

Magician's Tricks

Counting from 1

Counting from Any Number

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

Place number cards face down in numerical order. One child points to any card and the other child—the magician—uses their magic counting skills to figure out what number it is without turning the cards over. Then, flip the card over so children can see if they are correct. Leave the card face up so the next child counts on to find the next number. For example, if a 3 is turned over and the next facedown card that a student points to is a 4, the student can count on from 3 instead of starting at 1.

Primary Objectives

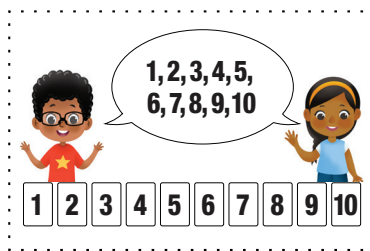
- Counting on from a number other than 1 (for example, counting on from 5 to 7)
- Counting backward from any number (for example, counting down from 8 to 6)
- Recognizing numerals

Materials

- Counting cards
- Numeral cards
- Think-Pair-Share mediator cards
- Magician's Tricks activity step icon cards
- Magician's hat, cape, or wand (optional)

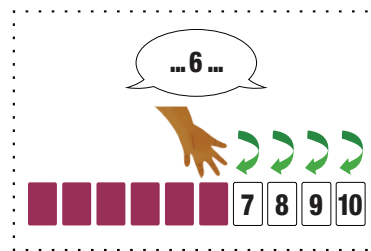
How to Play the Activity

The activity step icons below outline the steps of the activity. Print these icons as cards and share them to help children remember the steps. They're also a helpful scaffold for children!



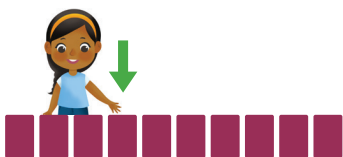
Setup 1

Lay the cards face up from 1 to 10 and count how many there are in all.



Setup 2

One by one, turn each card over to the blank side, saying the number word as you turn it.



Step 1

Child 1 points to a card.



Step 2

Child 2, as the magician, counts to figure out what number is on the card.



Step 3

Child 1 turns over the card to see if Child 2 is correct. (If not, try again!) Leave the card face up.



Step 4

Children switch roles and play again (leaving all faceup cards from the previous turns as they are).

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Teacher's Guide

Instructions for introducing the activity to the Whole Group.

Introduce the Activity

- *We are going to take turns being a magician! Do you know what a magician is?*
- If necessary, say, *A magician is a person who does magic tricks!*
- *Like a magician, I am going to show you a magic trick we can do with numbers!*

- Allow children to respond.

Model the Activity

- *Let's count the cards together.*

- Lay out the 1 to 10 counting cards or numeral cards in order (from the children's perspectives) so all children can see them. Say the number words from 1 to 10 aloud while pointing to each card.
- **To make the math easier**, for children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the counting cards, which have numerals and dots.
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) easier**, use fewer cards (for example, only 1 to 3 or 1 to 5).
- **To make the math harder**, for children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the numeral cards, which have numerals only.
- **To make the math harder**, during set-up only and before beginning the game, scramble and lay the cards out of order. Ask students to organize the cards in the correct order from 1 to 10.
- **To make the math and EF harder**, use more cards (for example, up to 10 or 20).

- *Now, let's count backward.*

- Say the number words backward from 10 to 1 while pointing to each card.

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Center Time

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Now we turn them over so we can't see the numbers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Keep the cards in the same order and say each number as you flip the card over.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I'll be the magician first. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ If you are using the optional hat, cape, or wand for the magician, introduce those here.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Watch my trick. I will tell you what number is on any card without even seeing the number. ■ Ask a student: Please point to any card. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model how to use self-talk to solve the problem by quietly counting the cards, starting at 1, while pointing to each card until reaching the goal card. Then, dramatically announce which number will be on the goal card.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ [Quietly, but loud enough for children to hear] 1, 2, 3, 4, 5. ■ [Then, louder to children] Abracadabra! The number is [number]! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Make a show of counting the cards, starting from 1, while pointing to each card until reaching the card that the student pointed to. ■ Dramatically announce what number will be on the card.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Let's turn the card over to check if my magic worked. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn over the card to check.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ My magic trick worked! ■ This time, we'll keep the cards face up after they are guessed. All the other cards can stay face down. That way, we won't pick the same card again. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ After correctly guessing the number, leave the card face up so the number is visible throughout the next turn.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Ask another student: Please point to another card. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Model how to use self-talk to solve the problem by quietly counting the cards forward or backward, starting at the faceup card, while pointing to each card until reaching the goal card. ■ Then, dramatically announce which number will be on the goal card.

Magician's Tricks

Counting from 1

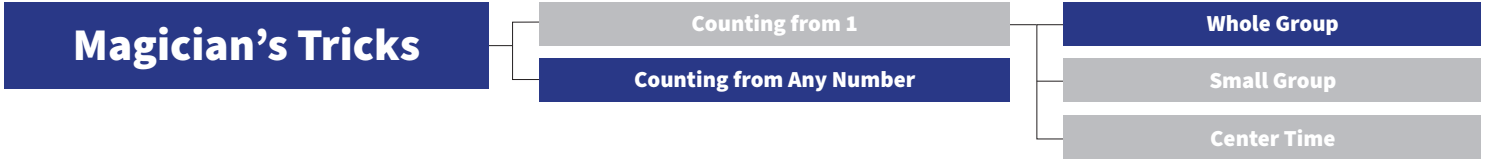
Counting from Any Number

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

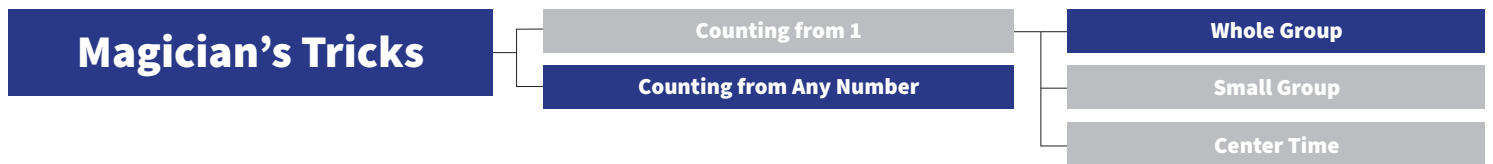
- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Now, you can use your magician's tricks to figure out what number is on this card without seeing it. ■ Please Think-Pair-Share with your partner what you think the card is and how you know. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to another card that is one card before or after a card that was left face up. ■ Give children time to Think-Pair-Share the number they think is on the card and why. ■ To make the EF easier, use the Think-Pair-Share mediator cards and Think-Pair-Share introduction. ■ To make the EF harder, omit the Think-Pair-Share mediator cards and Think-Pair-Share introduction. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Abacadabra! The number is [number]! | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Turn the card over to check if children are correct. |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How did you know? | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Encourage discussion about how you count forward and backward from the faceup card, emphasizing which numbers "come before," "right after," "in between," and "[number] more or less than." If children reported counting up from 1, model the counting on or back strategy, counting from one of the faceup cards instead. ■ To make the math easier, if children don't correctly identify a facedown card, turn the card over, have them say it with you, then turn it back. |



Summary of Activity Adaptations

For quick reference, here is a summary of all the available adaptations to make Magician’s Tricks easier or harder to accommodate the needs of your students. Whether the adaptation is easier or harder sometimes depends on each individual student’s math or EF skills.

	Make It Easier	Make It Harder
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none">For children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the counting cards, which have numerals and dots.If children don’t correctly identify a facedown card, turn the card over, have them say it with you, then turn it back.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">For children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the numeral cards, which have numerals only.During set-up only and before beginning the game, scramble and lay down the cards out of order. Ask students to organize the cards in the correct order from 1 to 10.
EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use the Think-Pair-Share mediator cards and the Think-Pair-Share introduction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Omit the Think-Pair-Share mediator cards.
Math & EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use fewer cards (for example, only 1 to 5).	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Use more cards (for example, up to 10 or 20).



Explore The Executive Function And Math Skills In This Activity

Visit the website for resources to support teaching this activity.

What to Do Next

Are some students ready for more challenge? Try the adaptations provided for Whole Group.

Magician's Tricks

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Whole Group

Small Group

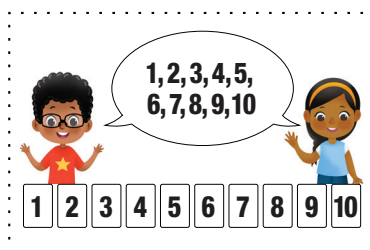
Center Time

Materials

- Counting cards
- Numeral cards
- Magician's Tricks activity step icon cards
- Magician's Tricks role cards
- Think-Pair-Share mediator cards
- Magician's hat, cape or wand (optional)

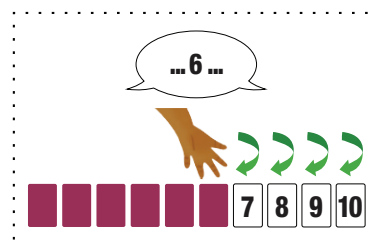
How to Play the Activity

For small groups, we suggest four children arranged in pairs of two play the game with a teacher present to provide guidance. The activity step icons below outline the steps of the activity. Print these icons as cards and share them to help children remember the steps. They're also a helpful scaffold for children!



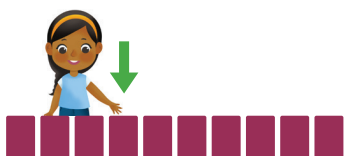
Setup 1

Lay the cards face up from 1 to 10 and count how many there are in all.



Setup 2

One by one, turn each card over to the blank side, saying the number word as you turn it.



Step 1

Child 1 points to a card.



Step 2

Child 2, as the magician, counts to figure out what number is on the card.



Step 3

Child 1 turns over the card to see if Child 2 is correct. (If not, try again!) Leave the card face up.



Step 4

Children switch roles and play again (leaving all faceup cards from the previous turns as they are).

Magician's Tricks

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Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

Teacher's Guide

Instructions for introducing the activity to Small Groups and preparing to play in pairs of two.

Introduce the Activity

- ***You are going to be magicians now! We're going to use these to help us remember the steps.***
- **To make the executive function (EF) easier**, point to the activity step icon cards (if being used).
- **To make the EF harder**, omit the activity step icon cards.

Model the Activity

- ***First, we lay out the cards and count them.***
- Point to the first set-up icon within the activity step icon cards (if being used) as you describe this step.
- ***Let's count the cards together.***
- Lay out the 1-10 counting cards or numeral cards in order from 1 to 10 (from children's left to right) so all children can see them.
- **To make the math easier**, for children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the counting cards, which have numerals and dots.
- **To make the math and EF easier**, use fewer cards (for example, only 1 to 5).
- **To make the math harder**, for children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the numeral cards, which have numerals only.
- **To make the math harder**, during set-up only and before beginning the game, scramble and lay down the cards out of order. Ask students to organize the cards in the correct order from 1 to 10.
- **To make the math and EF harder**, use more cards (for example, up to 10 or 20).
- **To make the math and EF harder**, put cards in rows of two (for 1 to 10 cards) or rows of four (for 1-20 cards). Explicitly point out the first and last card in each row and guide children to count on or back from these numbers if necessary.

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Center Time

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Now, let's count backward. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Say the number words backwards from 10 to 1 while pointing to each card.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Next, we turn all the cards face down while saying the number on each card. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to the second set-up icon within the activity step icon cards (if being used) as you describe the turning-over step. ■ Keeping the cards in the same order, say each number word as you flip the card over.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Now you be the magicians! 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ I will point to a card. But don't say what number it is yet! 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Point to the 5 card.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Instead, Think-Pair-Share with your partner: What is the number... and how do you know? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Review Think-Pair-Share as necessary. ■ Give children time to Think-Pair-Share the number they think is on the card and why. ■ Without flipping over the card, ask one pair of children to share their answer. ■ To make the math and EF easier, display a second set of counting cards face up (just above the facedown cards) that children can use as a visual cue to identify the cards. ■ To make the math and EF harder, if children point while they count, encourage them to be "more magical" and count with their eyes. ■ To make the EF easier, use the Think-Pair-Share mediator cards. ■ To make the EF harder, omit the Think-Pair-Share mediator cards.

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ask, <i>What is this</i> [point to 1] <i>card?</i> <i>So, if we count on to the next number, what is this</i> [point to 2] <i>card?</i> <i>And this</i> [point to 3]? <i>And this</i> [point to 4]? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keeping the number hidden, talk through the process of figuring out the number.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Now you all get to be magicians and say what number is on the card. You'll say the magic words: "Abracadabra, the number is..." and then I will turn the card over to check.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Have children use their magic tricks to name the 5 card from the Think-Pair-Share example they just worked through.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>We leave the card face up like this to help us on our next turn!</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Flip over the 5 card so children can see if they are correct. Act surprised and delighted that they knew. Leave the card face up.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>I will point to a card. But don't say what number it is yet!</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Point to the 7 card.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Now, use your magician's tricks to say what number is on this card. Please Think-Pair-Share what the card is and how you know."</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Give children time to Think-Pair-Share the number they think is on the card and why. Without flipping over the card, ask one pair of children to share their answer.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Abracadabra! The number is 7!</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Turn the card over to check if children are correct. Leave the card face up. Note that all cards are left face up after they are guessed.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>How did you know?</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Encourage discussion of how you count forward from the faceup card, emphasizing which numbers "come before," "right after," "in between," and "[number] more or less than."
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If needed, repeat until children understand the steps of the activity.

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Center Time

Time to Play!

■ ***Here are your cards. Now you will take turns being the magician or the pointer who picks out the card! Remember, we're going to leave all our cards face up after we correctly guess the number to help us on our next turn.***

■ Give each pair of children a set of counting cards or number cards. Also provide role cards, and activity step icon cards, if using.

■ ***It's your turn to be the magician first.***
 ■ ***It's your turn to be the pointer who points to the card and flips the card over when we're ready.***

■ Assign one student in each pair to be the magician and one to be the pointer, using the role cards if needed.

■ **To make the EF easier,** have children use the role cards.
 ■ **To make the EF harder,** omit the role cards.

■ ***Let's play! It is time for the pointer to point to a card. Now, the magician can use their math magic!***

■ Lead children through the activity steps with the activity step icon cards (if using) as necessary.
 ■ **To make the math easier,** encourage the child playing the magician to physically touch the cards while counting.
 ■ **To make the math easier,** if children don't correctly identify a facedown card, turn the card over (so they can see the numeral and dots) have them say the number on it with you, then turn it back.
 ■ **To make the EF easier,** have the child who is pointing mark the selected card with a counting chip if the child who is the magician needs help remembering.

■ ***Show me how to use the cards we can already see [point to the flipped cards] to figure out what number is on this card.***

■ **To make the math easier,** if children aren't able count on from a faceup card to figure out the hidden card on their own, point to the flipped cards and help children learn how to use the flipped cards to figure out the hidden number. Use terms such as, "before," "right after," and "in between" to support children's understanding.

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Center Time

■ ***What is another way you can figure out that number?***

■ To make the math harder, ask children another way to figure out the target number and encourage them to count backward from the highest number if the child counted forward, or forward if the child counted backward.

■ ***Now we switch roles and play again!***

■ Make sure children switch roles (and role cards, if using).

Summary of Activity Adaptations

For quick reference, here is a summary of all the available adaptations to make Magician's Tricks easier or harder to accommodate the needs of your students. Whether the adaptation is easier or harder depends on each student's math or executive function skills.

	Make It Easier	Make It Harder
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the counting cards, which have numerals and dots. ■ Encourage the child playing the magician to physically touch the cards while counting. ■ If children don't correctly identify a facedown card, turn the card over, have them say it with you, then turn it back. ■ If children aren't able count on from a faceup card to figure out the hidden card on their own, point to the flipped cards and help children learn how to use the flipped cards to figure out the hidden number. Use terms such as, "before," "right after," and "in between" to support children's understanding. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ For children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the numeral cards, which have numerals only. ■ During set-up only and before beginning the game, scramble and lay down the cards out of order. Ask students to organize the cards in the correct order from 1 to 10. ■ Ask children another way to figure out the target number and encourage them to count backward from the highest number if the child counted forward, or forward if the child counted backward.

Magician's Tricks

Counting from 1

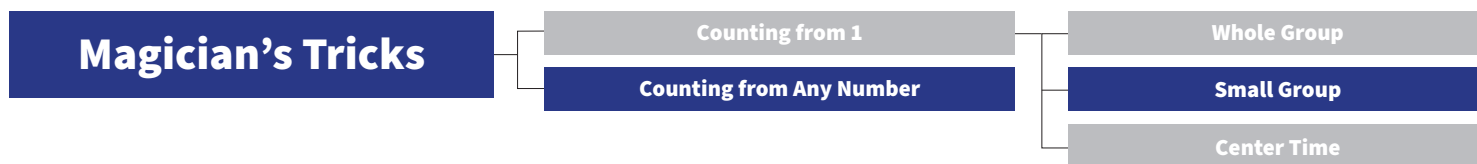
Counting from Any Number

Whole Group

Small Group

Center Time

	Make It Easier	Make It Harder
EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use the Think-Pair-Share mediator cards and the Think-Pair-Share introduction. ■ Use the role cards. ■ Use the activity step icon cards. ■ Have the child who is pointing mark the selected card with a counting chip if the child who is the magician needs help remembering. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Omit the Think-Pair-Share mediator cards. ■ Omit the role cards. ■ Omit the activity step icon cards.
Math & EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use fewer cards (for example, only 1 to 5). ■ Display a second set of counting cards face up (just above the facedown cards) that children can use as a visual cue to identify the cards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Use more cards (for example, up to 10 or 20). ■ If children point while they count, encourage them to be “more magical” and count with their eyes. ■ Put cards in rows of two (for 1 to 10 cards) or of four (for 1 to 20 cards). Explicitly point out the first and last card in each row and guide children to count on or back from these numbers if necessary.



Explore The Executive Function And Math Skills In This Activity

Visit the website for resources to support teaching this activity.

What to Do Next

Did some students need more support or more challenge? Don't forget to try out some of the adaptations provided for Small Group. Continue working in small groups with teacher support until students can comfortably play with minimal teacher guidance. Then have students practice the activity independently in Centers.

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Whole Group

Small Group

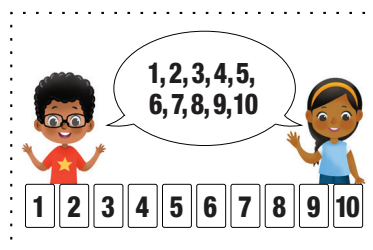
Center Time

Materials

- Counting cards
- Numeral cards
- Magician's Tricks role cards
- Magician's hat, cape or wand (optional)
- Magician's Tricks activity step icon cards

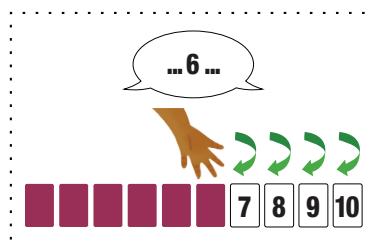
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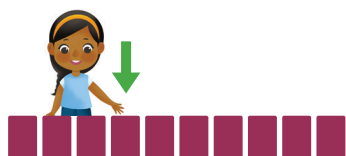
Setup 1

Lay the cards face up from 1 to 10 and count how many there are in all.



Setup 2

One by one, turn each card over to the blank side, saying the number word as you turn it.



Step 1

Child 1 points to a card.



Step 2

Child 2, as the magician, counts to figure out what number is on the card.



Step 3

Child 1 turns over the card to see if Child 2 is correct. (If not, try again!) Leave the card face up.



Step 4

Children switch roles and play again (leaving all faceup cards from the previous turns as they are).

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Whole Group

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Center Time

Teacher's Guide

Instructions for using this activity in independent Center Time.

Review the Activity

■ **Today, the Magician's Tricks game we've been playing together will be at [name] Center!**

- On the day you will be adding Magician's Tricks to Centers, let children know during Whole Group (or whatever time you give your Centers overview for the day) that the activity will be in Centers to play on their own. Ensure that all children have played the activity in Small Groups before introducing it in Centers.
- **To make the math easier**, for children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the counting cards, which have numerals and dots.
- **To make the math and executive function (EF) easier**, use fewer cards (for example, only 1 to 5).
- **To make the math and EF easier**, if children need help remembering to start counting at the far left, use a dry erase marker to draw an arrow pointing to the right on the first card in the sequence.
- **To make the math harder**, for children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the numeral cards, which have numerals only.
- **To make the math and EF harder**, use more cards (for example, up to 10 or 20).

■ **You will have the cards to help you remember how to play and to remind you whether you are the magician or the pointer.**

- If helpful, show the activity materials to help remind children of the activity.

Time to Play!

■ **Let's remind ourselves how to play the game!**

- **To make the EF easier**, re-introduce the activity to children once they are in centers just as you did for Small Group, using the activity step icon cards and the role cards.
- **To make the EF harder**, omit the activity step icon cards and the role cards.

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Whole Group

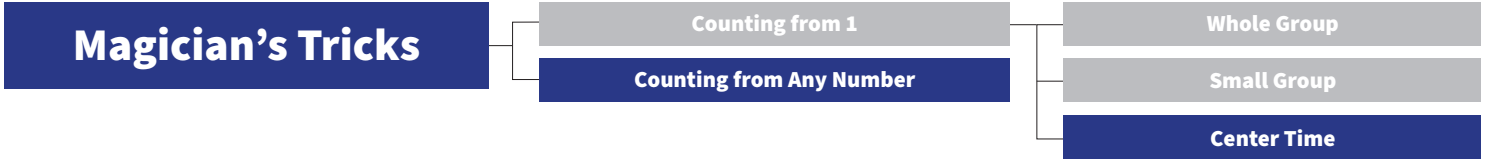
Small Group

Center Time

Summary of Activity Adaptations

For quick reference, here is a summary of all the available adaptations to make Magician's Tricks easier or harder to accommodate the needs of your students. Whether the adaptation is easier or harder depends on each student's math and EF skills.

	Make It Easier	Make It Harder
Math	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the counting cards, which have numerals and dots. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For children still learning the names of numerals or what quantity each numeral refers to, use the numeral cards, which have numerals only.
EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the activity step icon cards. Use the role cards. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Omit the activity step icon cards. Omit the role cards.
Math & EF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use fewer cards (for example, only 1 to 5). If children need help remembering to start counting at the far left, use a dry erase marker (if cards are laminated) to draw an arrow pointing to the right on the first card in the sequence. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use more cards (for example, up to 10 or 20).



Explore The Executive Function And Math Skills In This Activity

Visit the website for resources to support teaching this activity.

What to Do Next

Keep playing this activity in Centers throughout the year. Do some students need more support or more challenge? Try the adaptations provided for Centers.