice rolled by one hand and are blocked from going too far by the other hand. Another effective example is to have the students roll the dice with both hands, "trap" the dice in both hands and then "hide" the dice as they fall the 2 cms from their hands onto the playing surface. The roll is "revealed" when they remove their hands from over the dice.

**For noisy dice - roll on something "soft"** Fun Foam, Felt liners or pads, table setting mats etc all work well. In a pinch, have the students roll on 5-10 sheets of paper stacked on top of each other. The stacked paper muffles a lot of the sound.

### **Organizing & Managing Your Dice Trays (36 dice in a tray)**

**When taking the dice out of the tray.** Remove the tray from the bag, turn the tray upside-down (black on top) and take the black tray off of the clear lid (the dice remain in the lid). The dice are now easily "poured out" of the lid onto the playing surface.

**Play on the floor when possible.** The dice don't "fall off" the floor and most students enjoy the experience of playing on the floor as it gives them room to "spread out".

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**For noisy dice - roll on something "soft"** Fun Foam, Felt liners or pads, table setting mats etc all work well. In a pinch, have the students roll on 5-10 sheets of paper stacked on top of each other. The stacked paper muffles a lot of the sound.

**When putting the dice back into the trays at the end of a class** have the students start with the lid, using one hand to "separate" one half of the lid from the other. The students take all of ONE COLOR of the dice and pour them into ONE HALF of the lid. They spread the dice into the half, "patting down" the dice so the dice are flat and in place. Then all of the dice of the OTHER COLOR are poured into the other half of the lid. Again, the students "pat down" the dice so the dice are flat and in place. The black tray is then fitted on to the top of the dice in the lid. The tray is now complete and can be slipped back into the ziplock bag.

**Use rubber bands to separate parts of the tray.** This is useful when using the trays for place value and you want to limit size to less than 100,000 or you want to have a "decimal place".