



Readers Theater



Thank You, Moon: Celebrating Nature's Nightlight

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ABOUT THE BOOK

Under the glow of the shimmering Moon, creatures great and small are wide awake hunting, exploring, fending off predators, and building families. As the Moon changes phases, these animals alter their behavior to match its waxing and waning – while we look on in wonder. With luminous illustrations and lyrical text that's part lullaby, part scientific resource, *Thank You, Moon* is a treasure for all ages to enjoy.

GETTING STARTED

Many readers theater scripts have just ten or twelve parts, but this script has twice as many roles! It includes 21 animal parts and a narrator. The animal parts vary in difficulty to accommodate children at a variety of reading levels. The narrator text is the most challenging. It can be read by an adult or by an advanced young reader.

The script also includes two group choruses – lines read by half the children – as well as some lines read by everyone. These recurring parts help the children stay focused after they've read their animal line.

If you're working with a small group of children, some students can perform two roles. If you have a large group, some children can share a role or you can divide the narrator role into multiple parts.

After you've matched students with parts, ask the class to read through the script a few times. As the children practice, provide as much support and advice as needed.

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PLANNING THE PERFORMANCE

When the children feel confident about their roles, you may want to set out a variety of art supplies and encourage students to make animal/plant badges, hats, or even simple costumes to wear during the performance. Children acting as narrators may want to wear something special too.

During the final reading, the students can perform for another class or even a group of parents.

CAST OF CHARACTERS

narrator	lion 1	sea turtle 1
dung beetle	lion 2	sea turtle 2
night monkey 1	gazelle 1	coral 1
night monkey 2	gazelle 2	coral 2
night monkey 3	gazelle 3	coral 3
nightjar 1	zooplankton 1	joint pine
nightjar 2	zooplankton 2	moth
	kangaroo rat	

SCRIPT

Everyone:	Thank you, Moon, for making life on Earth possible.
Narrator:	Without the Moon's gentle gravity tugging on our planet. . .
Chorus 1:	Summers would be sizzling hot.
Chorus 2:	And winters would be freezing cold.
Chorus 1:	No plants,
Chorus 2:	no animals,
Narrator:	no living things at all
Everyone:	could survive.
Narrator:	And without the Moon's bright light . . .

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- Everyone:** Some creatures would have trouble getting food.
- Narrator: Dung beetles are the perfect example.
- Dung beetle: The glowing Moon helps me find my way home, so I can eat my scumdiddlyicious dung ball in peace.
- Narrator: When the Moon is bright, night monkeys can feast on . . .
- Night monkey 1: Figs!
- Night monkey 2: Figs!
- Night monkey 3: Figs!
- All monkeys: They're nutritious and delicious.
- Night monkey 1: On dark nights, we move slowly
- Night monkey 2: and carefully
- Night monkey 3: through the trees.
- Night monkey 1: We eat aren't picky.
- Night monkey 2: We eat whatever fruit we can find.
- Night monkey 3: But when the Full Moon lights the land . . .
- Everyone:** **Game on!**
- Night monkey 1: We dash through the forests,
- Night monkey 2: traveling far and wide
- Night monkey 3: until we find out favorite meal.
- Night monkey 1: Figs!
- Night monkey 2: Figs!
- Night monkey 3: Figs!

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All monkeys: They're nutritious and . . .

Everyone: **delicious.**

Narrator: Next, let's hear from some of my favorite birds – nightjars.

Nightjar 1: When the Moon is full in late autumn, we gorge on insects all night long.

Nightjar 2: Then we migrate to Africa with our bellies full.

Narrator: Speaking of Africa, what about lions? Do they depend on moonlight too?

Lion 1: Just the opposite, as a matter of fact.

Lion 2: We do our best hunting when just a sliver of Moon glows in the sky.

Everyone: **Look out gazelle!**

Narrator: And that leads right into our next topic. Without the Moon's bright light . . .

Everyone: **Some creatures would have trouble staying safe.**

Narrator: Gazelle are a perfect example.

Gazelle 1: That's right. On moonless nights, we cluster together.

Gazelle 2: We stay silent and still.

Gazelle 3: And we're always on the lookout for danger.

Gazelle 1: But on bright moonlit nights,

Gazelle 2: it's a whole different story.

Gazelle 3: We graze on grass without feeling fearful.

Narrator: Tiny zooplankton, how do you stay safe in your ocean home?

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- Zooplankton 1: For us, moonlight sends a warning.
- Zooplankton 2: It says: “Dive deep to escape from enemies!”
- Narrator: And what about you, kangaroo rat?
- Kangaroo rat: That dazzling glow lets me know it’s a good time to hide in my underground den.
- Narrator: Newly-hatched sea turtles don’t hide when the Moon is full.
- Sea turtle 1: We scramble to the surface and run for our lives.
- Sea turtle 2: Moonlight reflecting off the ocean guides us to the safety of the sea.
- Everyone: Stay safe, little turtles!**
- Narrator: Without the Moon’s bright light . . .
- Everyone: Some creatures would have trouble building families.**
- Narrator: Coral are a perfect example.
- Coral 1: That’s right! The midsummer Full Moon sends us a signal.
- Coral 2: A few days later we release millions of egg and sperm into the ocean.
- Coral 3: If they meet up, they form little larva that grow into brand new adults.
- Narrator: And last but not least, let’s talk to . . . a plant. How do you depend on the Moon, joint pine?
- Joint pine: When I sense the Full Moon in July, I release sticky drops with pollen inside.
- Moth: Hold on! That’s where I come in.
- Narrator: Well, hello, Mr. Moth. I didn’t know you were involved.

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- Moth: You bet I am! I spot the drops sparkling in the moonlight and swoop in for a snack.
- Joint pine: And that's good news for me. Because some of the pollen sticks to the moth's body.
- Moth: As I fly from plant to plant, pollen falls off my body and sticks to a new plant.
- Joint pine: Then the plant uses the pollen to make new seeds.
- Narrator: And we all know seeds grow into . . .
- Everyone: new plants!**
- Chorus 1: Hooray for moths!**
- Narrator: But most of all . . .
- Chorus 2: Hooray for the Moon!**
- Everyone: Thank you for all you do!**

THE END

