

Toad in the Moon

Activity L5

Grade Level: 3–6



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What’s This Activity About?

The pattern of lighter and darker features on the face of the Moon has been interpreted in many ways by different cultures. Students are introduced to some of the patterns various cultures saw in the Moon and then can create their own.

What Will Students Do?

Students look at some story sheets about what different cultures saw in the Moon and then get to make up their own.

Tips and Suggestions

- This activity was written for families to use, but it is easily adapted to a classroom.
- You may want to have students divide into groups and have each group come up with a story.

What Will Students Learn?

Concepts

- Face of the Moon

Inquiry Skills

- Observing
- Describing
- Imagining
- Visualizing

Big Ideas

- Models

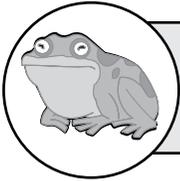
TOAD IN THE MOON

BY SUZANNE GURTON



An Activity for the Whole Family from Project ASTRO

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- **Type of Activity:** Station and Facilitated
- **Time to Do:** 7-8 minutes for station, 10 minutes for facilitated
- **Set up Time:** 5 minutes

WHAT'S THIS ABOUT?

There are as many stories about the patterns on the face of the Moon as there are cultures who have looked at it. In this activity, families will be introduced to the variety of characters seen there by different cultures and are invited to create their own.

MATERIALS INCLUDED

- Family Instructions master (page 11)
- Full Moon Story Sheets masters (pages 13-25)
- Black and white image of the Full Moon Family Worksheet master (page 27)

MATERIALS YOU'LL NEED TO GET

- Pencils
- Colored markers
- Masking tape

SETTING UP THE ACTIVITY

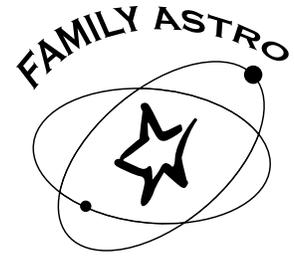
- Make photocopies of Story Sheets, Family Instructions, and Full Moon Worksheet (pages 11-27)
- Place one Full Moon Story Sheet on each family table (use a different story on each table)
- Place two to four blank Full Moon Worksheets on each family table (and have extras available)
- Make sure each family has pencils and markers available

DOING THE ACTIVITY

This starts as a station activity, so it requires little introduction. Families are asked to draw one or more characters from the light and dark spots on the face of the Full Moon directly on the photocopy of the Full Moon Worksheet. The characters can be modern or mythical, and personal to their family or not. During the facilitated debrief, ask each family to share their creation. Tape the drawings up on the wall to share with the group.

This activity will serve as an ice breaker to get families using their imaginations. All other activities will be treating the Moon as a member of the Solar System and as something to be explored. In this activity, they explore cultural connections to the Moon and astronomy.

Toad in the Moon

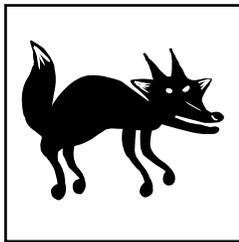


What do you see in the face of the Moon?

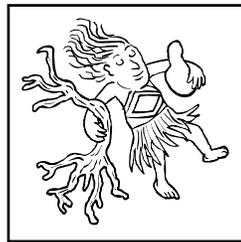
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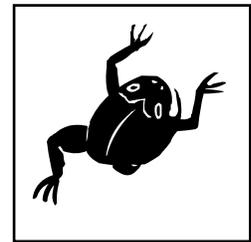
Fox - Peru



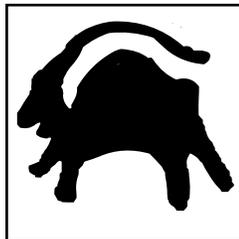
Woman - New Zealand



Man - Australia



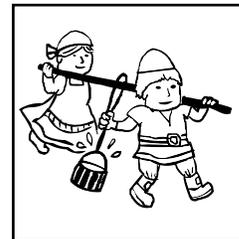
Toad - China



Rabbit - Mexico



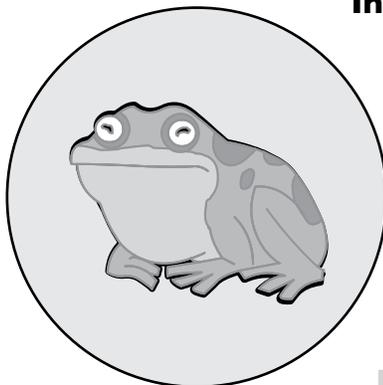
Woman - Polynesia



Boy & Girl - Scandinavia

This activity can be done individually or as a family

Instructions



- Take a look at the character(s) from one of the cultures above that is shown on the story sheet on your table. In each case, the storyteller used the light and dark spots on the face of the Full Moon to create the character(s) in their story. Read the story together as a family
- Look at the image of the Full Moon on your table.
- Outline a character or characters that **you see** when you look at the Moon.
- Write your own story about how the character(s) got there.

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Fox – A Story from Peru



All Fox could think about was getting to Moon. After braiding a grass rope long enough to reach Moon, he got help from the birds to fly it up to Moon for him. Once that was done, Fox climbed up the rope. The birds say they can see Fox in the Full Moon. Can you?

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Moon Woman – A Story from the Maori of New Zealand



The woman in the Moon is named Rona. She was returning one moonlit night from a stream with a calabash full of water. Moon slipped behind a cloud for a moment, and in the darkness Rona stumbled on the root of a tree. Angry, she cursed Moon. Moon, who would not stand for this abuse, swooped down on her and carried her off along with her water gourd and the tree that had tripped her. The Maori still see all three there today. Can you?

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Man in the Moon – A Story from Australia



Back in the Dreamtime, Baloo (Moon) visited the Earth and saw two young ladies who invited him to ride in their canoe. He was unsteady in the little craft and fell into the water. Embarrassed by his clumsiness he hid. Although he now shines brightly every month, he also remembers this little accident and shrinks away to gather his courage. Can you find the embarrassed Baloo in the face of the Full Moon?

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The Toad in the Moon – A Story from China



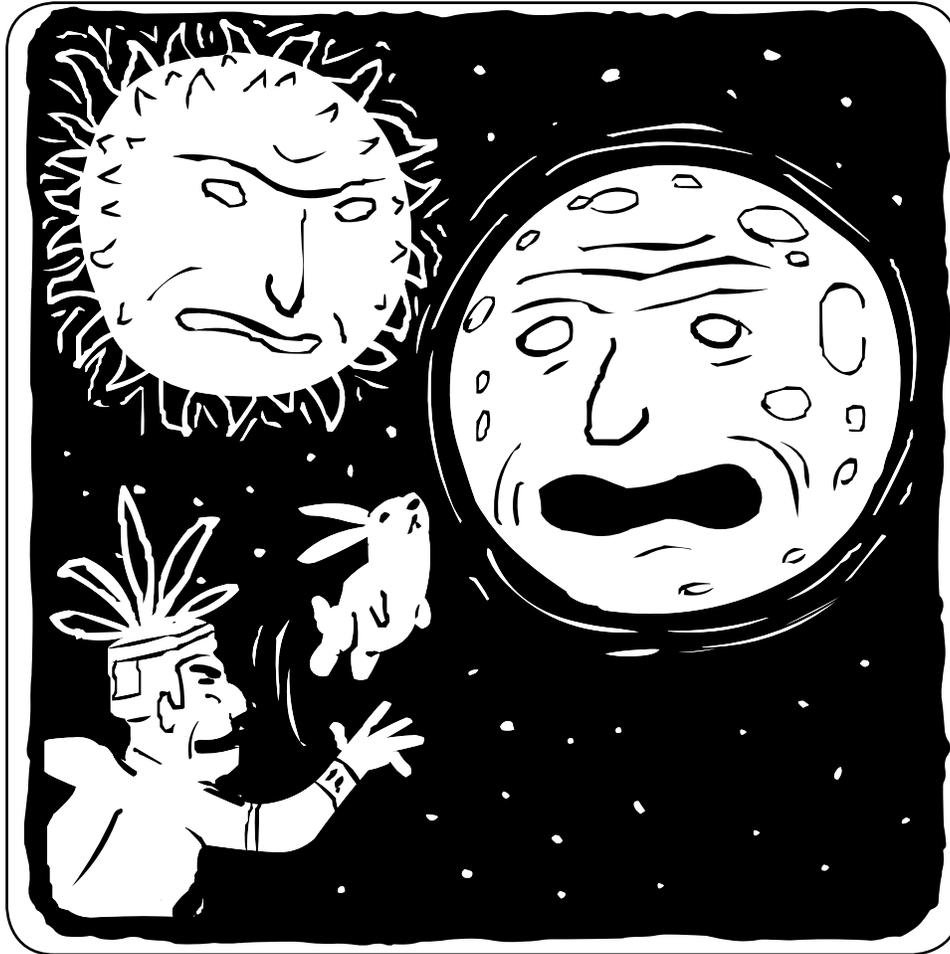
Heng O found out that her husband, Sheng I, had the secret of immortality. When she found the potion, she drank it and immediately flew out the window up to Moon. Sheng I was so angry with what she had done, he turned her into a three-legged toad. Can you see the toad in the face of the Full Moon?

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Rabbit Moon – A Story from the Aztecs of Mexico



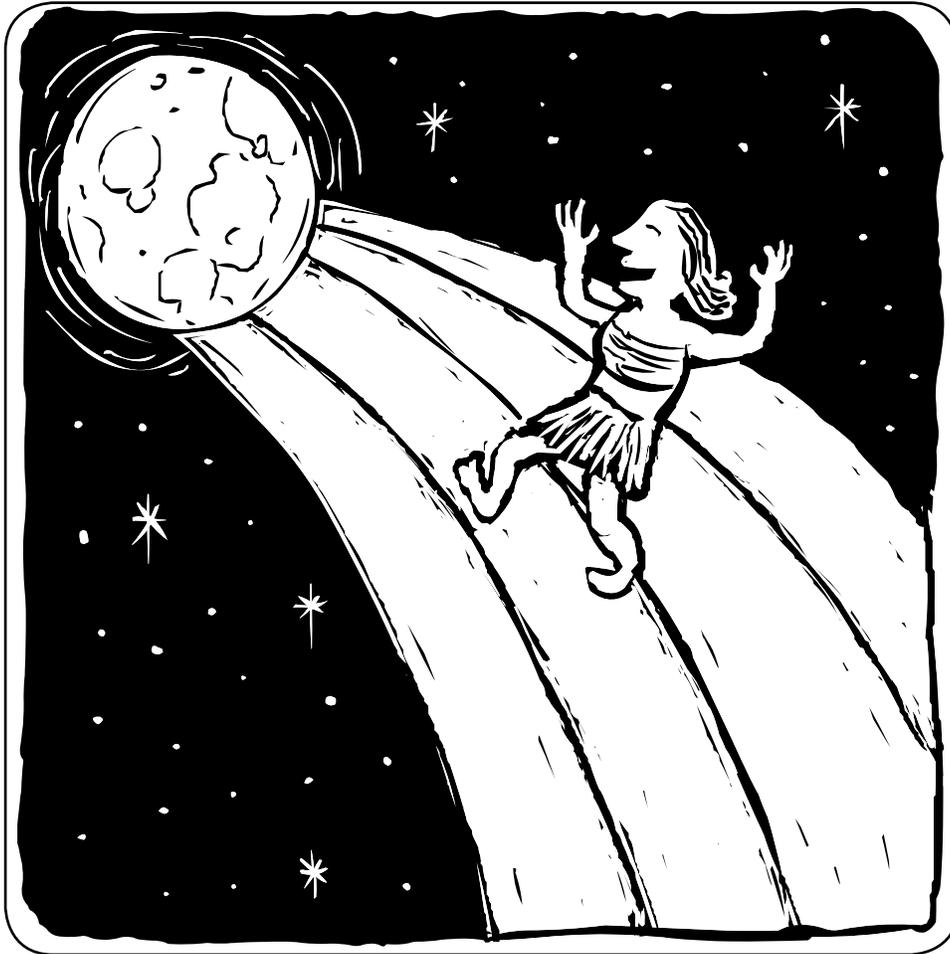
In ancient times, a god chose to set himself on fire and jump into the sky to light the cold, dark world. He became the Sun. A second god, jealous of the praise that this new Sun was getting, did the same. This was too much light and another angry god threw a rabbit at the second Sun's face to dim his light, making him Moon. Can you see the dark rabbit on the Moon?

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Moon Woman – A Story from Polynesia



Have you ever seen a rainbow at night formed by moonlight instead of sunlight? Legend has it that Hina, a Polynesian woman, who was on her way to get some fresh water, did. She had always wanted to live in the heavens, so she walked along the rainbow and didn't stop until she reached Moon. She lives there now and can be seen beating her tapa board to make cloth. Can you find her?

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Jack and Jill – A Story from Scandinavia



Hyuki (Jack) and Bil (Jill) were sent up the hill to fetch a pail of water from a magical well. Water from this well inspired poetry and prophecy. The children were spotted by the man who carries Moon across the sky each night in his chariot. He scooped them up into his chariot and carried them away. The two children can still be seen there today, bucket, pole and all. Can you find the splash from the spilled bucket?

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What do you see in the Moon? Create one or more characters and tell the story.

Character(s):

Story:
