

Card Memory Lane - Levels A - B

STAY
ACTIVE

To support early memory skills, joint attention, and cooperation through a simplified movement-and-card activity that values participation, communication, and shared effort over speed or accuracy.



Learning Intentions

Students are working towards:



Participating in a shared activity with peers and adults

Attending to objects and actions during a simple memory task

Experiencing movement and teamwork in a safe, supported way



Success Criteria

Students demonstrate success when they:

Participate in looking at, choosing, or collecting cards with support

Engage in a movement or waiting activity in their own way

Remain involved with encouragement and reassurance



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Duration: 5 - 8 minutes

Objective

To support early memory skills, joint attention, and cooperation through a simplified movement-and-card activity that values participation, communication, and shared effort over speed or accuracy.

Players

Pairs or very small groups
(1:1 adult support encouraged for many learners)

Materials

- A small set of playing cards (3 - 5 cards only to start). Our suggestion is to use cards Ace, Jack, Queen and King as they are easier to match and see the similarities.
- Table or mat to place cards on, face down
- Cones or floor markers to define a short movement space/starting point
- You will need a second set of the cards being used (they don't need to be the same suit, you can use them from the same deck of cards). These will be given to the students one at a time to show them what card they are trying to find from the cards laying face down on the table.

Setup

1. Place the playing cards face down on a table or mat at one end of the playing space (have at least 3 - 4 meters between the starting point and the cards).
2. Position students a short distance away, reducing travel demands.
3. Clearly show students the cards and explain that they will look for one of these cards and then come back to the starting position.
4. Model one full turn slowly with an adult or peer.
5. Assign a simple waiting action if appropriate, such as hands on knees or holding a soft object.

Gameplay / Activity Steps

Step 1: Go and Look

Give the first student a card to look at (from the second set of cards listed in the materials section above), this is the card they are trying to find first.

- One student moves toward the cards by walking, rolling, or being supported.
- The student flips **one card** with adult support and looks at it. If they find the matching card type (not matching suit, just the card type eg, a king) they pick it up and bring it back to the starting position. If it is not a match they flip the card back over on the table where they found it and return to the starting point.
- The adult names the card or picture aloud that the student picks up off the table.



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Step 2: Remember and Return

Students continue to walk back and forth from the starting position to the card table aiming to find the matching card.

- The student flips another card back over hoping for it to be a match.
- Adults may narrate for the student if needed.

Step 3: Collect a Matching Card

• If the correct card is found, the adult helps the student bring it back to the group and give the student another example card to match with the cards on the table.

Step 4: Continue until all cards are found and matched.

Step 5: Repeat

Celebrate together once all cards have been successfully flipped and matched.

Movement Options

- Walking a short distance
- Rolling forward and back

Reflection

Using visuals, gestures, or AAC, prompt gently:

- "Did you look at the cards?"
- "Was it hard to match the cards?"

Reflection may be adult-narrated where appropriate.

Sensory-Specific Learner Variations

For sensory-seeking learners:

- Add gentle pushing, pulling, or carrying a card
- Allow repeated turns
- Include short movement breaks between turns

For sensory-sensitive learners:

- Reduce card quantity to 2 - 3
- Shorten distance
- Use quiet, calm transitions
- Allow observation as participation

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AAC and Communication Supports

- Provide AAC buttons such as “go,” “look,” “card,” “again,” “finished”
- Use visual cue cards to support turn-taking
- Accept all communication modes including eye gaze, pointing, switches, or vocalisation
- Adults model AAC language consistently

For Wheelchair Users / Accessibility

- Place cards at accessible height
- Replace running with rolling or reaching
- Use upper-body waiting actions instead of static holds
- Ensure clear, wide pathways

Notes for Inclusion

- Participation may include moving, watching, choosing, or communicating with support
- Adults scaffold memory and communication
- No requirement to remember exact positions to be successful
- Celebrate effort, teamwork, and engagement equally
- Keep routines predictable, calm, and supportive

