



CALLING CARDS

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY

5+ MINUTES

- Lead this quick cognitive warm up to build attention, processing speed, nimbleness and other cognitive skills, as well as group connection.
- Distribute the same 4 (or more) playing cards to each person.
- Ask the first student to choose an order for the selected cards, and privately share that order with the next student. After viewing the order, have the second student shuffle their cards and say the phrase “Abracadabra I will order these cards.”
- Have the second student order the cards again in the original order, and share that order privately with the next student, and so on. Repeat until everyone has had a turn. See if the cards stay in “order” by the end.
- Have everyone clap or snap fingers to set a good pace.
- Option to add cards to the series for increased challenge.
- When working with distance learners, show the whole group the card series you select. Ask them all to shuffle their card decks and say, “Abracadabra I can order these cards.” See how well the group performs. Option to add cards to the series to increase the challenge.

Hello! I’m glad we are all here for our Total Brain Health “Brain Play.” These fast-paced workouts are an important way we can keep our thinking focused, quick, and nimble.

Today’s “Brain Play” is “Calling Cards.” I’m going to give you each 4 (or more) cards. (Name of student) will start by putting the cards in any order without showing the group. Like the game of telephone, (name of student) will share the order of the cards privately with (name of next student), who in turn, will share the order of the cards privately with the next person, and so on. To make it more challenging, I’d like you each to shuffle the cards before putting them back in order and say “Abracadabra, I will order these cards” at the same time. This will make it a bit more fun and add a distraction to what you’re trying to remember.

Let’s see if we can remember the original card order by the time the last person goes.

Excellent teamwork, class!



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TAKE-HOME WORKSHEET

TOTAL BRAIN HEALTH **BRAIN PLAYS**

Top memory championship players can oftentimes memorize the order of a fully shuffled deck in under 4 minutes simply by attaching meaning to each of the cards and a story that ties to the order. This memory feat is possible to achieve by any of us with lots of practice!

BUILD YOUR BRAIN

Workout your memory skills with your own pack of cards. Select a random grouping of 5-10 shuffled cards. Write down the order of the cards on a piece of paper. Give yourself 3 minutes on a timer to memorize the order. Then, cover up your paper, shuffle the cards and try to put them back in order. Repeat this exercise adding more cards to up the challenge.
