Educating Young Men

Language Arts/Mathematics

Grades 7 Resource- Unit 1
Our philosophy is built upon research that indicates that boys and girls learn differently. We recognize that boys have varied academic, social, and emotional needs. We will address those needs through instruction that is tailored to the male learner and delivered in an environment that promotes academic success while instilling a strong culture of brotherhood and camaraderie.
The goal of educators is to provide equitable learning opportunities for all students in the classroom. Research indicates that boys and girls develop literacy skills differently; resulting in disparate academic outcomes. As a result, providing equitable access to positive classroom experiences is an issue that has increased in urgency.

Recent and current research report consistent findings:

- Gender is a significant factor in both reading materials and reading achievement for boys and girls.
- On the US National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) boys have scored significantly lower than girls in reading at all grade levels every year since 1992 (the first year NAEP scores were available).
- Boys are more likely than girls to be placed in special education programs.
- Boys are less likely than girls to go to college.
- Dropout rates are higher for boys than for girls.

What causes this achievement gap?

Some researchers argue that the gender gap originates in biological, developmental, or environmental differences between boys and girls. Offering yet another perspective, sources such as ASCD and Psychology Today propose that the gap may be due to the way literacy is taught; suggesting that educational strategies that are more mindful of the way male brains develop would help close the achievement gap.

What can educators do?

The encouraging news is that none of the findings above are irreversible. Recent studies focused on how boys learn suggest that if their academic needs are properly addressed, boys can obtain academic success equal to their female counterparts. A key component in their academic success lies in ensuring that boys are provided with classroom experiences that address their interests, needs, and learning styles.

Extracted from *Me Read? No Way!* Copyright Ontario Education
Teaching Young Men

Boy Smarts

Boys are the masters of minimalism and the practitioners of “just—in-time” management. Asked to do almost any task, their mediate response is “later”. If they are asked to write a 50-word essay, they will count the words, and if they write 51 words most of them will think they have overdone it. If you have predominantly boys in your class, there are a number of things that you can do to improve behavior and learning. These methods are likely to work with the majority of boys.

Respect

Boys are constantly checking to see if you respect them. They respond well to people who have expectations of them and respect them as capable of meeting those goals. As the TV character Ali G. would say, “respect!” If a boy has a sense that you respect him, he will walk over coals for you. Never ask a boy who is a poor reader to read out loud in front of his peers. He will be humiliated and will never do anything for you ever again.

Use clear signals about who is in charge

Boys need boundaries. They need to know who is in charge here. They respond to teachers who are fair, funny and respect their antics of view, and they generally do better with teacher-led learning. Open spaced learning areas where no one clearly owns the ace can be quite anxiety provoking for boys, and that anxiety converts into expressions of low motivation and clowning type behaviors.

Use a physical signal when you want silence

Boys need more signals than girls partly because they are less tuned into facial cues. Boys are more able to screen out white noise. Teachers requesting quiet equals white noise!) Therefore, deliver instructions in silence. Use visual cues, raising hand, turning lights off and on, and moving to a particular part of the room. Never, ever yell.

Fewer rules and fewer words is better

Use a couple (no more than three) clear rules that you apply fairly and consistently. Base your classroom management on the idea “I won’t let this happen to you, and I won’t let you do it to anyone else”. During instruction, use a backup visual that you can int to for boys who have difficulty listening.

Value them and they will be heroes

Boys are tuned into hierarchies. This means the predominant values of a classroom, family or school will play a powerful role in determining their actions. Have a couple of core values (e.g. compassion, generosity, being part of a team). Live by them and insist on them. Help boys to learn that they can be heroes and victorious but that winning doesn’t mean someone else has to lose.

Use knowledge from computer games as an inspiration for learning

Page
Boys’ attraction to competition will override almost any disadvantage or loss of motivation. They generally love competitive games, especially when there is not an ultimate winner. Quick fire quizzes with several rounds are a successful way of engaging boys. Computer game designers have cleverly used the principles of engagement to captivate boys:

- Make success challenging but attainable by breaking it down into stages.
- Make success more likely than failure, the most motivating games have players succeed about 80% of the time, initially, before building up to 100% before moving to the next level.
- Give people the opportunity to try again.
- Try to create a sense of moratorium where boys and girls can try to out new activities in a setting where there are no consequences.
- Use lots of movement.

Boys’ attention to less competitive, sensitive boys. Assisting them to attain personal bests can be useful. Give boys more time to answer and to assemble the words and give them a chance to phone a friend (the friend cannot answer the question but can make helpful suggestions).

**ove regularly**

Teaching boys is like being a cross between a matador and a traffic cop. Keep on the move and mingle with the crowd. Boys see things best in motion. Use visuals and animations as often as you can. As James (2009) notes, boys love targeting. If you have ever watched boys place rubbish into bins you will see that they don’t place it, they take a shot. For this reason, movement and aiming to achieve a set target are powerful strategies with boys.

**ontrol where they sit**

Lever boys who do not appear to be paying attention to the front. Proactively shift the seating of boys who seem unsettled or distracted. They will often be playing up to impress their local audience. Boys need quiet times in order to reflect and re-energize, yet they need quiet times to think, read and at times, quietly chat with others.

**ow about anger**

anger and shame can stop boys’ learning, and once boys are angry, it is harder for them to get over it. If they feel you are going to shame them in front of their peers, they will fight you tooth and nail. Most boys will do silly, self-defeating things rather than lose the respect of their peers. Take your sail out of their winds. Deal with issues at a time of your choosing not when the boy wants to deal with it. There are also decision-making differences between girls and boys when involved in dispute resolution. Girls are often able to see the effect of their actions on other students, so asking “how do you think she felt?” type questions may pay off.
Contrast boys may be less cued into other students’ emotions and a more successful strategy may be reinforcing a rule such as, “I wouldn’t let him do that to you, and I’m not going to let you do it to him”.

**Boys are loyal and funny**
Boys love the inside word; the cheat sheet and they love to score. Giving them hints suggestions and a way to succeed builds their loyalty to you. Boys buy popularity through achievement, jokes and skills. Humor is an essential quality.

**Boys generally learn through doing- thinking- talking**
Boys like movement and are generally more active than girls. They are also more concerned with performance. While some boys will be inherently interested in the material, almost all boys engage when there is a competitive spirit. The more that you mimic a game show format the more boys will be engaged.

**Give them a whiff of success**
Most men and boys waste an incredible amount of time completing tasks that don’t need to be done and avoiding tasks that don’t need to be avoided. Help them to structure tasks and to improve on early attempts so that they gain mastery and success. Once a boy believes he can be successful, he’ll almost always live up to it.

Extracted from the Brain Based Learning Manual Copyright Andrew Fuller
Teaching Young Men
Model of a Boy-Friendly Curriculum

**Boys Need Curriculum That Provides**

- "Safe" classes that foster discussion
- Tasks that are open-ended and require interchange with others
- Subjects that mandate exploration of "the self"
- Teachers who "facilitate"
- Subjects that accept alternative truths

**Boys Need Curriculum That Provides**

- A wide variation of courses and activities
- Teachers with "passion"
- "Disciplined freedom"
- Avenues to be impulsive
- Tasks that are "relevant" - can be explored through boys' culture
- Problem-based learning, ("doing it")
- Hands-on activities with practical solutions

**Boys Need Curriculum That Provides**

- Small class sizes
- Pedagogy that counters fear of ridicule or embarrassment
- Skills to enable expression
- A vocabulary to discuss masculinity
- A mandate to explore individuality
- Opportunity to engage "a passion"
- Opportunity to be a risk-taker
- A level playing field between types of masculinities

**Boys Need Curriculum That Provides**

- Teachers skilled a facilitating boys' exchange of ideas.
- A range of tools to express ideas
- A range of outcomes to set tasks
- Criticism skills
- A mandate for the expression and an exchange of ideas
- Subjects with "non-binary" epistemologies
- Subjects that are non-competitive and allow access

Adapted from Imms, 2003
Teaching Young Men

COURAGEOUS CONVERSATIONS

According to the Ontario Ministry of Education, boys respond well to real-world themes that offer them authentic learning experiences, that is, experiences they have had or could have in their own lives. Exploring real-world themes typically involves a combination of sources and activities. Real-world themes have a clear focus on one or more meaningful, key concepts and authentic learning experiences that involve both direct instruction and students’ discovery of things on their own.

In addition to authentic real-world experiences, students need opportunities to engage in courageous conversations about race and discrimination. This work is critical for students and teachers to engage in because outside school experiences are quite inconsistent with the expectations that are inside of school. It is the school’s responsibility to take on the onus of understanding what students experience outside of school.

For example, if students read particular kinds of books outside of school, and if they engage in social media outside of school, teachers must figure out how to utilize that as an anchor for what happens inside of school. It is the teacher’s responsibility to develop lenses to understand what’s happening with the student outside of school so that he or she can be responsive to that reality. Teachers and students engage in courageous conversations within the classroom, it is imperative that all members are aware of the Agreements.

Four Agreements of Courageous Conversations:

**Stay engaged:** Staying engaged means “remaining morally, emotionally, intellectually, and socially involved in the dialogue”

**Experience discomfort:** This norm acknowledges that discomfort is inevitable, especially, in dialogue about race, and participants make a commitment to bring issues into the open.

**Speak your truth:** This means being open about thoughts and feelings and not just saying what you think others want to hear.

**Expect and accept non-closure:** This agreement asks participants to “hang out in uncertainty” and not rush to quick solutions, especially in relation to racial understanding, which requires ongoing dialogue (pp.58-65).
Unit 1
**Language Arts**  
**Grade 7**

**Theory:** Boys thrive on the visual language of television, cartoons, and video games. Similarly, boys respond well when presented with opportunities to present their ideas and written work using visual forms. Research suggests that boys respond positively to images because boys are more oriented to visual/special learning (Ontario Education, 2004)

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| SLSA.R1.  | Go to the Net  
Use technology to get boys interested in literacy while capitalizing on their preoccupation with computers.  
Special Education Boys engage with real world experiences. Explain to the students, Esperanza Rising is actually Pam Munoz-Ryan’s account of her grandmother’s move from Mexico to the U.S. It is fiction because it is not the exact truth, but Munoz-Ryan’s thoughts.  
| Computer, citing textual evidence graphic organizers (Prove it!)  
Novel: Esperanza Rising  
Audio of Esperanza Rising  
Reading Response Interactive Journal  
Pages printed from the book to find text evidence  
Choose one site on the Internet for students. Give the students the places to go to find information.  
Students will identify two real world issues on their topic. | Find sights on the Internet, which will help your students understand real world issues connected to Esperanza Rising such as:  
1. Class systems  
2. Immigration  
3. Segregation  
*choose one site on the Internet:* Newsela  
**www.educationworld.com**  
**http://www.cetel.org/**  
Then have classmates debate current issues related to these topics. Consider questions such as:  
1. Do any elements of a class system exist in the United States today.
• Students will be paired with other members of the class to share their topics and evidence.
• Prepare Special Education students to participate in debates by supplying them with graphic organizers to organize points about topics.

2. How are the lives of today’s immigrants similar and different from the experiences of immigrants in Esperanza Ri? Be sure to have students make real-world connections by addressing the impact these topics have on our society.

During discussion, send students back to the text/video for more evidence by prompting them to expand on a classmate’s idea or deepen the discussion. Prompt students by saying, “I heard this person say something that contradicts …” or “The students all said something similar … does anyone have a different idea?”

Language Arts
Some boys need to talk through their ideas before they can commit their ideas to paper. Failure to provide time for this social component, for the opportunity to verbalize ideas before reading or writing about them, can create a problem for some boys. (Ontario Education, 2004)

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<tr>
<td>JSLSA.R3:</td>
<td>Let Them Talk</td>
<td>Novel: <em>Esperanza Rising</em>, excerpts, paired text</td>
<td>Allow students to engage in shared reading, group work, and Literature circles when appropriate.</td>
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<td>Appeal to boys’ need for social interaction, while allowing them the opportunity to talk through their ideas before committing the idea to paper.</td>
<td>Soliciting a Response teacher moves: What do you think? We haven’t heard from you yet. Do you agree? What answer did you get?</td>
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<td>Snowball Discussion:</td>
<td>Discussion stems:</td>
<td>Examples include: Have students engaged in shared reading and discussion to analyze why the actions and dialogue reveal about the character and their relationships.</td>
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<td>Students begin in pairs, responding to a discussion question only with a single partner. After each person has had a chance to share their ideas, the pair joins another pair, creating a group of four. Pairs share their ideas with the pair they just joined. Next, groups of four join together to form groups of eight, and so on, until the whole class is</td>
<td>I believe ___ because ___. I agree with _____ because ___. I disagree with _____ because ___. I respectfully agree/disagree with what _____ said because ___. I’m confused. What did you mean when you said ____?</td>
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<td>Although the main character is Esperanza, your students may find more interest in studying the character Miguel and his relationships and interactions with Esperanza and how he evolves over the course of the novel.</td>
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joined up in one large discussion

Special Education Partner should be with Special Education teacher to guide the discussion before moving to the next group

On page _____, it says ____________, so I think _______.
I understood that you said _______.
May I point out _____?
I would like to add _______.
Do you mind explaining _______?
Could you please tell me more about _______?

Students can choose two stems

- After a close read of excerpts from chapter 1, students can work in groups to engage in discussion to answer the essential question:
  - “How does the difference in social class affect Miguel and Esperanza’s relationship?”
  - “In what way does Miguel demonstrate ambition and optimism?”
  - Character study of Miguel: List his traits, “he is patient, strong and kind.” Why is he different than Esperanza? How does this change their relationship?
  - What happens to Esperanza which allows Miguel to talk to her differently?
**Theory:** The arts, music, drama, art and design can be used to explore ideas, convey meaning and extend understanding. For boys, means of making meaning visible and increasing their understanding and enjoyment of what they read. Drama is a powerful motivating tool for learning, developing children’s understanding of themselves and the world as well as their communication skills.

Northern Ireland Education & Library Boards, (n.d.).

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| SLSA.R2. | • Embrace the Arts  
          • Allow students to choose an expression of the arts to depict a scene from the book.  
          • Create a movie  
          • Create a rap song  
          • Interview a character  
          • Create an emoji to represent a character | • Esperanza Rising, Newsela paired text:  
Faster Release for Immigrants Who Cross US Border Illegally  
Tougher Measures Keep Children from US Border Crossings  
Child Workers are Getting Sick While Harvesting Tobacco on US Farms.  
IPads | The following are some of the ways in which games and role play can enhance pupil’s understanding of stories, novels and other texts.  
• Role playing: Pupils take on the roles of characters in a text.  
• Dramatic play: Pupils use a situation from a text as a springboard for creating their own story or drama.  
• Guided imagery: Pupils are asked to imagine scenes and subsequently write about or visually depict them.  
• Snapshot drama: Pupils are asked to depict a moment |
from the text as a “freeze frame”, particularly as a way of describing characters’ expressions, gestures at that moment.

- Analogy drama: Pupils enact a story from their lives that parallels a situation in a text.

- “To tell the truth” game in the television show of the same name, a few pupils each of whom is depicting the same character from text, are grilled by a panel that ultimately determines which pupil has most convincingly “become” character.

- Correspondence: Pupils write letters, diary entries, and advertisements in the roles of various story characters.

- Missing-scene scripts: Pupils write scripts for scenes that, while suggested in a text, were not explicitly described.

- Newscast: Pupils produce a news broadcast based on
Consider a performance task where your students produce newscasts based on characters and events in Esperanza Rising. News coverage can focus on:

1. The Ranch Fire
2. Valley Fever caused by dust storms
3. Immigrants go on strike

Special Education Students should be encouraged to be part of the newscast either by filming or being interviewed.

Film a scene from Esperanza Rising.
Mathematics  
Grade 7

**Theory:** Competitive learning includes classroom debates, content-related games, and goal-oriented activities; these are often essential for boy-learning and highly useful for the life success of girls, too. Games give students opportunities to explore fundamental concepts and strategies. Engaging mathematical games can also encourage students to explore important mathematical concepts. Further, they afford opportunities for students to deepen their mathematical understanding and reasoning. Teachers should provide repeated opportunities for students to play games, then let the mathematical ideas emerge as students notice new patterns, relationships, and strategies.

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| **LO #1:** | • Gamify lessons: appeal to the gaming culture by writing instructions for games and offering students the opportunity to respectfully compete with each other. | • Zip, Zilch, Zero: 52-Card Deck  
• Battleship game for quadrants  
• Intro to rational and irrational numbers Khan Academy  
• Definition of Rational Numbers Flexiguru YouTube | Zip, Zilch, Zero Game:  
• Setup: The game is for 3-4 players. Use a standard 52-card deck. Choose a dealer by drawing for the high card. Shuffle the deck, and deal 7 cards to each player. With the remaining cards, form a draw pile in the middle of the table. Place the top card face up next to the draw pile to form a discard pile. |
This topic is extremely confusing to students with disabilities. Manipulatives and visuals are highly effective in teaching this concept. Directionality is crucial. One way to introduce the topic is by visuals of above and below sea level. The visual is clear and understandable. If something is under the water, it is negative, and the sea level is zero. Anything above is positive. Using the colors from this diagram, switch to a number line. (Vertical and horizontal placement also prepares students for ordered pairs in quadrants.)

a.) Draw a soccer field on a large mat on the floor. In the center mark it as zero. One side is positive, one side is negative. Give students cut outs of soccer players. Give them directionality cues to move their players in both directions. Have students explain how many lines they crossed. Compare and

- Gameplay: Each turn, a player must follow this sequence.
- Draw one card, either from the top of the draw pile or the top of the discard pile. A player may choose to draw more than the top card from the discard pile but must take all the cards on top and must play that bottom card in a zip during that turn.
- Play any zips. (See “Zip below.”)
- Discard one card, adding (face up) to the top of the discard pile. The card should be placed so that the cards below can still be seen. Previous discards are still available for play.
- If a player chooses to draw the top card on the discard pile in step 1, that card may not be discarded during the same turn in step 3.
- Zips: A zip consists of at least two cards from a
Interpret sums of rational numbers by describing real-world contexts.

b. substitute $p + q$ for the players.

Player’s hand that sum to
Black cards count as positive numbers and red cards count as negative numbers. Aces are worth one point, number cards worth face value, jacks worth 11, queens are worth 12, and kings are worth 1.

Example 1: A red 6 and a black 6
Example 2: A black king, red 2, a red 3, and a red 4

- Going Out: A player goes out when the last card in his or her hand is played as a discard.
- Scoring: When a player goes out, the hand is scored. Players subtract the absolute value of any cards remaining in their hands from the absolute value of cards they played in zip.
**Theory:** Competitive learning includes classroom debates, content-related games, and goal-oriented activities; these are often essential for boy-learning and highly useful for the life success of girls, too. Games give students opportunities to explore fundamental concepts and strategies. Engaging mathematical games can also encourage students to explore important mathematical concepts. Further, they afford opportunities for students to deepen their mathematical understanding and reasoning. Teachers should provide repeated opportunities for students to play games, then let the mathematical ideas emerge as students notice new patterns, relationships, and strategies.

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<td>LO #2:</td>
<td>Gamify lessons: appeal to the gaming culture by writing instructions for games and offering students the opportunity to respectfully compete with each other.</td>
<td>Football Integer Game: Computer, Link: <a href="https://www.mathgoodies.com/games/integer_game">https://www.mathgoodies.com/games/integer_game</a>, Football Integer Worksheet Zip, Zilch, Zero</td>
<td>Football Integer Game: The Interactive Football game presents 15 problems where a football player gains or loses yardage. The student must add a positive and negative integer accordingly and click the appropriate number on a number line, representing the yard that the football player lands on. For each problem in the interactive Integer Football game, the student writes the number sentence, creates a visual model to show work,</td>
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<td>NS.L: 7, NS.A.1c, 1d</td>
<td>Special Education Strategies: Frontload the vocabulary Set up an interactive notebook where students practice each term and supply examples.</td>
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<td>apply and extend previous understandings of addition and subtraction to add and subtract</td>
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- Rational numbers; represent addition and subtraction on a horizontal or vertical number line.
- Understand subtraction of rational numbers as adding the additive inverse, 
  \( p - q = p + (-q) \). Show that the distance between two rational numbers on the number line is the absolute value of their difference and apply this principle in real-world contexts.
- Apply properties of operations as strategies to add and subtract rational numbers.
- Create examples and describe situations in which opposite quantities combine to make one use a color-coded number line to understand the jumps in negative is equal to the jumps in positive...apply this concept to real-world context.

writes the solution in the table on the Football Integer Worksheet.

Game is for 3-4 players

Use a standard deck of cards.

Deal 7 cards to each player. Remaining cards form a “draw pile. Place the top card face up.

Each turn, a player must:

1. Draw one card Either from the draw or discard pile)
2. 2. Play any “Zips” (below)
3. 3. Discard one card, adding it face up to the top of the discard pile. (The card should be placed so the cards below are still visible)

A Zip consists of at least two cards from the player’s hand that sum to zero (Black cards count as positive, red cards negative) Aces are worth one point, number cards are worth face value; jacks are worth 10, and queens are worth 12, ki...
are worth 13.
Example 1: A red 6 and a black 6
Example 2: A black king, a red 2, a red 3, and a red 8
A player goes out when the card in his/her hand is scored.
Players subtract the absolute value from their hands.
Competitive learning includes classroom debates, content-related games, and goal-oriented activities; these are often essential for boy-learning and highly useful for the life success of girls, too. Games give students opportunities to explore fundamental concepts and strategies. Engaging mathematical games can also encourage students to explore important mathematical concepts. Further, they afford opportunities for students to deepen their mathematical understanding and reasoning. Teachers should provide repeated opportunities for students to play games, then let the mathematical ideas emerge as students notice new patterns, relationships, and strategies.

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<td>LO #6:</td>
<td><strong>Gamify lessons:</strong> appeal to the gaming culture by writing instructions for games and offering students the opportunity to respectfully compete with each other.</td>
<td>The Integer Game: Integer Cards, Understanding Multiplying Integers Worksheet</td>
<td><strong>The Integer Game:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SLO/NJSLA: 7 NS.A.2c</td>
<td>Special Education students should be included in every game offered in the Special classroom. To allow students an understanding of the games, Special Education teachers need to review the prerequisite skills necessary for playing games.</td>
<td>Students first try to reach a score of zero by obtaining the same number of positive points as negative points.</td>
<td>The Integer Game is designed for 2 to 4 players. Students can play the game with a learning partner or with a cooperative learning group of students. Each player begins the game with a score of zero. The object of the game is to return to a score of zero by picking up and discarding integer cards. The number of cards dealt to each player can be adjusted based on students’ familiarity with an operation and/or to different</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Apply properties of operations as strategies to multiply and divide rational numbers.

**JSLA: 7. NS.A.3**

Solve real-world and mathematical problems involving the four operations with rational numbers.

- Create examples and describe situations in which opposite quantities combine to make zero.
- Frontload vocabulary
- Use an interactive notebook to illustrate examples of absolute value
- Use a color-coded number line to demonstrate the distance between two rational numbers on the number line is the absolute value of their difference

for varying student ability levels. Below are the basic rules:

1. A student serves as the dealer (as well as a player) and provides each player with 4 cards.
2. The dealer turns one more card face up on the playing surface, starting a discard pile. The remaining cards become the draw pile.
3. The player to the dealer’s left begins play. On his or her turn, a player may select the top card from either the draw pile or the discard pile. The player must keep this card and discard another card from their hand to the discard pile.
4. A player’s goal is to have their hand’s total card value stay as close to zero as possible. So, for each turn, a player must determine how the card drawn affects their hand’s total card value, by counting up or down accordingly. Also, a player must decide which card to...
discard, so as to keep the total value of their hand as close to zero as possible. (See Scaffolded Ideas on page 15.)

5. Play continues with the next player, in the same manner, until all players have picked and discarded a card four times.

6. The player(s) with a score of zero (or the closest to zero, as in Lesson 2) wins the round.

Special Education teachers should pull out the cards that are the additive inverse or by obtaining combinations that total absolute value.

See game Zip, Zilch, Zero above.
References
(i.e. scholarly journals)