# Pathways to a Theme

**When you have read your chosen story, respond to the following questions:**

1. What is happening in the story? Answer in point form or full sentences.

- Zero is sad because she thinks she is empty, and has no value.

- Zero tries to stretch herself into the shape of the number one, but she is unable to do so.

- Zero then talks to eight and nine.

- Eight tells her to try and twist herself into the shape of the number eight, but she again fails.

- Nine tells her to try and stretch and twist into the shape of the number nine, but once again fails.

- She then tries to do different tricks to impress the other numbers, but she ends up tumbling into the other numbers, knocking them over.

- The numbers then tell Zero that her value is that when she works together with the other numbers, she can make bigger numbers.

- Zero realizes she has an open value.

1. Identify and describe the conflict in the story.

The conflict is person vs.self, due to the fact that Zero trys to convince herself that to have value she must be something she’s not. Zero tries to twist, bend, and stretch into the shapes of the other numbers, because she thinks that’s the only way she’ll have any value.

1. Brainstorm words or phrases that connect to the class discussion on the human condition.
* The search for self worth.
* Everybody tries to be someone or something they’re not.
* Feeling like you don’t belong
1. **What are 2-3 the theme or big idea of the story? Create a theme statement**.

-You can create a theme statement by using the formula **topic+treatment (+/-) = result**. Eg. In Macbeth, one could say that “ambition + too much = destruction”. Therefore the theme statement would be “*Too much ambition can lead to destruction*”

**-A theme statement has** **no absolutes, no cliches and no conversational language**. Eg. “*I think its to never judge a book by its cover”* **is NOT a good theme statement.**

Topic yourself + treatment(+/-) treating + badly = result destroyed self-worth

Theme Statement: Treating yourself badly can destroy your self-worth.

Topic Zero wants to count + treatment(+/-) + = result Zero ends up counting

Theme Statement If you keep your mind to it you may achieve it.

Topic standards + treatment(+/-) self-doubt = result self-disrespect

Theme Statement It will be hard to be happy when trying to change yourself to be like and look like

1. **Change the theme statements into a deep questions.** Eg. *What can be the result of too much ambition?* OR *Can too much ambition lead to destruction?*

**Why does everyone want to be someone they aren’t?**

**Why can’t everybody be theirselves?**

**Why do we doubt ourselves?**