Examples of ways to figure out products (faster than skip counting, but without having all of the multiplication facts memorized. The strategies here assume that children are good at doubling, multiplying by 5 and multiplying by 10):

Think about (this file shows ways to do) 4 × 6 and 3 × 8 and 7 × 9:

4 × 6:

Double twice: Think 4 sets of 6: 2 sets of 6 is 12…. so 4 sets of 6 is 2 sets of 12….which is 24.

4x6=2x2x6=2x12=24

6=5+1 (distributive law): Think 6 sets of 4. 6 sets of 4 is 5 sets of 4 and one more 4. 5x4=20, and 4 more is 24

6x4=(5+1)x4=5x4+1x4=20+4=24

6 = 2+2+2: 2x4=8. then four 4’s = two 8’s=16. Six 4’s = Three 8’s = 16+8=24

6x4=(2+2+2)x4=2x4+2x4+2x4=8+8+8=16+8=24

3 × 8:

3=2+1: Three 8’s is two 8’s and one more 8. 2x8=16, and add 8 more = 24.

(2+1)x8=2x8+1x8=16+8=24

8=2x2x2: Two 3’s = 6. Four 3’s = two 6’s = 12. Eight 3’s = double four 3’s = 2x12=24.

8x3=2x2x2x3=2x2x6=2x12=24

8=5+3 (good if you know 3x3): eight 3’s=five 3’s + three 3’s. 5x3=15 and 3x3=9 so 8x3=15+9=24.

 7 × 9:

7=5+2: Seven 9’s = five 9’s + two 9’s = 45+18=63

(5+2)x9=5x9+2x9=45+18=63

9=10-1: nine 7’s = ten 7’s – one 7 = 70-7=63

9x7=(10-1)x7=10x7-1x7=70-7=63

Nine’s pattern: the tens digit of 9x7 will be 7-1=6. The tens and ones digits will add up to 9: 6+?=9. ?=3. So the product is 63.