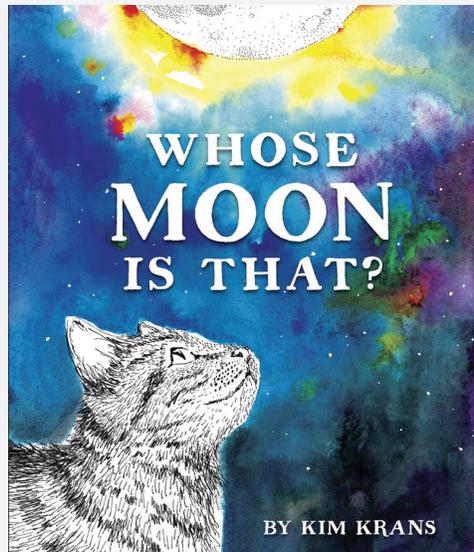


Second Reaction: Cosmic Questions for Curious Children

Krans, Kim. *Whose Moon is That?* Random House Books for Young Readers, 2017.

Kristen Bowman



A curious black and white-etched cat gazes up at the multicolored sky with a beautiful white speckled moon and asks, "Whose moon is that?" (Krans unpagged). Sparked by a seemingly simple question, various animals and objects engage in a lively debate about ownership of the moon in this whimsical and enchanting children's book written and illustrated by Kim Krans. A large and looming shadow of a tree with the bright, white moon peeking through its branches is the first to answer the cat's question, claiming ownership of the magic celestial body in question. A black and white bird perched on one of the branches sings a song to right the tree's wrong as it calls, "The moon belongs to me" (Krans unpagged). A black and white bear struggles to share and asserts, "I found it first!" The pointy black and white mountain joins in and claims the moon out of fairness. The white-starred, multicolored sky that holds the moon thinks the animals and objects are all telling lies. The black and white wolf howls to the moon, "I own it obviously!" The dark ocean at night, with the bright moon reflected on its surface, believes to own the moon as well! Finally, the luminous moon chimes in for the final word, "no one owns my glow . . . I shine for one and all, and none, throughout eternity." Content with the response, the curious cat curls up to take a nap and awakens to a bright yellow, red, orange, and pink sunrise. Without pause, the cat asked, "Whose sun is that?"

I chose to read this book during group story time to my preschool class made up of eighteen children ages three, four, and five. I explained to them that I was going to write a review

of this book and I needed their help to give opinions and compliments. The questions and discussions that occurred were most impactful to me as an early childhood educator.

While I was reading the story, many children raised their hands to tell their classmates and me that the various animals and objects were wrong about owning the moon. Initially, most of the children said that the sky or outer space owns the moon. When the cat asked about the sun, one child asked, "Where does the moon go when the sun is out?" Another child responded and enthusiastically said, "The moon goes inside the sun!" These questions sparked a lively discussion about the moon and the sun. I explained to the children that the moon and the sun essentially trade places and do their jobs in different parts of the world. I showed the children the globe in our classroom and explained that when the earth spins slowly on an axis, different parts of the world experience day and night. One child exclaimed, "The earth does not spin too fast because we do not fall off!" We then engaged in a discussion about gravity and how it keeps our feet grounded on earth. The rich, authentic, and meaningful scientific discussions that came from reading this story in my preschool were wonderful and inspiring to witness.

A few other topics came up during our book discussion that were not as authentic or child-initiated as the scientific ideas. We briefly discussed sharing and how it is unkind to try to claim ownership of the moon. A few children mentioned the colors in the illustrations and expressed interest in creating similar artwork at the art table. Many children mentioned how we have done yoga poses during our weekly yoga class inspired by some of the animals and objects in the story. As an early childhood educator, I walked away from the experience of reading this story feeling extremely inspired to incorporate activities related to the science, art, social-emotional, and gross motor topics that were interesting to my students based on this book.

About the Author

Kristen Bowman has had a passion for working with young children since she was just a child herself. Her teaching career began as a preschool teacher at the lab school at the University of Maryland, College Park, after completing her degree in early childhood education. In the last four years, Bowman has completed a master's degree in teacher leadership through the curriculum and instruction department, directed the summer camp program at the lab school, and brought yoga and mindfulness lessons to the children as a registered yoga teacher. Her two main goals as a preschool teacher are to create a family-like environment in her classroom and to have reciprocal partnerships with the families of her students. Teaching social-emotional development using children's literature as a tool is one way in which Bowman works to achieve her goals.