

We're going to talk about Arrow Cards. Arrow Cards are a great resource for helping children to understand place value. You can explain to children how place value works. For example in this number four thousand two hundred and eighty-seven, I put this together using four cards, one card that represents four thousand, one that represents two hundred, one that is eighty and the card for seven. When we put them together, we make the number four thousand two hundred and eighty-seven. So children learn to connect the physical process of stacking the cards with the image that that gives of the number, with the symbols and the language, four thousand two hundred and eighty-seven. They can see that that four there is actually four thousand, the zeroes are hidden behind the other digits. They can see that that two is actually two hundred that the eight is eighty or eight tens and the seven is seven ones. And then we put them together, we make the number that we say as four thousand two hundred and eighty-seven. So children can construct a number and they can take it apart.

Ok let's have a look at another example. We imagine we'd have a whole set of cards and children would select cards to make a particular number. So let's say we want to make the number nine thousand, five hundred and eighty-three. So we need a nine thousand card, a five hundred card, a card for eighty and the card for three. Now we stack them up, notice that the arrows at the end on the right hand side help us to get them stacked up in the right way and there we have the number put together. Remember that is was made up from these four numbers: nine thousand, five hundred and eighty-three.

Cards (are) particularly effective when you want to use a number that has a zero in it as a place holder. For example, let's make up the number nine thousand and eighty-three. Here's the card for nine thousand, the card for eighty and the card for three. Now this time we have no hundreds in this number and when we put the number together using these three cards, this is what happens and you see we have there the zero which tells us that we have no hundreds. It's a lovely way of seeing how place value works, I recommend you get hold of a set of these cards. You can buy them commercially. They are sometimes called Place Value Cards or you can make your own set, as I do.