

# 4.5 The Card Flow Game

*This activity introduces structured note-taking skills. You will read off the names of playing cards in the same way a debater might read evidence in a debate round, and the students will compete with one another to record the cards accurately. This short activity can be a useful warm-up for the beginning of your class.*

## Time Allotment

This activity can be used in short, five to ten minute regular chunks of time. The first time you introduce the activity, however, it will take 20-30 minutes for students to get the hang of it.

## Objectives

By the end of this activity, students will:

- develop skill recording information in a structured, usable form.
- develop familiarity with the structure of line-by-line argumentation.

## Materials and Preparation

- A deck of standard playing cards
- A table large enough for you to spread the cards out in flowing order

## Method

Each student should begin with a piece of paper for a flow sheet. Students should divide their flow into seven columns as if they were preparing to flow speeches in a debate round. Alternately, if you have a limited amount of time or a less experienced group, you may want them to simply divide the paper into three to five columns.

Once students have their flow sheets ready, begin reading out the playing cards. Treat each card as if it is an individual argument in a debate speech. For example, you might call out:

- 1** First is the Ace of Hearts.
- 2** Second is the Queen of Spades.
- 3** Third is the Ten of Clubs”, etc.

Read off 4-5 cards for the first “speech”, and then deliver a second “speech” that responds to the first. For example:

- 1** Off the number 1, The Ace of Hearts:
  - 1a** My first response is the Three of Clubs.
  - 1b** My second response is the Jack of Spades.
- 2** Off the number 2..., etc.



You should deliver 3-4 of these “speeches” for students to flow. Each speech should directly respond to each “argument” in the speech before it in the same order.

As you read, lay the cards out on the table in the order that you read them, placing “responses” next to the original card, so students can check their flows later. Students should write down both the suit and the number of the card, using abbreviations and symbols as needed.

Have volunteers read their flows aloud at the end of the activity to check for accuracy. Or, ask the class (or individual students) specific questions about their flows. For instance, you might ask, “what did the 2AC say in response to the 1NC number six? What about the number three?” Collect the flows at the end of the activity and check them.

**Variation:**

Read (or have a volunteer read) a “speech” that contains numbered pieces of evidence interspersed with playing card titles. Have the class flow, being certain to record every “argument” whether it is a playing card or a piece of evidence. This activity forces students to listen for the main idea of the evidence in addition to catching all of the playing card titles.