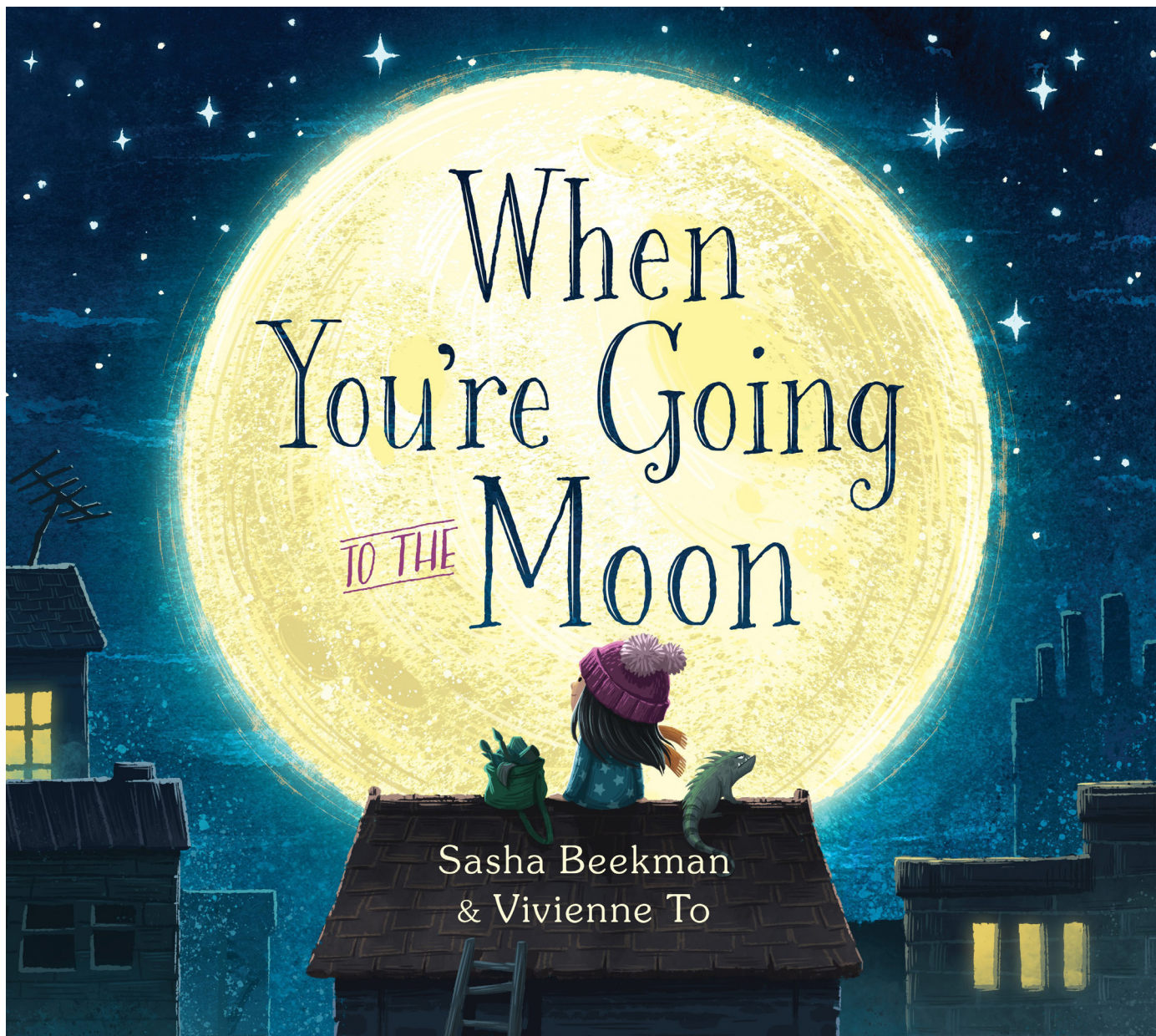


TEACHERS NOTES

When You're Going to the Moon



Sasha Beekman
& Vivienne To

Written by Sasha Beekman
Illustrated by Vivienne To

THEMES

- Following your dreams
- Conquering your fears
- The joy of adventure
- The comfort of home

SUITABLE FOR

Age 3-7: Pre-school to Grade 1

DESCRIPTION

Your pet iguana, tap-dancing shoes, an inflatable moose ... What else might you need when you're going to the moon?

From an exciting new duo comes a heartfelt story about dreaming your biggest dream and taking it to the stars.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Sasha Beekman is a Thai-born writer who grew up in Darwin, NT. As a kid, she probably spent one too many clear dry season nights watching the moon from under the mango tree in her backyard. She won two Young Territory Author awards while she was in high school and spent her gap year in Toyama, Japan. Once she'd finally had enough matcha and Hello Kitty, she moved to Melbourne to study writing and editing at RMIT University. *When You're Going to the Moon* is her first picture book.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR

Vivienne To is an illustrator and visual development artist working in film and publishing. Most recently Vivienne has worked as the Art Director on *The Lego Batman Movie*. Her first picture book was *The Sloth Who Came To Stay*, with author Margaret Wild. She is currently based in Wellington, New Zealand. When she isn't drawing, she can be found knitting on the couch, watching cute dogs at the local park or reading in the children's section of the library and trying to blend in.

AUTHOR INSPIRATION BY SASHA BEEKMAN

This is my first book and it actually started out as a uni assignment so I was delighted when Affirm Press loved it enough to publish it.

I wrote *When You're Going to the Moon* partly in response to the lack of diversity in children's books – as a young Thai-Australian girl growing up in Darwin, I didn't see many or even any books that had characters like me or my family. I want that to change and I'm so excited that bookstores around Australia will be helping to make that change.

My hope is that little kids today will be able to see themselves in *When You're Going to the Moon*. It's a story about chasing your dreams no matter how big they might seem, and letting your imagination take you on all kinds of adventures.

THEMES

Following your dreams

The unnamed main character in this book desperately wants to go to the moon. So she collects all of the things she needs, and sets off on her journey. The illustrations and text tie together beautifully to give the reader a sense of her desire to go and achievement at meeting her goals.

Conquering your fears

We see the main character stop as she sets out, and return home to collect a few more items to take with her on her journey. It's clear that these aren't necessary, but that she is just pausing to gather her courage in order to take the leap. This message of bravery is framed in a gentle and non-didactic way that readers will respond to strongly.

The joy of adventure

The illustrations show that the main character feels strongly a sense of adventure and discovery. She also take a moment to savour her achievement, and to enjoy the place she has worked so hard to reach. Here, there is joy to be found in both the journey and the destination.

The comfort of home

We see many facets of the main character's home life, from her bedroom filled with space paraphernalia to the kitchen where her mother is preparing dinner. And even though we know she wishes to go to the moon, we always know that she wants to return home too. This sweet element of the story makes it accessible and relevant to most young readers.



ACTIVITIES AND DISCUSSION POINTS

- If you could go anywhere – from Egypt or Paris to Jupiter or Mars – where would you go? Make a list of the things you need to take on your journey.
- Print out a big map of the world and mark your town with an 'X'. See how far it is from all the other places (on Earth) you might like to go! Using the key and a piece of string, can you work out how many kilometres you would have to travel? Who wants to travel the furthest?
- When the main character is leaving on her adventure, she keeps turning back. Why? Do you think she really needs all of the things she takes to the moon? Are you ever nervous before going somewhere different? What do you do to make yourself feel better? Do you have any special items you would take with you?
- Take a good look at the main character's bedroom. What do you see there, and what do these things tell you about her? Draw a picture of your bedroom. What do all the things in your room say about you?
- Does anyone in the class have a pet iguana? What kind of pet would you like, if you could have anything you choose? Draw a picture of your dream pet, and don't forget to give them a name!
- What are your dreams? What things would you like to do before you get too big? Make a list as a class, and see if you can cross off any of these things together.
- Draw your kitchen or dining room. What does it look like when you're about to have dinner? What does a typical meal look like? Do you ever eat with chopsticks, like the character in this book?



- Using boxes, break into groups to build rockets, just like the one you see in the main character's room. Don't forget to paint it!
- Did you know that people actually have walked on the moon? As a class, look at some photos of the moon landing and research what happened. Who travelled to the moon? Why did they go? When did they land? How did they get there? Can you find out what they needed to take to the moon?

