Home Activity
The Electric Company: The Power of Zero

What's The Point
Kids learn about place value while playing a fun card game.

Related Episode:
Revenge of the Zeros – Danny and Annie are planning to ruin Paul the Gorilla's party by using the power of zero to change the amount of supplies that have been ordered! Now Hector and the rest of the Electric Company have to check every order to make sure they have the correct amount.

This Activity Will Help Your Child
- Understand the concept of "zero" and how it can affect other numbers

Book Suggestions
- A Place for Zero
  by Angeline Sparagna Lopresti
- Sir Cumference and All the King's Tens
  by Cindy Neuschwander

Supplies
- Deck of playing cards
- Paper
- Pen or pencil

How Do I Do It?
1. Pull out all of the number cards and aces of one color (e.g., pull out the A, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, and 10 cards with hearts and diamonds on them). Make a new deck with these cards.
2. On the top of a piece of paper write your name on one side and your child's name on the other.
3. Tell your child that you are going to play a game that is all about the power of zero. "One zero changes two to twenty. Another zero changes twenty to two-hundred. We are going to use that power in a card game!"
4. Ask your child to start the game by picking a card from the new deck you just created. Write the number of the card on the piece of paper under your child's name. Then you pick a card and write the number under your name. Continue taking turns picking cards, and adding up the numbers as you go.
5. When someone draws an ace say: "These cards give us the power of zero. From now on you get to add a zero to the end of every card you draw from the deck. If you draw a two it becomes a twenty!" If a person gets both aces he or she gets to add two zeros on the end of the numbers drawn from the deck.
6. Keep playing until you are out of cards. Once you are out of cards, add up the amount under each person's name. The person with the largest amount wins!

Take It Further
To help you remember how to play the game, draw a picture! Encourage your child to make a sign that has a picture of an Ace and the word "zero". Hang the picture up and let the word and picture work together to help you understand how to play. Ask your child to write a 1 followed by 100 zeros. What number is that? It's called a googol! Your child can have fun asking other members of the family if they know what a googol is!