

# Math Q and A Mixer

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**Math Q and A Mixer** is a fun way to help student review math concepts. It can be used to help students review for a test or for a fun filler activity on days when no new lessons are planned. It does take some up front planning by the teacher, parent or tutor, but this can also be done on the fly by using problems from the math textbook being used for the class.

Materials used for this game are **3 x 5 cards**. It can help to have two different colors of cards, one for the questions and one for the answers. If only one color of 3 x 5 cards are available, then write large Qs and As on the backs of the cards so it is easy to tell which cards are which.

**Preparing the cards** is very important. Make up new practice problems, or use problems from the textbook used for the class. In one stack of cards write a question or problem on each card. In the other stack write the answer to each question or problem. It can help to do each question and answer at the same time to build both stacks of cards simultaneously. The quantity of questions and answers depends on how large the group of participants is and how much material there is to review. Make sure there are at least as many cards as there are participants, but twice as many cards is more interesting and makes the game last for a longer time.

Once the cards are created, the game can begin. Keep in mind this is also an activity to see how the group interacts with each other. **Allow the participants to decide how they will resolve the game.** It is an easy way to see if there are natural leaders in the group or if there are reluctant participants who would rather not be active participants in the group.

Shuffle the question cards and shuffle the answer cards. Give each participant **one question card and one answer card**. Make sure they do not match with each other. Explain to the participants they will be in charge of finding the matching cards in the room. There is an answer for every question. Each participant will have to solve their problem card in order to know which answer they need to find. Once they know what their answer is, they can start to find the matching answer.

Once a participant has found a matching card in the group, the two participants **exchange cards** so that the one who solved the problem has the matching answer and the other participant has a new answer card. The participant with the matching set of cards then brings them to the teacher, parent or tutor and gets a new set of unmatched cards. If a tally or score is being kept, this is the time to keep track. Either let each person hold onto their matches or keep score. It is also important for the teacher, parent or tutor to make sure the matching pair of cards is really a match. Some people might accidentally think they have a match when it is actually incorrect.

The game must continue until all the cards are used in order for everyone to have a set of matching cards. If the group is having difficulty mixing and is not understanding how to play the game, then the teacher, parent or tutor should help by **giving an example** of how to find matches. Some groups shout out the answer to see if anyone in the group has their answer. Some groups do the problems on the board and help each other solve the problems and find the answers. Some groups have a leader who writes the answers people are looking for on the board, so that people can say they have the answer card. Some people go from person to person until they find the answer card they need. Some people will just sit and wait for someone to come to them, especially if they do not know how to solve the problem they have in their hand. Keep in mind that some people will not have the matching card in the group because the leader is still holding it. This is a situation when that person needs to help other people in the group find their matching cards, so that more cards are brought into play.

By getting the participants to **actively work to solve and find answers to problems**, the participants are learning which problems they do and do not understand. Some people do not know how to study for a test or are not willing to study for a test. Some of them feel they already understand the material fully. This game can bring out some issues that were not known and encourage people to continue studying or start studying for upcoming tests and quizzes.

This game can be used at the beginning of a term for **review of math facts from previous levels of math** to get a better understanding of the group's grasp on materials that are essential foundations for moving forward in the course.

**This game can also be played by an individual** trying to match up problems with their answers. The student can make these cards throughout the term and use them to study for tests and quizzes. The cards can be labeled for the different sections in the textbook for easy targeted study and for an easy way to find the place to return for more review if the questions and answers are not matching up the way they did when the concept was first learned. Numbering the cards and keeping a key of which questions go with which answers can also help when it is time to review for the final exam. Don't make it too easy, number them on the back or use nonsequential numbering so that it is not obvious which question matches to which answer. Spread the cards out on a table or floor to see the bigger picture and for easier matching.

Enjoy playing Math Q and A Mixer!

Please note this game can be used with other subjects.