# LOW SCORE

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Math Concepts Covered:** Fractions, addition **Materials:**Deck of cards **# of Players:**2+ **Grades:**4-6 | **Prepare the deck:**(Include Jokers.)  **Special card values:** Joker = 0 points Ace = 1 point King, Queen, Jack = 1/2 point 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 = their face value |

**OBJECT OF THE GAME:**Get the lowest combined score with 4 cards!

**HOW TO PLAY:**

1. Each player begins with 4 cards, face down. You may not look at your cards yet!
2. Once every player has their cards, each player may look at exactly TWO of their cards. This will be the only chance during the entire game that you can sneak a peek at your cards, so try to remember what they are, and where you put them! You can arrange your cards however you'd like to help you remember better.
3. Once all the players are ready, play begins. The first card is flipped over for everyone to see. It's a queen. That's a good card, because it's worth 1/2 point, which is very low!
4. Emily is the first player. She has a 5 and a 10. The 5 is okay, but the 10 is the worst card possible, so she'll have to get rid of that ASAP! Now she needs to make a decision. Does she want to take the queen (1/2 point) and swap it with one of her cards, or does she want to take a chance on the draw pile? It's not a very hard choice since the queen is one of the best cards, and she picks up the queen and swaps it out with her 10, which is the worst possible card in this game. Now she has to remember that her two cards are a 5 and a queen, and she needs to remember where she put them!
5. Eric is next, and he can now choose between Emily's discarded card (the 10) or take a chance on the draw pile. Again, it's an easy choice. Since 10 is the worst card possible in this game, he goes for the draw pile. He looks at it secretly, and then dejectedly drops it into the discard pile-- it's a 9, which is also a bad card. His hand remains the same.
6. Daniel is next. He is feeling pretty good, because the two cards he looked at were low-- an ace and a king! He's going to keep those cards no matter what. He also decides to pick up a surprise card from the draw pile. It's a 2. *That's not bad*, he thinks to himself, and he selects one of his two unseen cards to swap out. He doesn't know what the card is, and he's hoping it's a high card that he's getting rid of! Everyone watches to see what it is: he flips it over, and it's a JOKER (0 points)! *Noooooooo!!!*he thinks to himself, *That was the best card!! Nooooo!!* However, that's the risk he took, and he lost out on it this time. Too bad.
7. Next to him, Kim is thinking, *Yessss!!!!!*because now she gets to take his discarded Joker! She swiftly picks it up and exchanges it with the 4 that she had already looked at.
8. It's Emily's turn again. She could choose the 4 that Kim discarded, or take a chance on the draw pile. The 4 isn't bad, but curiosity gets the best of her and she picks the draw pile. It's a 3. Not bad! She decides to swap it with one of her unseen cards. She takes a deep breath and picks one up, flips it over and... it's a 6! Not a bad trade. She exchanges her 6 for the 3, and now it's Eric's turn again.
9. The game continues in this way until someone feels that they have the lowest score, at which point they announce, "LOW SCORE!" The game immediately stops and all the players flip over their cards and add up their total scores.
10. If the player who said LOW SCORE is the lowest, she wins and doesn't have to add anything to her accumulative game total. Scoring is as follows:
    * If the player who said "LOW SCORE" **is** the lowest, she adds 0 points to her game total.
    * If the player who said "LOW SCORE" **is not** the lowest (either another player beats her score or ties with her), she gets the point total in her hand *AND additional 10-point penalty to her score.* That’s right. You have to think carefully before calling it!
    * All other players add up the points in their hand and add that to their total score.
11. If no one calls "Low score," then the hand ends when the cards run out. At this point, all the players just get their totals and there is no bonus or penalty. It's best if all players record every other players' score so they can get more math practice in!
12. After five rounds, the winner is the one with the lowest cumulative score!

**FAQ:**

Q: If I look at my unknown card and don't want to trade it anymore (like Daniel in step #6), do I still have to?  
*A: Yes, once you've looked you're committed. It's the chance you're taking!*

Q: When I say LOW SCORE, does everyone get one more turn before showing cards?  
*A: No. You can declare "Low score!" at any point in the game and the round ends there.*

Q: Once the game begins, can I move my cards around?  
*A: No. You just have to remember what is where. Memory. Good luck!*

Q: Can I say "Low Score" in the middle of someone's turn?  
*A: Well that's not nice! Let him/her finish his/her turn and then call it out.*

**Low Score**card values

Joker = 0 points  
Ace = 1 point  
King, Queen, Jack = 1/2 point  
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 = their face value

Challenge version:

Joker = 0 points  
Ace = 1 point  
Jack = 1/4 point

Queen = 1/3 point

King = 1/2 point  
2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10 = their face value