Trading Places

Create the largest numbers possible in this competitive math game. Use playing cards to fill a place value mat. Choose where each number should go as carefully as you can. If you create a number larger than the other players, you'll win!

Use this fun activity to introduce the value of decimals. Talk through the differences in value between the tenths place and the hundredths place. If you have difficulty at first, try to think of the numbers after the decimal as "cents" in order to assess their value more easily.

What You Need:

- Deck of playing cards (Download here)
- 1 place value mat per player (Download here)
- Paper and pencil (for recording scores)

What You Do:

1. Remove all tens and face cards from the deck. If you have jokers, keep them and count them as zeros. Shuffle the remaining deck.
2. Deal each player 5 cards, face down.
3. At the signal, "Go," players turn over their cards and make the largest or smallest possible number using their cards.
4. When players are finished, the player with the largest number wins 1 point. If numbers are equal, both players win a point.
5. The player with the highest score after 5 rounds wins.

Variations:

- Try to create the lowest possible number instead.
- Change the number of cards that are dealt. Add or subtract spaces from your place value chart.
- Change the values on the place value chart. Add "thousandths" or smaller for a fifth grader. Remove spaces after the decimal for a younger player.

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