

# HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MOON

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MOON

by Frank Asch

Themes: Friendship/Sound

Grade Level: Pre-K-1

Running Time: 7 minutes, animated

### SUMMARY

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MOON is a charming story about a bear who wants to give the moon a birthday present. The bear decides to ask the moon what it would like for a present and goes up into the mountains to get close to it. When the bear says “Hello” to the moon, his voice echoes back “Hello.” Of course, the bear thinks the response is coming from the moon. Because of the echo, everything the bear says is repeated back to him, with the bear thinking, in each case, that the response is coming from the moon.

Since the bear wants a hat for his birthday, he hears the moon say that it too wants a hat. The bear leaves one in a tree top for the moon. As the moon appears to creep up through the branches of the tree, it actually appears to be wearing the hat left by the bear. The bear sees this and is very pleased.

The next morning, the hat falls out of the tree and onto the bear’s doorstep. The bear believes that the moon has left it there as a present for him. The wind blows the hat away, the bear chases it, and, when he can’t find it, decides to go to the mountains and talk with the moon. The end of the story finds the bear telling the moon “I still love you” and “Happy Birthday” and the moon, of course, responds in kind.

### OBJECTIVES

- Children will examine friendships.
- Children will explore the act of giving.

- Children will investigate sound.

### BEFORE VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Share the book, HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MOON, with children. Then ask:

- What do you like most about your birthday?
- What do you like about other people's birthdays?

Talk with children about times when they may have seen the moon in the night sky. Ask:

- What did the moon look like?
- What shape was it?
- How far away do you think it is?
- What do you think it would look like if you could stand right next to it?

Discuss with children their favorite birthday presents. Ask: Why were these gifts your favorites? Who gave these special gifts to you? Do you think the people who gave you these gifts knew important things about you? What kinds of things can you give people without spending money? How do you think people might feel about these gifts?

### AFTER VIEWING ACTIVITIES

Talk with children about the way Bear’s voice echoed through the mountains and how Bear believed that his own echo was the voice of the moon. Ask: Why do you think Bear heard an echo in the mountains, but not when he called to the moon from the tree top? Then try some simple echo experiments with children. Take them to a school corridor where all of the doors along the hallway have been closed, or the gymnasium with entry and exit doors closed. Have children call out to a friend at one end of the hallway or gymnasium and listen to their voices echo back. Encourage children to be as quiet as possible, and to listen very carefully in order to

enjoy the sound of the echoes. Later, take children outdoors and have them try and listen for an echo. Discuss the reasons why children can hear their voices echoed in contained environments, but not in others.

Distribute a round white circle cut from construction paper, a piece of colored construction paper, paste, and crayons to each child in the group. Have children paste the circle onto the construction paper to represent the moon. Then have children draw pictures on the paper of birthday presents they would like to give the moon. Later, ask children to talk about the reasons for their choices of gifts as they share their moon pictures with the class.

Have children think about why Bear considered the moon to be a good friend. Explain to children that one reason Bear might have become fond of the moon is that he thought they had so many things in common. Encourage children to talk about the things they have in common with their friends. Emphasize that shared interests, enjoying the same things, laughing about the same things, feeling sad about the same things, are important parts of friendship.

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