The Number That Waited Outside

Zero joins the counting party.

A short story to enjoy together



Read slowly. Pause to enjoy the pictures and the words.

The Number That Waited Outside

READ TOGETHER

In Ravi's pretend number party, One brought one apple drawing. Two brought two stars. Three brought three leaves. Zero stood outside holding an empty plate.

"You haven't brought anything," said Three. Zero looked down. "That's what my number can tell you." Ravi moved the Zero card closer to the table and thought about the game.

He drew a plate with no biscuits. "How many biscuits are there?" he asked his sister. "Zero," she replied. Ravi placed the card beside the empty plate.

Then he drew three biscuits on another plate and crossed them out one by one as his pretend guests ate them. At the end, Zero had a useful job again.

The Number That Waited Outside

READ TOGETHER

Zero did not become one just to fit in. The empty plate did not need a hidden biscuit. The number belonged because sometimes none was exactly the information required.

Ravi drew a chair for Zero at the party table. His sister added an empty cup beside it. "No juice left," she said. Zero could help with that too.

When they packed the cards away, Ravi counted the boxes. One box held all the number cards. Zero cards were left on the floor. The party had ended very tidily indeed.

LET'S TALK

What information did zero give about the empty plate?

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