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# Zero



## Synopsis

Zero is a big round number. When she looks at herself, she just sees a hole right in her center. Every day she watches the other numbers line up to count: "1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 . . . !" "Those numbers have value. That's why they count," she thinks. But how could a number worth nothing become something? Zero feels empty inside. She watches One having fun with the other numbers. One has bold strokes and squared corners. Zero is big and round with no corners at all. "If I were like One, then I can count too," she thinks. So she pushes and pulls, stretches and straightens, forces and flattens herself, but in the end she realizes that she can only be Zero. As budding young readers learn about numbers and counting, they are also introduced to accepting different body types, developing social skills and character, and learning what it means to find value in yourself and in others.

## Book Information

Lexile Measure: 510 (What's this?)

Hardcover: 32 pages

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Product Dimensions: 0.5 x 10.2 x 9.2 inches

Shipping Weight: 14.4 ounces (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.9 out of 5 stars 94 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #12,861 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #46 in Books > Children's Books > Early Learning > Basic Concepts > Counting

Age Range: 3 and up

Grade Level: Preschool and up

## Customer Reviews

K-Gr 2  
Zero has a complex she finds herself unglamorous. Furthermore, with a hole in her center, she feels she doesn't count as much as her fellow numbers do. Twisting herself into the shape of 8 or 9 doesn't work; her attempt only leaves an empty feeling inside. Then one day, Zero discovers that by joining together with another number, 1, for example, she can become 10, or 100, or 1000, increasing her value. Soon, the others do the same 2 joins 3, 111 joins 5, and 4 and 8 join 2 escalating their worth and pleasure as well. At last, Zero feels

whole, “right in her center.” Otoshi’s story plays out against either stark white or dense black pages where Zero is strikingly depicted in broad silver brush strokes. In contrast, the other numbers cartwheel across the pages in bright splashy colors. Readers swept into the arresting artwork will soon be captivated by the importance of numbers. However, the underlying mission of the book—to elevate children’s self-worth—will take an intuitive parent or teacher to weave the two concepts together. *Barbara Elleman, Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art, Amherst, MA* (c) Copyright 2010. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

**\*Starred Review\*** Zero sees herself as a big round number with emptiness inside. The other, more colorful numbers have fun, and they count. After trying to stretch and pinch herself into another shape (1, 8, or 9) and making a bombastic grand entrance that sends the other numbers tumbling, Zero is ready to listen to some wise words: “Every number has value,” said Seven. “Be open. You’ll find a way.” Inspired, Zero shows the numbers how to “count even more.” With her help, 1 becomes 10, 2 becomes 20, and so on. Zero realizes her value and feels whole. Whether seen as an introduction to zero or to self-esteem, this picture book delivers on many levels. The simple story and colorful, minimalist art will intrigue children, even those too young to understand every bit of wordplay and wisdom in the text, while older kids will find food for thought. On the dramatic, black book jacket, the raised letters of the title include Zer in shining silver, and O in a silver that shines and also shimmers with subtle, shifting colors. Every aspect of the book’s illustration and design seems carefully thought out, beautifully executed, and pleasing. An impressive sequel to *One* (2008).

Preschool-Grade 3. --Carolyn Phelan

Don’t let the black cover fool you. This book is a ten! I love the message of this book. The illustration is simply and beautiful. My kindergartner used this book for a book report and she really understood the importance of what it means to be of value. Great message, great book.

When Zero looked at herself in the mirror she saw a hole right in her middle. How can a number worth absolutely nothing become worth something? Zero sets out to find worth in herself. She felt empty inside. Zero is a wonderful number book that looks at not only the concept of counting, it tackles the social issue of self acceptance and diversity. I liked how Otoshi used feeling words that most children of three or four year old would not know and gives opportunity to extend their

vocabulary. I also found it was fun to stay with the fast paced story to see how the number Zero was going to count. If there was a "Grandma's Choice Award" it would certainly be a winner.

Great, multipurpose book which teaches counting and other numerical concepts, while also conveying the important message that we all have something vital to offer.

Love this series of books. Very creative use of story telling using numbers! This book has counting, story telling, teamwork, and nifty Japanese paintbrush art all wrapped into one. My 2.5 year old loves it and asks for this book almost daily!

exactly the type of children's book I love to buy and give as a gift, fun, educational value, clever concept, appeals equally to adults, good design and colors

I love reading this book to my son! "Zero" not only shares lessons in numbers, but importantly, introduces concepts of accepting different body types, developing character, and learning what it means to find value in yourself and in others. I absolutely adore this book. I like how it can serve as an inspiration to both children and grown-ups. It teaches life lessons that are often hard to grasp as adults and are even harder to speak to children about.

All parents should buy these books for their kids, the messages within this book allow the parent and child to have an open and honest conversation about how actions may have an effect on others and their feelings. They are beautifully illustrated and inspire great conversations! There is also One and Two...both great books as well!

If you enjoyed the her first book; ONE your will love ZERO! I read them as a bookends. First we read ONE and discuss standing up for yourself and others. Then we read ZERO and talk lots and lots about numbers! Any young child will love these 2 stories.

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