

# Once Upon a Book... There Was a Rabbit in the Moon

## Collaging the Moon with Grace Lin

### Rabbit in the Moon

In Grace Lin and Kate Messner's picture book **Once Upon a Book**, Alice's toy rabbit follows her when she steps into the pages of a book. Hidden on each page, the rabbit waits until Alice is floating amongst the stars to make its leap toward the moon. On the final page of Grace's story, we can see the rabbit nestled in the full moon. **Why do you think the rabbit goes to the moon?**

Throughout time, humans all over the world have looked at the moon and wondered. The moon's surface is 238,900 miles away from us. At that distance, our eyes can only see the landscape of the moon as shapes of light and dark. We have always looked at those light and dark shapes and tried to make them into things we know—like animals, people, or even written words.



Many Asian cultures have looked at those shapes and seen a rabbit. Chinese stories have told us that the Jade Rabbit is the companion of the moon goddess Chang'e, both of whom will live forever.

**Do you know what else will live forever?** Our fascination with the moon and our fascination with stories will always exist.

**What story can you tell about the moon?**

In celebration of the story of Alice's rabbit and all the stories of the moon we have told and will tell, let's create a moon to hang from your ceiling.

### Collaging the Moon

**Collage** is an art form that uses pieces of paper, photographs, cloth, or other discovered materials to make a picture. Collage is like how we see the moon. Shades and shapes come together to tell a story. Supplies and steps are "suggested" because, like all art forms, collage is as unique as the person creating it.

#### Suggested Art Supplies

- 6-10 inch round piece of cardboard
- Scraps of paper
- Tissue paper (white or yellow)
- Liquid glue or glue stick
- Paint Brush or sponge
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- String

#### Suggested Steps

1. Let's start by making a circle out of cardboard. This will become the canvas or surface for your moon collage. You could use a:
  - a. Round pan from the kitchen to trace a circle on a cardboard box or cereal box. Carefully, cut out the circle.
  - b. Paper plate with the curvy edges cut off.
  - c. Bakery "cake board rounds" that come in 6, 8, and 10-inch sizes. They are available where craft supplies are sold.

Images © Grace Lin

This activity was created for the picture book **Once Upon a Book**, written by Grace Lin and Kate Messner and illustrated by Grace Lin (Little, Brown and Company). It was designed by I'm Your Neighbor Books with art educator Kelly McConnell.

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## Collaging the Moon (cont.)

### Suggested Steps

2. Look at the moon, using books, the internet, or the night sky.
3. Gather scraps of paper from the recycling bin, magazines, old books, or other places. Look for papers with colors or images that remind you of the moon.
4. Start arranging the scraps of paper. What looks good together? Cut the papers or tear them to give you interesting edges. There is no a right way to do this, there is only your way to do this.
5. Decide if you want to hide a recognizable animal or other object on your moon for people to find. You could try cutting out a rabbit head, body, ears, and four paws from a paper grocery bag to make a rough rabbit shape. It does not have to be perfect as it is simply “rabbit shaped.”

Or you can simply collage random pieces together and look for shapes in your finished piece. Your moon has two sides, so you can even do both!
6. Grab a glue stick. You can also use glue from a bottle mixed with a little bit of water and applied with a paintbrush. Start your collage by gluing down the pieces of paper in a way that pleases you.
7. Let one side dry. Flip your moon over and collage the other side.
8. Consider your collage up close and at a distance. Can you see a rabbit in the moon? Can you see another shape? Keep collaging until you are satisfied.
9. Think about blurring the surface of your moon. Remember the moon is 238,900 miles away and we do not see anything clearly.
  - a. Using a pencil, color some small sections. Using your finger, rub and smear the pencil. If you had an ink pad, you could use ink on your finger to smudge your collage. These smears and smudges may give your collage some of the fuzzy texture of the actual moon.
  - b. If you have tissue paper (white or yellow) and liquid glue, try this cool effect! In a container, mix liquid glue with a tiny bit of water. With a paintbrush or sponge, cover your whole collage with a thin layer of glue. Lay the tissue paper over the moon. Now paint or sponge the top surface of the tissue paper with more glue until the tissue seems wet all the way through. Don't worry about wrinkles or tears—they will make the moon's surface more interesting!
10. Once you feel like your art is complete, use a hole punch to make a hole in the top. If you do not have a hole punch, ask an adult to gently drill a hole with the point of a pair of scissors.
11. Put a string through the hole and hang it. Let it spin. Look for shapes. Use what you see to make up your own stories about who or what you see on the surface and what they are doing there.



**Maybe, like Alice, that story will take you places you have never been.**

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