

MATHEMATICS GAMES

Mahesh Sharma

The following is a partial list of commercial games that help develop prerequisite mathematics skills. The appropriate pre-requisite skills have been identified with them:

- **SIMON** or **MINI WIZARD** (sequencing, following multi-step directions, visual and auditory memory)
- **OTHELLO** (pattern recognition, spatial orientation, visual clustering, focus on more than one aspect, variable or concept at a time)
- **SCORE FOUR** and **CONNECT FOUR** (pattern recognition, spatial orientation, visual clustering, geometrical patterns)
- **CONNECT FOUR** (pattern recognition)
- **QUBIC** (pattern recognition, spatial orientation, visualization, geometrical patterns)
- **KRYPTO** (number sense, basic arithmetical facts)
- **GO MUKO** (pattern recognition, spatial organization)
- **KALAH** (counting, estimation, visual clustering)
- **MASTER MIND** (sequencing, logical deduction, pattern recognition)
- **FOUR SIGHT** (spatial orientation, pattern recognition, logical deduction)
- **BLACK-BOX** (logical deduction)
- **RECKON** (number facts, estimation, basic operations)
- **CARD GAMES** (visual clustering, pattern recognition, number facts)
- **HEX** (pattern recognition)
- **BRITISH SQUARES** (spatial orientation)
- **STRATEGO** (spatial orientation, logical deduction, graphing)
- **NUMBER SAFARI** (number facts, a paper/pencil game available from CT/LM)
- **PINBALL WIZARD** (number facts -- paper/pencil game)
- **IN ONE EAR AND OUT THE OTHER** (number facts -- paper/pencil game)

Many of the games are highly motivational and do break a sometimes monotonous routine, but should not simply be used to occupy children's time. Games should be used for a purpose. All activities, games, software, or equipment must be teacher/parent directed and goal oriented. The involvement of the teacher/parent is essential for success and progress. The key to wise use of materials is to first determine what the child needs and then select the appropriate materials. The practice of plugging all children into a single game assumes that there are no individual differences among children, parents, or teachers.