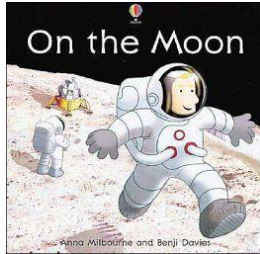


Space Read-Aloud Outline

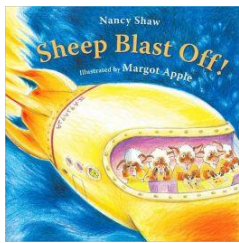
Capture kids' imaginations this summer with an out-of-this-world Read-Aloud! Outer space offers many topics to read about. There are galaxies of both fiction and nonfiction books on this topic. This Read-Aloud is sure to have kids absolutely blasting off with excitement!



On the Moon by Anna Milbourne

Ages 3 to 6

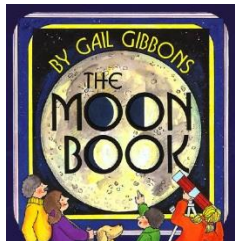
Beginning with the question, "What do you think it would be like to go to the moon?" this book describes basic aspects of moon travel: shuttles, space suits and zero gravity. Simple, sparse text makes this a great book to read with a group of young kids.



Sheep Blast Off! by Nancy Shaw

Ages 3 to 6

"Something has landed! What can it be?" The sheep find out in this picture book. Shaw's sheep, featured in other titles, including *Sheep in a Jeep*, *Sheep Out to Eat* and *Sheep Take a Hike*, discover a spaceship and blast off through the stratosphere. With minimal, rhyming text and hilarious pictures of sheep shenanigans, this book answers the age-old question: what mischief would sheep get up to in space?



The Moon Book by Gail Gibbons

Ages 5 to 8

A pleasant combination of narrative, illustration and facts, this book focuses on a basic astronomical mystery: our own moon! It's organized so that you can read as little or as much as you want; you could read the narrative to a big group, giving as many facts as you like, or you could focus on the details if you're reading to just one child.

More space books

Bugs in Space by David A. Carter

Ages 4 to 6

I Want to be an Astronaut by Byron Barton

Ages 4 to 8

DK First Space Encyclopedia

Ages 5 to 8

The Moon Might Be Milk by Lisa Shulman
Ages 5 to 8

Comets, Stars, the Moon and Mars: Space Poems and Paintings by Douglas Florian
Ages 5 to 10

Star Seeker: A Journey to Outer Space by Theresa Heine
Ages 6 to 9

Once Upon a Starry Night: A Book of Constellations by Jacqueline Mitton
Ages 7 to 10

13 Planets: The Latest View of the Solar System by David A. Aguilar
Ages 8 to 12

For more books and activity ideas, check out Reading Rockets Reading Adventure Pack on stars, <http://www.readingrockets.org/article/51766>.

Activities

1. Solar System Mobile. This craft requires quite a bit of preparation, but it's not difficult to put together and makes an awesome take away. Use paper plates, yarn and pre-cut paper circles (nine per set, of various sizes – these will represent the eight planets and the sun) to make a mobile of the solar system. It will be easiest if you bring a number of paper plates with holes for yarn already punched in them, so that all the kids have to do is decorate their "planets" with crayons and markers and hang them from the paper plate. The following version of the craft is more elaborate than what we have in mind, but the basic idea is the same:
http://www.lpi.usra.edu/education/skytellers/solar_system/activities/ss_string.shtml.
2. Constellation Cards. Using *Once Upon a Starry Night* and *Zoo in the Sky*, ask each kid pick a favorite constellation. (If you have a big group, you might want to photocopy some of the pages so everybody can look at them at the same time.) After picking a constellation, ask the kids to draw the shape of the constellation and then to trace it in glue on black paper. Next, have them place their card on top of a paper plate (for easier cleanup) and shake silver glitter over their card to outline their constellations in glitter.
3. Human Solar System. For an activity that involves some moving around, make a model of the solar system with your bodies! First, explain that planets move around the sun and that the amount of time it takes a planet to move around the sun is one year. Next, assign either a kid or a volunteer to be the sun and each remaining kid to be a planet. Put each kid assigned to be a planet a different distance from the "sun." Then have everybody move around the sun. Their orbits should take different amounts of time, with "inner planets" completing their orbits faster than "outer planets." Go around for a few "years" (times around the sun) for every planet. Why do some planets take longer to go around the sun than other planets?

Conversation Starters

1. Teach the kids a mnemonic device for remembering the order of the planets in our solar system.
 - Mother – Mercury
 - Very – Venus
 - Thoughtfully – Terra (Earth)
 - Made – Mars
 - A – Asteroid Belt
 - Jelly – Jupiter
 - Sandwich – Saturn
 - Under – Uranus
 - No – Neptune
 - Protest – Pluto (mention that Pluto is a dwarf planet)

2. What is the distinguishing characteristic of each planet? (Mars is red, Jupiter has a big spot, Saturn has rings, etc.) Which planets are made of rock and which ones are made of gas? Do other planets have water? Do they have moons? Ask questions and let the kids respond. Encourage conversation and speculation about extraterrestrial life. Bring age-appropriate scientific sources on both sides of this issue so kids can see how to find info on a topic that interests them.

3. Ask the kids if they would go into space if they had the option. Why or why not? If they want to go, where would they like to go? A short trip on the shuttle? A trip all the way to Mars?