

Families Reading

Together.



A Reading Celebration Guide
Reach for the Moon!



Hopa Mountain is a Bozeman, Montana based nonprofit organization that invests in rural and tribal citizen leaders, adults and youth, who are working to improve education, ecological health, and economic development.

A growing body of research confirms that a strong early learning home environment predicts children's success as readers and students. Success in school strongly predicts good health and economic self-sufficiency in adulthood. With relevant information and resources, parents and caregivers across the economic spectrum can provide their children with the early experiences that lead to their children's success. Hopa Mountain's *StoryMakers* program supports families with high-quality early learning resources and encouragement to shape home life for their children's long-term success. www.hopamountain.org

Benefits of reading with children every day:

- **Reading together builds stronger relationships.** As children grow more independent, having a positive routine together will allow parents and children to slow down and connect with each other. A child that has a strong relationship with at least one adult is more likely to feel safe and confident, do better in school, and lead a healthy and happy adult life.
- **Reading together improves communication skills.** The contact children get with parents while reading allows children to feel more comfortable expressing their own feelings. This can help children communicate in healthy, productive ways.
- **Reading together promotes concentration and memory retention.** Reading aloud together, even after children learn to read alone, encourages children to concentrate on the story to remember what was read. These skills will serve children well both in and out of school.
- **Reading together encourages children to think critically.** As parents and children talk together about the characters' actions and the plots of stories they are reading, children are learning how to apply logic and good judgment to their own lives.
- **Reading more supports academic success.** Research shows that daily reading helps children build the foundational skills they need to excel in many aspects of school. Reading often and having access to books over the summer can also help a child retain the information learned throughout the school year.
- **Reading together fosters a lifetime love of reading.** Children who are exposed to regular reading view themselves as "readers" and see reading as a pleasurable activity rather than a chore.
- **Reading supports math and science learning.** Reading enables children to ask questions and investigate new math and science concepts.



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Organizing a Family Reading Celebration at your school or community center can be simple and fun.

This guide contains everything you need to plan a successful event. It is designed to use picture books to excite children about math and science while encouraging families to create literacy and science rich home environments. Throughout the event, you will show parents ways to read, play, and talk with their children about math and science at home.

Two concepts will make this family reading celebration successful:

- **Modeling** storytelling for parents and introducing families to simple storytelling strategies allows them to use these tools to build literacy at home. Be sure to model reading books aloud during this event.
- **Intentional Dialogue** emphasizes conversation while reading aloud. Stop to ask questions to deepen children's understanding, check their comprehension, introduce new vocabulary, or make connections from the book to their lives.

In this guide, you will find:

Getting Started: Materials and Books	1
Schedule	2
Guide to Activity 1: <i>Read Aloud & Model</i>	3
Guide to Children's Activity 2: <i>Moon Predictions & Journals</i>	4
Guide to Parents Activity 2: <i>Supporting Science Exploration</i>	5
Guide to Activity 3: <i>Family Science Exploration</i>	6
Guide to Activity 4: <i>Book Distribution & Meal</i>	7
Handouts	
Using Books to Explore Your World	8
<i>My Moon Journal</i>	9
<i>My Night Sky Prediction</i>	10
<i>My Night Sky Observation</i>	11
<i>Moon Calendar</i>	12
<i>Moon Phases</i>	13
Evaluation	14
Customizable Press Pack (see separate document on website)	

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A Family Reading Celebration Guide

Reach for the Moon!

Together.

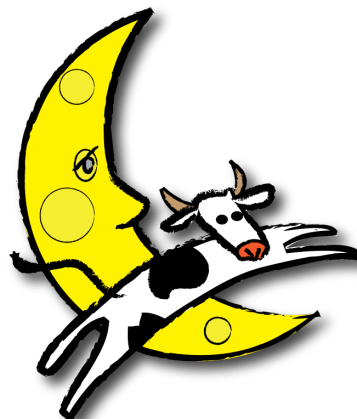
Getting Started

Recommended Books

- **The Moon Book** by Gail Gibbons
- **How Much Is A Million** by David M. Schwartz

Materials

- **Handout**
Using Books to Explore Your World
- **Moon Journals Activity**
Moon Journal
Pens or Pencils
- **Snacks or Meal**



Book Alternatives

- **The Moon Seems to Change** by Franklyn M. Branley
- **There's No Place Like Space** by Tish Rabe
- **The Librarian Who Measured the Earth** by Kathryn Lasky

Book Resources

You may choose to give away books during your event. Visit these websites to see if you qualify for books through their programs.

- **First Book** – A nonprofit providing new books at 50%-90% off retail price.
www.firstbook.org
- **Scholastic Literacy Partnerships** – A program that supports literacy efforts of organizations nationwide.
<http://teacher.scholastic.com/products/literacypartnerships/>
- **Book Drive** – Host a book drive in your community to gather gently used books to offer at your event. Here are a few tips for a successful book drive:
www.serve.gov/toolkits/book-drive/four.asp



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Reading Celebration Schedule

Welcome

5 Minutes
Everyone

Welcome families, introduce yourself, and quickly review the event schedule.



Activity 1: Read Aloud & Model

15 Minutes
Everyone

Read aloud to families while you model asking questions and starting conversations.

Activity 2: Simultaneous Break-Out Sessions

20 Minutes

Children's Group

Moon Predictions & Journals

Parent's Group

Supporting Science Exploration

Activity 3: Family Science Exploration

10 Minutes
Everyone

Families will take their Moon Journals outside to observe the night sky.

Activity 4: Book Distribution & Meal

25 Minutes
Everyone

Serve dinner or snacks, collect evaluations, and distribute books.

Wrap Up: Thank everybody for coming!

5 Minutes
Everyone

Encourage family reading at home.



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Guide to Activity 1: Read Aloud & Model

15 minutes

Everyone

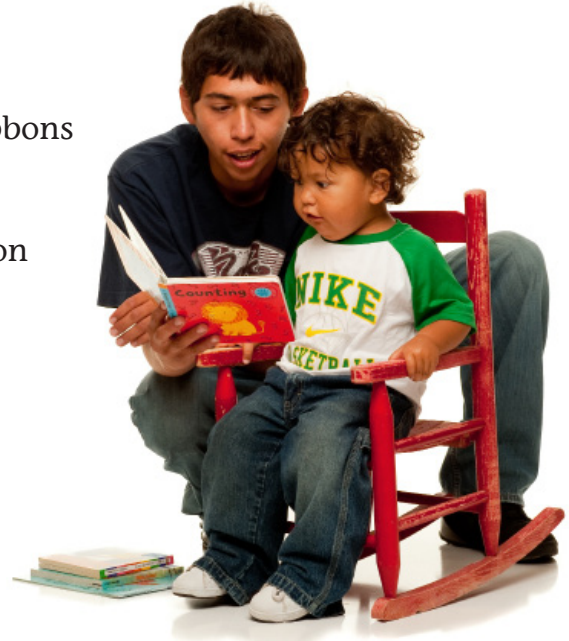
Before the Activity

- You will need the *The Moon Book* by Gail Gibbons

During the Activity

- Introduce yourself and give a brief description of the event's purpose and schedule.
- Ask parents to listen as you read *The Moon Book* to their children and ask them to notice the questions you use to engage the children.

Conversation-Starters to Use While Reading Aloud:



Before Reading

- Show the book to the children. "What do you think this book is about?"
- "Turn to your neighbor and ask them what they notice when they look to the sky at night."
- Share what you heard.

Example:

"I heard Jenna say she sees the Big Dipper in the stars."

"Mason says the moon comes up at night."

"Cora likes to wish on shooting stars."

During Reading

- "Who can guess how far away the moon is from Earth?"
- "Have you ever seen faces or shapes in the moon?"
- "Raise your hand if you have seen a full moon? How about half of a moon?"

After Reading

- "Turn to your neighbor and tell them how often the moon goes through phases."
- Share that the moon goes through phases about once a month. Say this out loud to reinforce this knowledge.
- Thank them for being such good listeners.



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Reach for the Moon!

Together.

Guide to Activity 2: Moon Predictions and Journals

20 Minutes

Children's Group

Before the Activity

- Prepare *Moon Journals* for each child attending.
- Have a *Moon Journal* to use as a model.

During the Activity

- Gather children on the floor around you with a copy of *The Moon Book*. Open the book to the page with moon phases.
- Using the book's illustrations as a guide, explain that the moon remains the same, but the way we see it changes. These changes are called **phases**. The moon goes through these phases about once each month.
- Tell children that they can be scientists and observe the moon to keep track of the phases, or changes, in a Moon Journal. Tell them they will be making their very own Moon Journals.
- Show the children the different parts of the Moon Journal.
- Ask the children what a prediction is. Remind them that a prediction is a guess about what the moon looks like, but that first you want to know what they already know about the moon.
- Ask children if they think they will see the moon when they go outside tonight. Take all responses and be sure not to give them a definite answer.
- Give each child a *Moon Journal* and have them go back to the table to write their name on it and draw what they think the sky will look like tonight on the *Night Sky Prediction* page in their journal.



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Reach for the Moon!

Together.

Guide to Activity 2: Supporting Science Exploration

20 Minutes

Parent's Group

During the Activity

- Distribute Parent Handouts
Using Books to Explore Your World
- Begin by thanking parents for coming.
- Explain that this event is an opportunity to share ideas and resources so that parents can support their child's academic, social and emotional growth.
- Use the parent handouts to guide you in sharing tips and ideas. Be sure to model examples for each point. Invite questions and suggestions from the parents. Here are some topics to explore:
 - Parents have an important role in their children's lives as their first and most important teachers.
 - Using picture books to explore science concepts benefits children by providing an inviting way for them to expand their knowledge, while gaining the many benefits of reading.
 - Use intentional dialogue (asking open-ended questions) when reading to encourage children to think more deeply about the material.
 - Hands-on learning paired with a book can be used with any topic your child shows interest in. Suggest other nature-based themes and activities.
- Explain to the parents that their children are making Moon Journals to help them predict and track the changes in the moon that they read about in *The Moon Book*. This is an easy activity for families to continue together throughout the month.
- Invite parents to rejoin their children.



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Reach for the Moon!

Together.



Guide to Activity 3: Family Science Exploration

10 Minutes
Everyone

Before the Activity

- Decide on an outside location for families to best view the night sky and the moon.

During the Activity

- Allow parents to join their children. Encourage children to share their Moon Journals and predictions with their parents.
- Explain that everyone will go outside together to observe the moon and sky and record what they see on the *Night Sky Observation* page in their Moon Journal. Explain to children and families where they will go to observe the moon and give a time frame for being outside.
- Invite families to go outside to observe the sky and then come in and complete the activity.
- Gather and discuss the activity:
 - a. "Did anybody see the moon?"
 - b. "What shape was it in? Can anyone tell me what phase it is in?"
 - c. "Did your observation match your prediction?"

After the Activity

- Tell children and families that the Moon Journals are for them to take home and to continue to observe and record the night sky for the rest of the month. Encourage families to do this together.
- Encourage families to observe other changes in nature, such as the habits of animals and growth of plants.



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Together.

Guide to Activity 4: Book Distribution & Meal

25 Minutes
Everyone

- **Invite** families to dinner or snacks if you have chosen to offer them. Thank everyone for coming.
- **Food:** Offering a light dinner, such as soup, pizza, or spaghetti, is a good way to build community and draw in families. Popcorn, hot cocoa, or cookies and milk, are easy treats to serve as a dessert.
- **Book Giveaway:** We have included tips for collecting and distributing books to give away at your event.
- **Raffle:** A raffle drawing while families are enjoying their dinner or snacks can also be fun for families and a way to thank families for coming.
- **Announcements:** Announce your next family reading event and any other important information you have for family literacy activities.
- **Evaluations:** We encourage you to have families fill out evaluations before they leave for the evening. Pass them out with pens during dinner, and ask parents to fill them out and leave them on the table for you. Walk around and collect them as you see families finish them.
- **Closing:** Be sure to take the time to thank families for coming while they are eating dinner as some may leave before others.



A Family Reading Celebration Guide

Reach for the Moon!

Together.

Using Books to Explore Your World

Parent Handout

Children learn best through hands-on exploration and play. Pairing books and nature-based activities can help tie books to the real world and deepen a child's interest in science.

Read About Nature

Read more about any topic your child is interested in knowing more about. Children will enjoy learning more about science when they choose what materials to read.

- Look for nonfiction books and magazines at your local library.
- Discover science themed children's books and activities at *Mother Goose Cares About Math and Science*. www.mothersgooseprograms.org
- Search online for websites like www.nasa.gov, which have sections devoted specifically for children to explore.

Observe Nature

Help your child connect what he or she reads with the real world by observing patterns and objects in nature that were also in the book. Finding things to explore does not have to be difficult. Many materials such as rocks, the sky, insects, and animals can be found right outside your front door.

- Draw pictures of things you see together.
- Create a nature-themed scavenger hunt to do together.
- Keep a journal of how things change over time, such as the moon throughout the month or leaves throughout the seasons.

Learn Together

A parent who shows interest in what their child is exploring can encourage their child to continue learning. Read together, explore together, and talk often about everyday changes you notice in nature.



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Reach for the Moon!
Together.

Moon Journal Cover

My Moon Journal

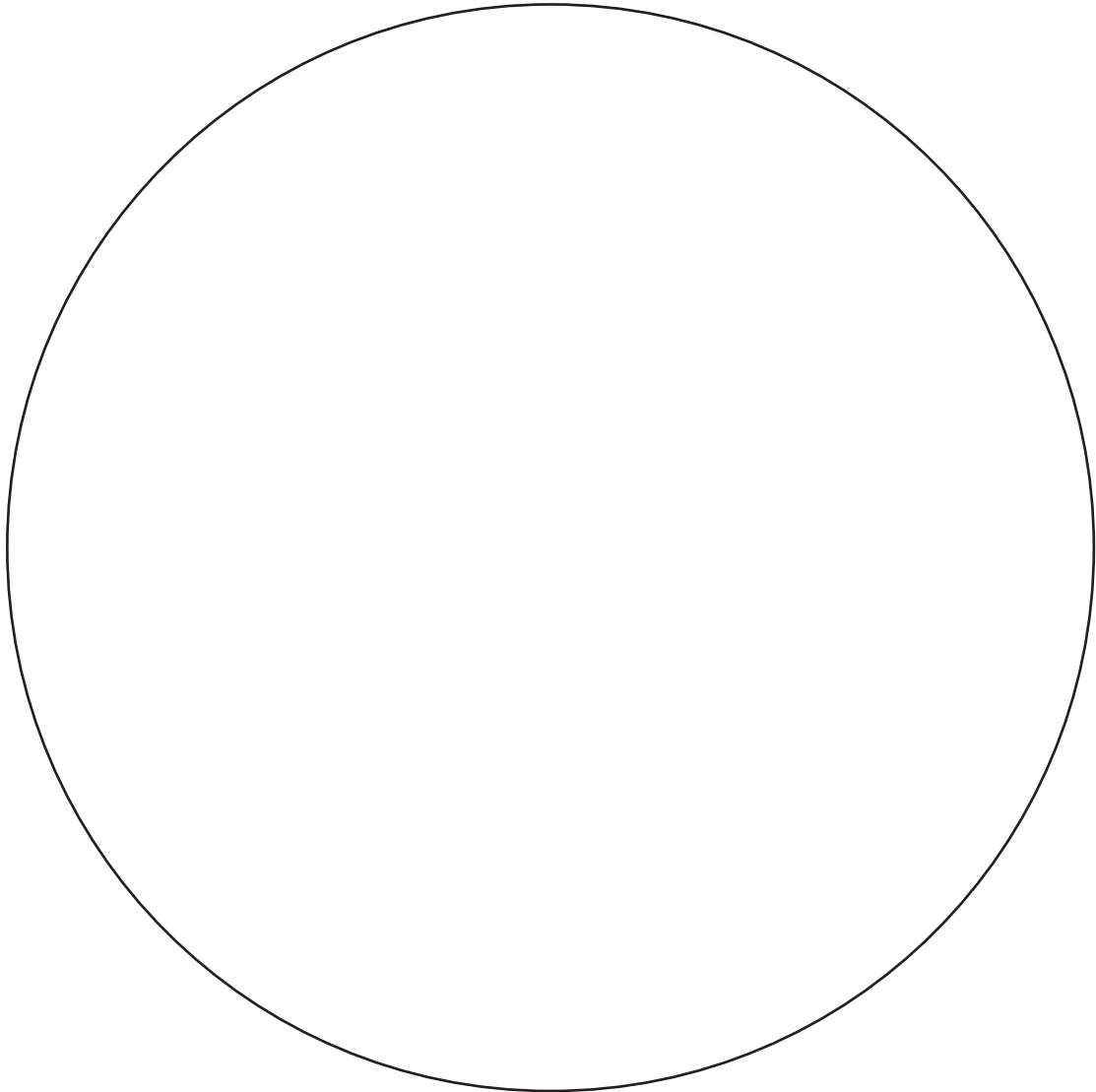
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My Night Sky Prediction

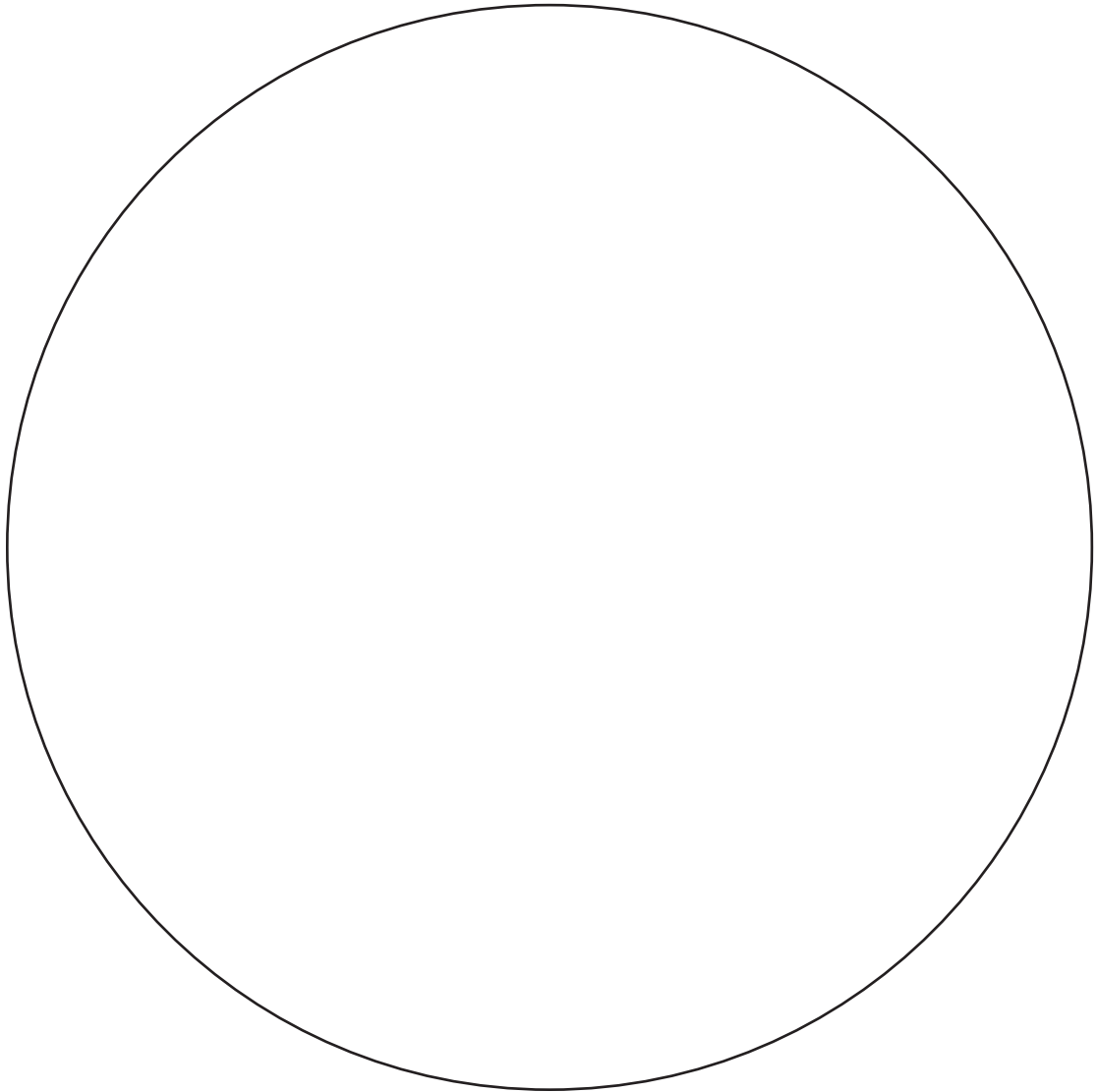
This is what I think the sky will look like tonight.



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My Night Sky Observation

This is what the sky actually looks like tonight.








































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Reach for the Moon!

Together.

Moon Calendar

Observe the moon each night for a month and shade in the circle to match the shape of the moon for each date.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						
						
						
						
						
						



A Family Reading Celebration Guide
Reach for the Moon!
Together.

Moon Phases



New Moon



Crescent Moon



First Quarter Moon



Gibbous Moon



Full Moon



Gibbous Moon



Last Quarter Moon



Crescent Moon

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Together.

How was this Reading Celebration?

Evaluation for Parents: Please rate the following items by circling one number in each row on this scale: **5 - Excellent** **4 - Good** **3 - Adequate** **2 - Fair** **1 - Poor**

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Fair	Poor
A Registration & Pre-event Information	5	4	3	2	1
B Parent Workshop Session	5	4	3	2	1
C Parent and Child Workshop	5	4	3	2	1
D Parent Resource Materials	5	4	3	2	1

Comments and suggestions:

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Fair	Poor
A As a result of this event, my knowledge of how I can support my child with science learning activities at home has increased.	5	4	3	2	1
B As a result of this event, I have increased knowledge about how to use books and reading with my child at home.	5	4	3	2	1

Comments and suggestions for future family events:

